



Making IVET more attractive for learners

Results of the work undertaken by the thematic group on Making VET more attractive

Report drafted by Elizabeth Watters

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FOREWORD

The work undertaken in the context of the ENQA-VET work programme (2008-2009) which has been funded by the European Commission within the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme, has had a two-fold character. At one level it has sought to produce policy-useful material to support Member States in developing the instruments and tools which will be important for the implementation of the EQARF Recommendation. At a second level, the intensive cooperation between countries in areas of shared policy concern, has contributed to a greater level of understanding of each others systems, mutual learning, and an increased culture of quality assurance in Member States.

This process has involved policymakers and VET providers as well as the social partners as key players in developing appropriate responses to policy implementation issues in regional and national contexts within the Member States.

The work of the thematic groups has provided an opportunity to mobilise policymakers and specialists in areas of key policy interest for improving the quality of VET, such as the common understanding of indicators, peer review the development of guidelines to support quality, and how to make VET more attractive. The outcomes of this work will play a significant role in supporting Member States in developing their national plans for the implementation of EQARF, as well as informing the policymaking process at Member State and European levels.

The results of the thematic groups will also be of particular interest to the European Commission as it addresses the issue of how to best support the successful implementation of EQARF in the coming years.

The reports of the thematic groups are not designed to be static however. They represent best thinking at a particular moment in time. They will now be used at a more general level, involving actors and countries who are at different stages of development, as they reflect on what effective implementation of the EQARF will mean in their context. This material will feed into this process and in turn support the development of the incremental policy learning which is a key part of the open method of coordination as applied to education and training.

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In particular we would like to thank the Kunsill Malti għall-Kwalifiki -Malta Qualifications Council-, the Hessisches Kulturministerium of Germany -Department of Education- and Skolverket –the Swedish National Agency for Education- for hosting the work of the thematic group, Shawn Mendes for chairing the group and Elizabeth Watters for facilitating communication between members and preparing the final report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2010 is the target date for current EU action that aims to make the quality of VET a world reference. Member States have been working hard, individually and collectively, to achieve this goal. At EU level, in the context of the 'Copenhagen process' and the over-arching 'Education and Training 2010' Programme, a range of policy initiatives have been agreed for the modernisation and improvement of VET and the transparency and portability of VET qualifications. The development and implementation of EU reference frameworks and tools, such as the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF), European Credit System for VET (ECVET), the European guidelines on the validation of non-formal and informal learning and EUROPASS have provided a common structure for VET reform at national and regional levels. Joint efforts to achieve mutual goals have enabled policy makers to better understand other VET systems and arrangements and benchmark their achievements.

In the context of its biennial Work Programme (2008-2009) ENQA-VET has focussed on preparations for the implementation of the EQARF, which was adopted by the Council in May 2009. Supporting stakeholders' involvement in a 'culture of quality improvement' is at the heart of the EQARF Recommendation and the extent to which quality improvement helps to make VET more attractive was selected as one of the themes for exploration and exchange. The group addressing the theme was established in June 2008 and met four times over the course of a 12-month period. This report presents the outcomes of the discussions of experts from sixteen Member States who explored the theme from the perspectives of the quality and relevance of initial VET (IVET) policy and provision, i.e. *quality as the key to the attractiveness of IVET* and the status and image/visibility of IVET from a quality perspective, i.e. *quality as the means to demonstrate the attractiveness of IVET, perceived as 'opposite sides of the same coin'*.

Chapter two of the report reflects on the diversity of IVET in the EU, which is as disparate as the societies and economies that it serves and how EU-level policy initiatives need to be adapted to suit the role and traditions of IVET in Member States, which are reflected in the governance, organization and provision of IVET. Chapter three presents Member States initiatives to 'make IVET more attractive' and chapter four offers an analysis of trends and messages that the group considers may be useful to policy-makers charged with the responsibility of implementing the EQARF.

1. POLICY CONTEXT

1.1. Introduction

The group addressing the theme 'making VET more attractive' was established in June 2008 by the EU Network for Quality Assurance in VET (ENQA-VET), in the context of its biennial ENQA-VET Work Programme (2008-2009). The outcomes of the current work programme are intended to support the implementation of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF) for VET¹

A key priority of EU education and training policy is to improve the quality and attractiveness of VET². The Bordeaux Communiqué (2008) of the 'Copenhagen process'³ and the most recent joint report on the implementation of the Education and Training 2010 Programme⁴ (2008) inextricably link the attractiveness of VET with its quality⁵. The Communiqué identified this as a priority for action⁶ to tackle the challenges of; youth unemployment (cited as 15.5% in 2007), early school leaving (cited as 14.8% of young people leaving school with only lower second-level education) and the labour market need for *'twice as many people with medium-level qualifications than with high-level qualifications to replace those who retire or leave the labour market for other reasons'* between now and 2020. Amongst the actions proposed are: basing VET policies on reliable evidence, developing school-business partnerships, ensuring equitable access and participation in VET, providing access to information, guidance and counselling, developing qualifications systems and frameworks based on learning outcomes, opening paths to facilitate progress from one level of qualification to another, developing quality assurance and encouraging the promotion of VET. In 2008, the potential of VET to contribute to the reversal of recession became the focus of attention. Motivating people to invest time and other resources in upgrading skills and gaining new skills is contingent on the attractiveness of VET offers.

1.2. The mandate

¹Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF) for VET (April 2 2009), is based on common European references and under development since 2002.

²Draft 2008 joint progress report on the implementation of the "Education and Training 2010 work programme, COM (2007) 703 final.

³The Copenhagen Declaration and the Council Resolution on the promotion of enhanced European co-operation in VET (November 2002) underpin the 'Copenhagen Process, which aims to implement a shared vision of how VET in the EU needs to be adapted and improved, if the EU goals are to be achieved.

⁴The report on the 'Concrete Future Objectives of Education and Training Systems' (2001), forms the basis of the Programme later known as 'Education and Training 2010' (the reference for the Programme 2002-2010).

⁵Most recently reiterated in the Council Conclusions on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ("ET 2020"), 13th May 2009

⁶Priority two: 'Heightening the quality and attractiveness of VET systems'

'To support ENQA-VET in its reflection on the attractiveness of VET and to produce concrete suggestions which will support policy implementation within national and/regional systems, as appropriate'.

The work of the group was intended to facilitate 'a qualitative improvement in terms of reflection and strategic development in relation to the attractiveness of VET'. Working from the premise that high quality, relevant, accessible, equitable and esteemed VET is attractive, key goals of the thematic group included sharing views on the extent to which VET meets these criteria in the participating countries and exchanging information on good examples of relevant policies and practices. Given the role of ENQA-VET in supporting the ongoing development and use of the EQARF, the thematic group's programme of work aimed to consider ways in which the implementation of the EQARF could contribute to the process of 'making VET more attractive'.

1.3. The objectives and work programme

The objectives of the thematic group were; to enhance self-knowledge within the group, to build on combined experience and expertise in order to improve knowledge on the theme and to distil useful messages from their deliberations for transmission to policy makers, charged with the implementation of the EQARF. The four phases of the work programme, coinciding with the number of meetings, were:

1. Reflection on the key concepts and consideration of the theme, including the pressures to make IVET more attractive (Chapter two);
2. Identification and presentation of national/regional developments that aim to make IVET more attractive (Chapter three);
3. Distillation of policy-useful messages (Chapter four).

The group made use of the terms and their definitions in the Cedefop Glossary and Thesaurus, and the Eurydice Glossary.

2. MAKING VET MORE ATTRACTIVE

2.1. Introduction

The theme is broad and complex. To make the task of producing policy useful messages with regard to making VET more attractive feasible, it was considered necessary to restrict the theme and ensure mutual understanding of key concepts. In chapter two, the reasons for focusing on Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) and a brief analysis of the sector are presented, together with a study of the term attractiveness and associated concepts and the pressures to make IVET more attractive.

2.2. The heterogeneity of VET⁷ in the EU

VET in the EU is defined and organised according to the different social, economic and political traditions of Member States⁸. Diverse forms of governance and organization of VET result in different forms of provision, which may be integrated into formal systems of education and training, linked to the latter or be totally separated. There is a good deal of formal VET provision outside the public education and training system, which governs initial and advanced VET, including; in-company and externally organised job related training; open and distance, ICT and other media assisted VET provision and immeasurable types of non-formal VET. Thus, VET is a continuum of systems and arrangements and the differences between them can be wide-ranging: this makes comparative analysis difficult.

Attempting to analyse the attractiveness of each VET system and arrangement across the participating countries was not considered feasible. For the most part, only the initial vocational education and training (IVET)⁹ sector was represented in the group and the Social Partners were not represented. Therefore, it was decided to limit the theme and concentrate on IVET. This was narrowed down even further to formal IVET pathways and programmes within the formal education and training system leading to qualifications recognised in the labour market.

⁷ VET is broadly defined at EU-level (Terminology of vocational training policy Cedefop 2004) as: *Education and training which aims to equip people with skills and competences that can be used on the labour market.* This definition inextricably links VET with the world of work and the employability of individuals.

⁸ Comparative research on VET systems in Europe reveals a complex range of VET models. W.D. Greinert (*Towards a history of VET in Europe in a comparative perspective* Cedefop 2004) makes reference to three overriding typologies of VET in Europe, a) the liberal market economy model with training regulated by market forces b) the state-regulated bureaucratic model with an academic approach to training and c) the dual-corporatist model, in which training is determined by the vocational principle. Hybrid models combine the latter with different weightings.

⁹ For the purposes of the study, IVET is defined as vocationally orientated education and training in second-level or further education and training, normally for young people under the age of 25, which leads to a qualification with labour market currency. It 'can be carried out at any level in general or vocational education (full-time school-based or *alternance* training) pathways or apprenticeship'. Cedefop Glossary 2009

2.3. Initial vocational education and training

IVET comprises a range of learning pathways that interface with general and tertiary education and with the world of work. The features, function, form and size of each IVET pathway relates to a nation's, or a region's, economic and social needs and how they can be best met holistically by the different sectors within the education and training continuum. Over the past twenty years, equity and inclusion and other societal pressures have increased in importance as drivers of IVET policies within the EU¹⁰, leading to the development of new or adapted IVET pathways. These exist alongside economy-driven IVET pathways, some of which are built on centuries of tradition and are deeply embedded in the social fabric. Depending on the primacy of one driving force over the other, the needs to which IVET pathways and programmes respond, their goals and how they are governed, organised and funded, can be quite different. Diversity can be an indicator of quality, in that different needs are accommodated, but can also be the cause of confusion and uncertainty for learners, their advisors and employers. This has consequences for the attractiveness of IVET.

We can define the responsiveness of diverse IVET learning pathways to economic and social drivers according to various distinctions and tensions, including:

- Which aims and purposes are paramount: employability and economic competitiveness or personal development and social cohesion?
- Which has the main policy-making role: government or business and social partners and how, if at all, is dual policy-making managed?
- Which standards are dominant in the IVET programme: educational or occupational and how, if at all, are they reconciled?
- Who are the principal players determining learning outcomes, developing contents, methods and assessment of competences etc: primarily public servants or industry representatives?
- What status and currency is attached to qualifications acquired: in relation to job procurement and advancement and/or further learning?
- What is the main function of the learning facilitator: educator or skills developer?

These, and other factors that differentiate IVET, have a bearing on, *inter alia*: how the quality criteria for the associated programmes are determined, managed and assured; how relevance is defined and guaranteed and how attractive IVET pathways are perceived to be by different stakeholders.

2.4. IVET qualifications with currency in the labour market

¹⁰ With significant support from the European Social Fund (ESF)

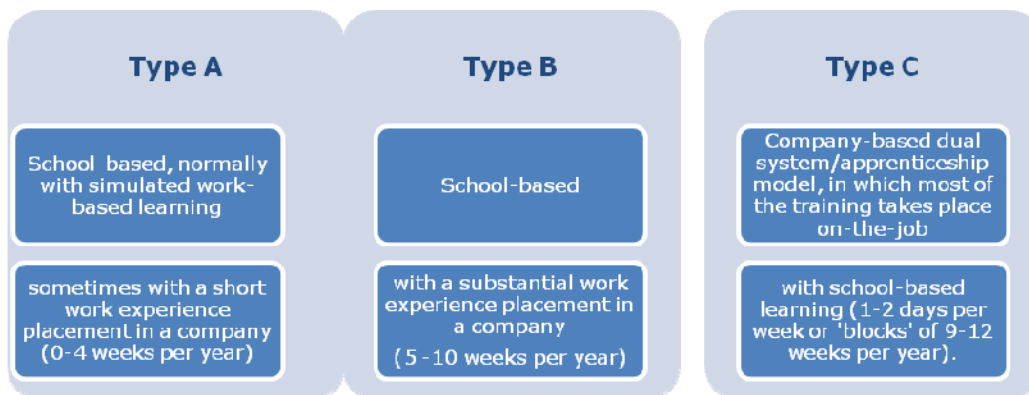
For IVET qualifications to have currency in the labour market, IVET systems and arrangements must be linked to the economic development of the locality/region/state and must adapt as rapidly as economies change. Within this context of change, the constants are the needs for IVET to develop with private (economy stakeholders), and public (local/region/state stakeholders) leadership, support and involvement. Public/private partnership needs to be reflected in the expertise required to develop methods, standards, curricula and contents and for the assessment, validation and certification of learning. Facilitators of learning, VET teachers and trainers, require the capacities to nurture up-to-date vocationally orientated knowledge, skills and competences in learners.

The function of IVET is to offer learners opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and competences that are relevant for employment purposes (current and future) and further learning. Different types of IVET offer a range of learning contexts and opportunities that can nurture different talents and capacities, including the different ways by which people learn, achieve and excel in what they do. Maintaining this diversity is crucial to exploit the full potential of every individual so that current and future challenges can be tackled from multiple perspectives and capacities: all the more important in the context of economic transformation and changing population structures. Offering a diversity of learning contexts and opportunities is an important factor in ensuring the development of varied and versatile 'social capital', necessary for balanced and resourceful societies and economies.

The key characteristic of an IVET programme that is linked to an employment sector is that it is job and career orientated. Closely connecting IVET to the world of work fosters work ethics and behaviour and smooths the transition from learning to employment. To use, make use of and further develop new technologies, requires exposure to them and acquisition of the relevant skills sets. Learning contexts need to simulate the job context and/or offer opportunities for learning in the workplace. Job specific knowledge needs to be transmitted and related skills and competences need to be nurtured and assessed and the resulting certification and qualification must have currency in the labour market.

Three types of IVET pathways, which lead to qualifications with currency in the labour market, were prominent across the participating countries, as illustrated below. A 'snapshot'¹¹ of the standing of the different types of pathways in the participating countries can be found in appendix two.

¹¹ The data in the snapshot are approximate and incomplete for some countries, nonetheless they provide some indication of how IVET is organised and how participation rates in different pathways can differ in different countries. This supports the conclusion that action related to the attractiveness of IVET needs to be considered in relation to different pathways.



Within each type, there can be significant differences across countries with regard to, for example; functions and goals, governance and organization, curriculum, contents and methodology, teachers/trainers' and learners' profiles, enrolment numbers, access and completion rates, and qualifications' levels associated with the types. The group aimed to consider these differences and how they affect the quality, relevance, status and image of VET types in different countries and the consequences for the attractiveness of IVET.

2.5. The target groups

The target groups selected, in relation to the theme, were young people considering future learning choices and learners already enrolled in IVET programmes. The former category comprises young people who consider that their talents and capacities are best matched with the jobs for which IVET qualifications are required, respond well to the learning approaches that characterise IVET and who want to qualify as quickly as possible for work. It also includes those who cannot decide between options, and young people who may not have given IVET sufficient consideration as an option.

Having selected an IVET programme as a preferred learning option, it must 'live up to' the young person's expectations, otherwise there is a likelihood that s/he will transfer to a different learning pathway, 'drop out' or under-perform. Account must be taken of the fact that some young people feel they were coerced into IVET, for example, because they needed to complete compulsory education or were streamed at an early age and find themselves without other options. Every effort must be made to raise the level of their contentment and satisfaction with their learning pathway.

Reasons why young people may or may not find IVET pathways and programmes attractive are best provided by young people themselves. In a few countries, learner surveys provide

useful information but for the most part evidence of learners' views specific to the theme was unavailable or difficult to access. This needs to be addressed.

The knowledgeable views of the thematic group participants, many of whom with lengthy experience of working with young people in the IVET sector, supported by the experience of their peers and evidence from research and policy documents, serve as proxies for learners views. The selected keywords that relate to views on the attractiveness of IVET for learners include; status, image, relevance and quality¹².

2.6. The attractiveness of IVET

Attractiveness is a subjective and value-laden concept. The attractiveness of IVET is therefore difficult to define and measure. The attractiveness of an IVET pathway and programme is linked to its quality and relevance and how the latter are made visible and valued by society. The value that the labour market and society in general, place on an IVET pathway gives status. Assessing characteristics of IVET pathways and programmes that relate to their status, image, relevance and quality can serve as indicators of their attractiveness. These features include:

- Research of excellence underpinning IVET policy and practice;
- qualitative co-operation between stakeholders/partner, including suitable collaboration between IVET and the labour market on matters such as, needs analyses and the development of standards and contents;
- Quality managed and assured teacher/trainer education;
- Suitably accredited and quality assured IVET provider institutions;
- Use of effective learning approaches, methodologies and tools;
- Quality assured qualifications esteemed in society and the labour market and recognised in relation to progress to another level of qualification;
- Quality information, guidance and counselling services;
- Tangible and pro-active links between the IVET school and the labour market that facilitate work-based learning;
- Environment, ambiance and facilities that appeal to young people.

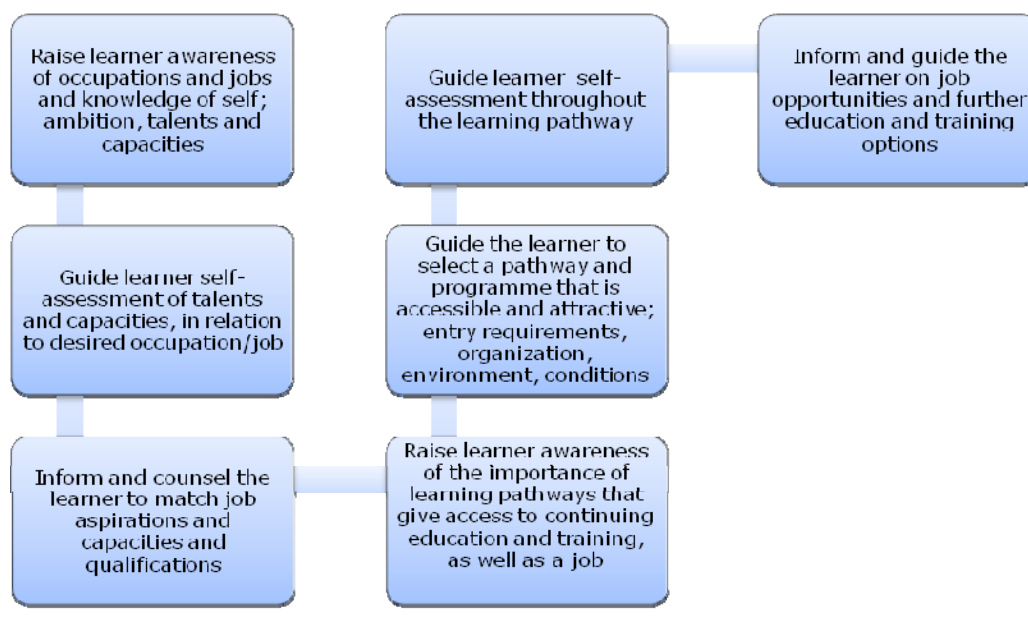
These features are examined in chapter three from the perspectives of the quality and relevance of IVET policy and provision, *quality as the key to the attractiveness of IVET* and

¹² Learners' views and the judgements they make are informed by how society views IVET; peers, parents, role models, media, counsellors, teachers, employers, etc. Approaching the theme from the perspectives of these stakeholders would require a good deal more time and a more representative group of participants. How to positively influence their views is, however, taken into account.

the status and image/visibility of IVET from a quality perspective, *quality as the means to demonstrate the attractiveness of IVET, perceived as 'opposite sides of the same coin'*.

Demonstrating the attractiveness of high quality, relevant IVET to young people is reliant on its visibility and how it is promoted. In this regard, information and guidance services of excellence prior to enrolment and during training help to make IVET more attractive.

Information and guidance services making IVET more attractive for learners



2.7. IVET and cultures of quality improvement

Quality is the key to making IVET attractive. Ensuring the relevance of IVET, for the purposes of gaining access to employment and further learning, is a fundamental criterion to be addressed when improving its quality¹³. Supporting IVET stakeholders' involvement in a 'culture of quality improvement' is at the heart of the EQARF Recommendation. A 'culture' can be understood as the shared ethos, knowledge and behaviour of groupings of people engaged in social learning. The meaning of quality is context bound¹⁴. The engagement of a grouping of IVET stakeholders in a culture of quality improvement and accountability has the

¹³ Even when IVET pathways meet quality criteria if the importance of relevance and status and image is not taken into account they may not be considered attractive by learners.

¹⁴ 'A common understanding of quality is 'being of value' and this makes quality relative: of what value; value for whom and value for what? Accordingly, we need to consider quality in terms of context, where judgments are made. This means that there is no global, absolute, objective measure for quality rather it is something agreed upon by 'communities' (however defined and whatever their composition): whether they be scientific communities or communities of practice. These communities may define quality procedures and processes and/or quantitative benchmarks for mutual implementation and attainment.' Elizabeth Watters: *Quality of VET: The EU Dimension*. Der Konferenz: Qualität in der beruflichen Bildung, 6 Oktober 2008 Wien.

purposes of; sharing what is known, collectively improving shared knowledge and practices, and demonstrating improvements for the purposes of evaluation. The culture of a community of practice, transmogrifies through an osmosis-like process: this process is hard to measure. The results of social learning however, can be observed objectively when the community of practice puts in place quality management¹⁵ arrangements.

The thematic group proposed to consider the connection between stakeholder involvement in a 'culture of quality improvement' and the features and achievements that make IVET more attractive. Developments to improve attractiveness related to EU reference frameworks linked to the EQARF Recommendation, including; EQF, ECVET and the validation of non-formal and informal learning would be highlighted. The approach to capture and distil generic messages of relevance for the implementation of the Recommendation complements the work of the three concurrent thematic groups set up by ENQA-VET (2008-2009), which focus on the EQARF tools: the implementation of the CQAF, the further development of indicators for assessing quality and peer review in the context of quality assurance in VET.

¹⁵ All activities of management that determine the quality policy, objectives and responsibilities, and implement them by means of a quality plan, quality control, and quality assurance within a quality system. *Source:* ISO 8402. Cedefop Glossary 'Quality in Training' (2003)

3. QUALITY DEVELOPMENTS TO MAKE IVET MORE ATTRACTIVE

3.1 Context

Policy developments that aim to improve the quality, relevance, image and status of IVET and improve its attractiveness are planned, implemented, monitored, evaluated and reviewed at all levels; policy planning, policy making, policy conversion into application processes and policy implementation.

Over the past decade, participating countries report a noticeable shift towards multi-actor partnerships of key stakeholders and other specialists in IVET policy development processes at the different levels. The multi-actor partnership approach compels participants to ‘think outside the box’ and reflect on the different purposes and functions of IVET and take account of the diverse expectations of different stakeholders. This creates receptiveness to blending diverse approaches and introducing innovation, needed to integrate IVET into a continuum of lifelong learning. Increasingly, key IVET actors are also involved in EU partnerships, at policy and programme levels, and contribute knowledge and know-how acquired therein to policy development processes.

A culture of co-operation and mutual effort is the foundation for a culture of quality. As discussed in the previous chapter, the meaning of quality is context bound. The quality culture of a development partnership, or community of practice, is underpinned by the quality management¹⁶ capacities of each partner and the quality management system they put in place.

Thematic group participants report that the application of the ‘quality cycle’ approach to policy development is commonplace and the quality assurance procedures of the associated processes improving. Explicit reference to quality management and quality assurance¹⁷ in IVET policy documents has become more frequent.

During the discussions participants drew attention to well-established legislation and policies in their countries that have contributed to the quality and relevance of IVET and continue to do so. There is evidence that policies and practices that work well in one context are being adapted and implemented in other contexts and countries. In this regard, EU action programmes and initiatives stretching back for almost two decades (e.g. PETRA, Leonardo da Vinci) and the policy programme ‘Education and Training 2010 as well as EU related

¹⁶ All activities of management that determine the quality policy, objectives and responsibilities, and implement them by means of a quality plan, quality control, and quality assurance within a quality system. *Source:* ISO 8402. Cedefop Glossary ‘Quality in Training’ (2003)

¹⁷ Part of quality management focused on providing confidence that quality requirements will be fulfilled. *Source:* ISO 9000 Cited in the Cedefop Glossary ‘Quality in Training’ (2003)

reporting procedures and supported research measures and dissemination activities (CEDEFOP, ETF) have played an important role. Accordingly, a policy that is a recent development in one country may be long-standing in another.

Participants focussed on developments in the past decade that they considered were improving the quality and relevance of IVET in their countries or would do so in time, suggesting that five years was the average length of time for policy to impact on IVET provision. These developments can be clustered under the headings:

- Legislation and evidence-based policy planning
- Governance and organization
- Labour market relevance of IVET
- IVET qualifications
- Quality management of IVET
- The qualifications of IVET learning facilitators
- Information and guidance services
- IVET status and image

In the following sections of the report these developments are examined in relation to their potential to improve the quality, relevance, status and image of IVET, thereby making it more attractive. Development processes are also reviewed for evidence of enhanced quality.

DEVELOPMENTS

EXAMPLES OF LEGISLATION AND POLICY PLANS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF IVET

Austria

Amendment of the Vocational Training Act (2006)
The qualifications of VET teachers is a priority
Plan for the implementation of the NQF (2008)

Cyprus

Equity for VET learners is a current reform priority
Proposal for the new modern apprenticeship (2007)

Denmark

New apprenticeship (2006)
VET reform and a framework for RPL (2007)
Development of an NQF (commenced 2007)

Estonia

Amendment of the Vocational Institutions Act (2005) and the Vocational Education Standard (2006) Legislation to regulate apprenticeship (2007)
Professions Act Amendment (2008) Development of the NQF (2008 rev) National VET curricula (2009)

Finland

Review of national core curricula for VET (2007-10)
Quality Management Recommendation-VET (2008)
Proposal for an NQF (2009)
Attractiveness Strategy for VET (2009)

Germany

Revision of the Vocational Training Act (2005)
VET Innovation Package (quality assurance, equity measures for ethnic minorities etc) (2007)
Proposal for a NQF (2009)

Ireland

Qualifications (Education and Training) Act (1999),
Establishment of the NFQ/ Awards Councils (2003)
Institutes of Technology Act (2006)

Italy

Law for Provider Accreditation (2001)
Provision to regulate RPL
Legislation to regulate apprenticeship

Malta

Legal notice to establish the Malta Qualifications Council and the NQF descriptors (2005)
NQF established (2007)

Romania

Law on quality assurance (2006)
National Qualifications Authority established

Sweden

Decision to develop a NQF (2008)
Agency, processes for Provider Accreditation (2008)
Programme Councils: standards, curricula (2011)
Commission for teachers' qualifications

3.2 Legislation and policy planning

Member States made commitments to modernize IVET by addressing mutually agreed priorities for reform¹⁸. Reviewing recent legislation and policy plans in the participating countries reveals the centrality of these EU-wide priorities. The themes that surface most commonly, with relevance for IVET, include:

- integrating IVET in a continuum of lifelong learning by improving access and progression routes e.g. modularisation, credit systems, recognition of prior learning, qualifications systems and frameworks.¹⁹
- upgrading the relevance of IVET for the labour market e.g. reliable skills needs analyses, fit-for purpose occupational standards, integrated work experience etc.;
- Enhancing the quality of IVET e.g. improving teacher education, quality assurance etc.

The quality processes and procedures that improve legislation formulation and policy planning at national level include:

- Inter-ministerial co-operation and tripartite partnerships;
- Partnership processes that are more open and transparent;
- Needs analyses and targeted research that underpin policy and legislation;
- Stakeholder consensus that is being sought through consultation and negotiation;
- Processes that aim to increase ownership and empowerment, in order to ease the implementation of policy and legislation;
- The integration of evaluation and review processes and procedures into policy plans and legislation.

When applied, these processes and procedures are considered to improve:

- The relevance of the legislation/policy for stakeholders;
- The validity of legislation/policy in addressing the issues challenging IVET;
- The quality and efficiency of the subsequent implementation of reform;
- The effectiveness of reform.

¹⁸ In the contexts of the 'Copenhagen' Process, the 'Education and Training 2010' Programme and EES and the ESF guidelines

¹⁹ EQF Definitions: '**qualification**' means a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards; '**national qualifications system**' means all aspects of a Member State's activity related to the recognition of learning and other mechanisms that link education and training to the labour market and civil society. This includes the development and implementation of institutional arrangements and processes relating to quality assurance, assessment and the award of qualifications. A national qualifications system may be composed of several subsystems and may include a national qualifications framework; '**national qualifications framework**' means an instrument for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims to integrate and coordinate national qualifications subsystems and improve the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society.

Much policy learning derives from engaging in EU-level dialogue and joint initiatives. The involvement of national decision-makers in the development and testing of EU instruments, such as: the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework, European Qualifications Framework, the European Credit System for VET (ECVET), Guidelines for the validation of non-formal learning as well as engaging in EU peer learning, peer review and trans-national development projects is considered to enhance national level policy development.

Findings

- 🌐 National policy developments are becoming more strategic and process orientated: key stakeholder involvement and consensus building is more evident.
- 🌐 IVET policy developments in participating countries focus on the mutually determined priorities reflected in EU policy and national policy is enhanced by the learning acquired through the Open Method of Co-ordination and engagement in the development and testing of EU policy instruments.
- 🌐 Member States are profiting from the experiences that work well in the EU: peer learning and knowledge transfer facilitate a 'sense' of common understanding.
- 🌐 The public-private partnership principle is contributing to more relevant and higher quality IVET.

SKILLS FORECASTING IN FINLAND

The **Finnish** National Board of Education developed the '**Mitenna Model**' for anticipating vocational training and skills needs nationally and regionally. The method is based on statistical data.

The Government set up the **Foresight Network** in 2005, comprising representatives from all ministries and the Prime Minister's Office. The Network's objectives are to: coordinate ministries' foresight activities, promote foresight activities at the regional level and ensure that the outcomes inform policymaking. The Network keeps in contact with research institutions and publishes reports. Every year the Network organises a Foresight Forum, which functions as a medium of societal discussion between ministries, regional and local governments and labour market organizations.

Both the Mitenna Model and the Foresight Network aim to improve the quality and relevance of VET by giving reliable and useful information about the sort and amount of education needed to correspond to the skills needs for the future and to safeguard access to skilled labour. The information is used to steer VET: e.g. target student intake, to detect bottlenecks in the labour force and early identification of oversupply. Regional anticipation and dialogue is stressed. The results benefit the students through career guidance.

The results and outcome of anticipation act as a resource for the Development Plan for Education and Research adopted by the Government every four years. The on-line information service for anticipation called ENSTI is based on Mitenna Model and was developed particularly to serve the users and producers of anticipation data for education and the labour market.

3.3 Needs analyses and targeted research

Quality needs analyses and research play an important role in ensuring the quality and relevance of IVET related policy and legislation.

Models and processes for forecasting future skills needs are of importance in IVET reform. Reliable forecasting informs the development of IVET standards, curricula and contents that aim to ensure the quality of learners' knowledge, skills and competences and thus, their employment chances in current and future workforces. The quality of processes and procedures for forecasting skills' needs is paramount. Poor forecasting can result in IVET training provision that lacks relevance for employers or an inappropriate supply of graduates, with the result that skills needs and labour shortages can not be met or the 'supply' of certain qualified employment candidates outweighs demand. These factors have a direct bearing on the attractiveness of an IVET pathway for learners.

SKILLS PLANNING IN IRELAND

In Ireland, the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN), with a budget from the National Training Fund, was established in 1997 to advise Government. Since its inception the EGFSN has produced a wide range of publications related to the education, training and qualifications needs of the population. In early 2007 it launched its 5th major report, 'Tomorrow's Skills: Towards a National Skills Strategy'.

The role of research for the development of IVET is increasing in importance in the participating countries. In some countries IVET research is highly developed and in others IVET is included in; lifelong learning, employment and social inclusion research. However, in some countries this area of research is considered to be under-developed.

Key areas for IVET research that are important for 'making IVET more attractive' include: Public-private partnership; IVET teacher and trainer

OUTLINE OF VET RESEARCH IN THE PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

Different research institutions are working to further develop their VET scientific base, in Austria. The first VET research conference took place in Steyr in 2008, with 200 participants.

Integrating ICTs in IVET is an important research area in Cyprus. A survey is planned to investigate why young Cypriots are not interested in technical jobs, and consequently VET.

VET research in Germany is rich and diverse. Research to inform policy on strengthening the attractiveness of IVET and other themes under discussion in the thematic group is underway, including the 'Europeanization' of VET.

How to make VET programmes more attractive for young people is a long standing research theme in Denmark. The renewal of the dual training principle is also a theme for research. Trade committees' reports complement government analyses regarding educational change.

In 2006, The Ministry of Education in Finland conducted a survey of the attractiveness of IVET among students in basic education and in IVET and among industry stakeholders and in 2008, a survey of measures adopted or planned by different stakeholders to make IVET more attractive.

VET research in Ireland is addressed for the most part in the context of research on education, employment and skills trends and social inclusion.

In Italy, research areas related to recent legislative reforms include: standards, contents and quality (apprenticeship reform). Research related to the monitoring processes associated with reform feeds into policy and planning.

The Malta Qualifications Council shall research and design occupational standards in the context of two ESF projects. The Employment and Training Corporation is carrying out research that will lead to the redesign of the Trade Testing process and training for assessors.

Student surveys are implemented in the Netherlands: organized by the national VET student association and used for the yearly benchmark of VET providers and the yearly risk analysis of the inspectorate.

Students'/parents'/social partners' surveys provide feedback on teaching/training, which is used for institutional planning and teacher performance assessment in Romania.

At present there is limited research into IVET. Both municipal authorities, responsible for the administration of upper secondary IVET in Sweden, and the Swedish National Agency for Education conducts periodic surveys of student satisfaction. Larger scale, longitudinal studies are also conducted investigating student satisfaction.

education and IVET pedagogy; assessment, including non-formal learning; quality development, management and assurance; vocationally orientated guidance and counselling; cost, benefits and returns of participation and learners' and employers' satisfaction with IVET.

VET RESEARCH PRIORITIES IN ESTONIA

The development of curricula.
Training for leaders of quality management in VET schools and introducing quality management to VET school personnel.

The latest surveys focus on:

1. The reputation of VET for the adult population and primary school pupils (Saar-Poll, 2008);
2. Research on social partners contentment with VET education (tnsEmor, 2009);
3. Monitoring the implementation of new national curricula and a survey on the teacher continuing training system are planned.

The involvement of national research institutes in EU-level IVET research is considered to be beneficial.

Findings

- ✚ Legislation formulation and policy planning, developed in accordance with principles of quality management, by key and competent stakeholders, based on quality evidence and arrived at through consensus, enhance confidence in policy directives and help to speed up the reform process.
- ✚ More timely and relevant reforms help to improve the quality of IVET, which in turn increases its attractiveness.
- ✚ The methods and tools employed in research, surveys, needs analyses and other forecasting procedures and processes must be of high quality to ensure the excellence and relevance of the evidence, which underpins policy developments for IVET qualifications.
- ✚ The attractiveness of IVET is an important area for research and should take account of making IVET more attractive for learners and employers.

3.4 Governance and organisation

The role of the State

IVET, as defined for the purposes of the thematic group, is located within the formal system of education and training and therefore governed and organised at national and/or regional level, for the most part, by government departments for education and/or labour.

There is a trend towards rationalising and strengthening central structures and procedures to support the process of devolving more responsibilities to IVET institutions. Governance at central level is mainly concerned with matters related to; strategic planning, qualifications, provider accreditation, quality assurance, common standards and core curricula.

Intermediate bodies and networks

There has been a growth in the number of agencies, or a broadening of mandates of institutions, which operate at the interface of IVET policy and practice (for example, Boards of Education and Qualifications Authorities), to manage effectively and efficiently the two-way process of informing policy-makers of the need for change identified at practice level, and decoding policy and facilitating its transference into practice.

Increasingly, intermediate bodies are charged with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the quality management processes and procedures related to the implementation of policy developments. These agencies are often also the catalysts for establishing and maintaining multi-actor networks that facilitate the implementation of change.

The involvement of economic actors

The REAP, LEAP, SAP Strategy in Romania

This strategy aims to ensure that IVET provision relate to local employment needs and can be quickly adapted to employment change.

Three supporting partnership structures were created in 2003, each comprising representatives of the local and regional educational authorities, employers, trade-unions, local authorities, NGOs and other important local stakeholders including parents. They facilitate the development of a common strategic vision for VET at local and regional levels and, through the annual updating process ease adaptation to the rapidly changing needs at each level.

The Regional Consortia act at the interface between the Regional Development Committees and institutions with responsibilities for human resources' development at county level. The Regional Consortia develop and update the **REAP-Regional Educational Action Plan**. Local Committees develop the **LEAP –Local Educational Action Plans** and school partnerships develop and update the **SAP- School Action Plan**. The respective partnership structure monitors and evaluates the implementation of each of the plans, which are updated regularly to incorporate the outcomes of the evaluation.

REAPs-LEAPs and SAPs have enhanced the attractiveness of VET, as demonstrated through the tracer studies of the graduates of IVET.

EXAMPLES OF THE ROLES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIAL PARTNERS IN IVET

AT Work-based training is an integral part of the dual system. There is well-established co-operation between economic actors and IVET providers.

DE Economic actors are equal partners in IVET federal and regional networks. Social partners are decision-makers regarding the need for new and improved IVET programmes. Together with the federal ministry of education and science they develop the training curricula and qualifications.

DK Skills anticipation activities have been strengthened through social partner involvement. Partnerships have been established between the colleges and local enterprises to ensure coherence between school-based education and workplace-based training.

EE The social partners are involved in all general VET developments.

FI National education and training committees, tripartite advisory bodies, and qualification committees are regulated by law. There is also a well-established co-operation between social partners and IVET providers in local level. In 2005, the social partners and the government signed a recommendation for on the job learning and skills demonstrations.

IE Social partners act in an advisory capacity in relation to the governance and organization of IVET. Local employers play important roles in the planning and organization of IVET.

IT The Union of Chambers of Commerce carry out an annual large scale study to determine vocational skills needs.

MT social partners are involved in: sponsoring apprenticeships, designing demand led qualifications and assessment.

NL Partnership between business and VET providers is highly stimulated by financial rewards/subsidies.

RO The definition of the educational offer in VET is being informed by more robust labour market intelligence.

Economic players are included in regional consortia and local partnerships for IVET planning.

SE There is well established cooperation

The relevance of an IVET pathway for the labour market is related to, the extent to which economic actors²⁰ are involved in the governance²¹ and organization of that IVET pathway. When the workplace is the main learning context in the IVET pathway, key economic actors are the main partners, when equal time is spent in the workplace and at school they are equal partners with their counterparts in the public sector. From that point onwards, as the time spent in the workplace decreases, the role of the economic actors appears to reduce accordingly.

In all the participating countries that have maintained the traditional IVET pathway of apprenticeship training²², or dual-training or 'alternance'²³ training the key economic actors play a major role in matters of governance and organization. They are major partners in all aspects of policy making and planning, including: legislative reform and strategic planning for the identification/forecasting of skills needs, standards and curriculum, quality development and assurance, learner assessment and validation and certification. They are also major players in the organization and delivery of IVET. There is a good deal of evidence that apprenticeship pathways that are of high quality

and tightly linked with the labour market are attractive for young people.

²⁰ Employers, employers' and employees' representatives, sector associations, chambers etc.

²¹ A model for education policy-making management (objective setting, implementation, monitoring), based on commitment and association of stakeholders at all levels (sectoral, local/regional, national or international). Governance aims to reinforce interaction between stakeholders and improve accountability, transparency, coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of policy. *Source*: Cedefop, working definition

²² Cedefop definition: Systematic, long-term training alternating periods in a school or training centre and at the workplace; the apprentice is contractually linked to the employer and receives remuneration. The employer assumes responsibility for providing the trainee with training leading to a specific occupation.

²³ Cedefop definition: Alternating periods in a school/training centre and the workplace on a weekly, monthly or yearly basis. Participants are not contractually linked to the employer where they do their training, nor do they generally receive remuneration

Institutional training²⁴ is the most common IVET pathway in most of the participating countries. There can be significant differences with regard to the extent of the involvement of key economic actors in institutional IVET pathways.

It appears that the more formal and extensive the work-based learning element in IVET and the higher the IVET qualification level the greater the role of the economic actors. The contrary holds in IVET pathways leading to lower level qualifications, particularly when social inclusion is the dominant goal.

Amongst the advantages of involving economic actors in the governance and organization of an IVET pathway are:

- Enhanced co-operation leads to more effective processes for IVET quality development, management and assurance;
- Heightened awareness amongst 'educators' of the needs of the labour market and the need to base IVET on occupational as well as educational standards;
- Greater understanding amongst economic actors of the need to incorporate broader educational goals in IVET provision for the purposes of holistic learner development and to facilitate their further education and training;
- Quicker transfer of information regarding changing work practices and/or technology;
- Increased awareness of educators of the benefits the learning outcomes approach in enabling learners to demonstrate what they know and can do, to employers;
- Access to the workplace to provide learners with on-the-job experience;
- Increased competitiveness of the IVET institution with regard to enrolments and participation rates;
- Better fit between IVET and the needs of enterprises results in more job offers for trainees.

²⁴ EU Labour Market Policy (LMP) database definition (Eurostat and Cedefop sources): Measures where most of the training time (75% or more) is spent in a training institution (school, college, training centre or similar)

IVET providers in the public sector tend to take account of the function of IVET for employability, further learning and social inclusion and tend to provide more broad-based holistic learning opportunities. Institutions often cater for mixed ability groups, which can affect the pace of group learning, and they often have to facilitate remedial learning. Employers tend to prioritise more strictly job-related training; when more closely linked with public providers, appreciation of the other functions of IVET increases and can lead to improved corporate responsibility. However, participants expressed some concern in relation to balancing equity and quality. Employers want high achieving students and those best prepared to take on the role and responsibilities aligned to related job offers.

Quality assurance measures in institutions that place additional demands on companies can be considered very time-consuming and overly-bureaucratic to employers or even conflict with those adopted by the firm/sector. Finally, developing and maintaining partnerships is resource intensive.

Findings

- 🌍 Countries are increasing the involvement of economic actors in IVET governance and organization. This is a pre-requisite for the relevance of IVET, arguably the most important factor in making IVET more attractive for learners.
- 🌍 When work-based learning is a significant element of an IVET pathway, as in apprenticeships, economic actors play major roles in IVET governance and organization.
- 🌍 Increasing the role of economic actors in IVET helps to improve the quality of IVET, but 'cultural' understandings of quality and quality assurance can differ.

CURRICULUM AND STANDARDS

Austria In 2005, the Ministry launched a project for the development of quality standards for core elements of IVET. Periodic revisions of curricula and contents are moderated by the Ministry of Education. Experts from stakeholders, specifically from the provider level, are involved in the development process.

Cyprus Revision of IVET curricula with the participation of consultants from industries

Denmark Curricula have been revised to make it easier to relate the general parts of the programmes to the vocational parts, thereby enabling the trainees to acquire knowledge about work tasks and processes in the chosen trades at an early stage of IVET.

Estonia National core curricula and standards are developed in partnership with social partners/industry. 43 national curricula, based on professional standards, have been approved to date (2009).

Finland Core curricula and the requirements of competence-based qualifications are developed in close cooperation with employers, employees, other economic actors, providers, teachers and students.

Germany Chambers, ministries and institutes for IVET define standards of knowledge, skills and competences. Social partners, and the Federal Ministry of Education and Science develop the training curricula and qualifications. Standardized exams based on core curricula are developed in partnership. There is a nationwide framework of defined competences for school only IVET.

Ireland Sector bodies are involved in standards and curriculum development.

- ✚ The role of the State in the governance and organization of IVET is important for matters related to equity and social inclusion and the positioning of IVET in the continuum of lifelong learning and ensuring conditions for access and progression.

3.5 The relevance of IVET for the labour market

In addition to increasing the involvement of economic actors in IVET decision-making, governance, organization, research and analyses and improving the efficiency of forecasting skills needs, there are other matters related to the labour market relevance of IVET that need to be taken into account and include:

- The reliability of the occupational standards underpinning IVET provision;
- The relevance of curriculum and contents in relation to sector needs;
- Teachers' knowledge of the needs of employers and their capacities, including the suitability of their pedagogical approaches, to prepare learners for the world of work in respective sectors (see also section 2.4);
- The suitability of the learning context for fostering employment related capacities;
- The reliability of qualifications in reflecting the true capacities of learners.

The relevance of standards, curriculum²⁵ and contents in relation to sector needs

The qualifications associated with different IVET pathways comprise different types, levels and combinations of knowledge, skills and competences²⁶. In the previous chapter the

CURRICULUM AND STANDARDS

Italy The national system of minimum occupational, training and certification standards is an ongoing process. This system registers and recognizes occupational standards. Regional Authorities develop training specifications on the basis of occupational skills needs

Malta IVET programmes are designed in consultation with economic actors. A new ESF-funded project Skills-Plus aims to research, design, publish and promote occupational standards.

Netherlands Assessment of student training needs is part of every curricular path in our competence based learning system, which will be fully implemented in 2010. In the NQF context, standardized national exams with national core curricula are being developed together with social partners/industry. Curricula, developed between school and industry, is encouraged.

Romania 21 sector committees are involved in the design and validation of vocational qualifications. Qualifications are developed in line with the results of the training needs analysis. Curricula are developed at local level through school and industry partnership.

Sweden The new upper secondary system (2011) requires that VET curricula be developed in partnership with industry. National VET programme councils will be created for all national IVET programmes.

²⁵ The inventory of activities implemented to design, organize and plan an education or training action, including the definition of learning objectives, content, methods (including assessment) and material, as well as arrangements for training teachers and trainers. Cedefop Glossary 2009

²⁶ EQF definitions: '**knowledge**' means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study. '**skills**' means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and

purposes and functions of different IVET pathways were discussed. The need to ensure that IVET graduates possess the key competences²⁷ for working life is considered a pre-requisite. Employers value these competences but for many sectors the development of technical skills is considered the primary function of IVET. The more sector-specific and occupationally orientated the programme and qualification the more likely the knowledge input will be based primarily on occupational standards and learning outcomes²⁸. IVET curricula and contents must be responsive to sector needs. Employment relevant curricula and contents contribute to the development of appropriate competences for targeted jobs/occupations.

It is sometimes the case that learners enter IVET pathways with under-developed basic skills. The organization and pace of learning has to accommodate these learners. This can challenge teacher competence and counteract the attractiveness of learning for high achievers. On the other hand, research findings presented by the German participant demonstrate the positive responsiveness of learners with these special needs to IVET methodologies.

The main ways of ensuring the occupational relevance of learner' knowledge, skills and competences in curricula planning in the participating countries can be clustered as follows:

- Involving economic actors closely in standards and curriculum development;
- Requiring IVET teachers and trainers to be specialised in the occupational area with up-to-date knowledge and have effective and up-to-date pedagogical methods and skills (see section 2.4);
- Integrating on-the-job learning into programmes and/or making provision for learning in high quality simulated work environments;
- Adopting methods that make learning outcomes visible for assessment.

On the job learning

solve problems. '**competence**' means the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development.

²⁷ The sum of skills (basic and new basic skills) needed to live in the contemporary knowledge society. The Recommendation (2006) on key competences for lifelong learning, sets out eight key competences: – communication in the mother tongue;– communication in foreign languages;– competences in maths, science and technology;– digital competence;– learning to learn;– interpersonal, intercultural and social competences, and civic competence;– entrepreneurship;– cultural expression. Cedefop Glossary 2009

²⁸ EQF definition: '**learning outcomes**' means statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

Learning on the job is at the core of apprenticeship training and plays an important role in other forms of dual or *alternance* training. In both Austria and Germany approximately two thirds of any yearly age group will qualify in work-based learning.

Across all participating countries the trend is to introduce, or extend the duration of, work placements in all IVET pathways to increase relevance and make IVET more attractive for learners. The quality of work-based learning is also being addressed.

Integrating work-based learning into IVET requires close co-operation between schools and enterprises. Vocational teachers improve their knowledge and awareness of sector development and changing work practices, in some countries teachers are also placed in enterprises to renew and update skills. Employers can observe the outcomes of school-based learning, as students apply them in the job context.

In cases where work experience in enterprises and other work places are difficult to organise, schools have organised the context of learning to simulate the work place as closely as possible, often in close co-operation with partners from industry. It is not uncommon to see in IVET schools, for example; building sites with state-of-the-art machinery, functioning restaurants and equipped offices where students engage in running mini-businesses.

Findings

- ✚ Ensuring the relevance of IVET for the labour market requires effective education-industry partnerships at many levels. These partnerships require quality management and the results of partnerships need to be quality assured.

Skills demonstrations in Finland

The objectives of skills demonstrations are to; improve the quality of student assessment, bring the world of work and the education institutions closer to each other, ensure that the learning fulfils the objectives set and is relevant to the needs of the labour market, involve the employers and employees in the student assessment process and give feedback on learning outcomes and learning arrangements which can be used as a basis for developing instruction.

Regulated by law, students are provided with individual study plans which outline what, when, how they study and the assessment of studies.

Skills demonstrations and the positive effects of them are a part of the marketing of IVET.

A 2004 study confirms that skills demonstrations have several positive effects on VET quality, they: help to ensure the students' learning and competence level, increase the attainments regarding the needs of the labour market, develop training and teaching, have positive effects on the students' motivation and aptitude to learn and increase the value and estimation of VET.

If the quality of VET is improved, VET is more likely to be seen as attractive.

- ✚ Curricula and contents based on an appropriate combination of occupational standards, validated by competent economic actors, and educational standards increase the relevance of IVET and employer confidence in qualifications.
- ✚ Acquiring competences on the job or in an effective simulated workplace is attractive for learners.
- ✚ The opportunity to demonstrate acquired knowledge and know-how to stakeholders (e.g. 'on-the-job' and skills demonstrations), in the context of assessment for certification is attractive for learners.

3.6 IVET qualifications

Throughout the EU, qualifications and qualifications systems and frameworks are at the forefront of education and training policy agendas. Qualifications systems are being reformed to support lifelong learning by taking account of the need to value all learning and to open pathways for progression.

With regard to assessment and certification, the themes of related policy debates include: the meaning, purposes and value of qualifications; the different kinds of learning that need to be assessed; different approaches for recognising and validating learning; appropriate methodologies for learner assessment; how qualifications processes are managed and how qualifications systems and frameworks can support lifelong learning.

Of primary importance is the need to ensure that IVET qualifications truly reflect the capacities of learners and guarantee the relevance of their knowledge, skills and competences for the target occupations and employment in general. Additionally, the phasing out of so called 'dead end' qualifications is considered a priority in the interest of encouraging further learning for advanced qualifications.

Employer confidence in qualifications and the status they accord them is directly related to the status of the learner whilst in IVET and on entry into employment.

In the context of progression, the status of the IVET pathway qualification is also dependent on how it is viewed by further and higher education institutions, which also affects the status of the learners. It is important to keep economic and further/higher education stakeholders involved and informed, as new or modernised IVET programmes and qualifications come on stream.

National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)

An important development of the past decade is the proliferation of qualifications frameworks, established and in planning, and associated arrangements for the recognition of prior learning and credit systems. Participants consider that the development of qualifications frameworks serves as a catalyst for modernising IVET, improving its quality and flexibility, integrating IVET in the continuum of lifelong learning and facilitating progression pathways, which contribute towards improving the quality of IVET and making it more attractive for learners.

Consultation and negotiation processes aligned to the development of an NQF compel stakeholders to be reflective and analytical about their traditions and practices as well as those of other stakeholders. It is in this area that stakeholder involvement in a 'culture of quality improvement' may be observed to function most overtly.

Learning outcomes approach

New developments for the establishment and implementation of NQFs reflect a shift to an outcomes-based approach to learning and assessment.

Demonstrating what one knows, understands and can do has a long tradition in certain IVET pathways, and the sector as a whole is moving in this direction. This approach is considered to result in more reliable evidence of learner competence, which in turn makes the relevance of the learners' qualifications more transparent for employers.

QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS

Austria- An over-arching 8-level NQF, based on learning outcomes, is planned for 2010.

Cyprus- The NQF is expected to be designed by the end of 2010.

Denmark- The 8-level NQF, based on learning outcomes, was finalised in 2008. Over 2009 each VET qualification will be included at levels 3 to 5.

Estonia- There will be a transfer (2009-2013) from the 5-level system to an 8-level lifelong learning NQF.

Professional standards and the principles of qualifying in professions will be reviewed.

Finland- The NQF, based on learning outcomes provided by qualifications, degrees and other prior learning will be prepared by 2010. A proposal for EQF implementation and an over-arching 8-level NQF was presented in June 2009.

Germany- has presented a proposal for an 8-level NQF (DQR) for lifelong learning (11.03.09).

Ireland- The 10-level NFQ (2003) includes all qualifications awarded. The NFQ was referenced to the Bologna framework in 2006 and is currently verifying its compatibility with the EQF.

Italy- A national committee (Tavolo Unico Nazionale) was set up to define and implement an NQF for Italy that will aim to incorporate all qualifications.

Lithuania- VET legislation (2007) made provision for the 8-level NQF, which will be part of the national qualifications system that will be finalised in 2012.

Malta- 8-level NQF, based on learning outcomes, launched in 2007. The referencing to the EQF and QF/EHEA will be completed in Autumn 2009.

Netherlands- A steering committee was set up to consider a NQF.

Romania- The National Adult Training Board is the National Qualifications Authority. It will develop a single system of qualifications. The over-arching NQF will build on the NQF for Higher Education and the NQF for VET.

Slovenia- Legislation for the classification of education and training (2006) is the first step towards the establishment of an NQF.

Sweden- National Commission on Validation (2004-2007). Decision to develop the NQF (2008). Programme Councils for standards and curricula (2011).

The assessment of outcomes based learning can be challenging and several countries refer to the need for models of effective processes and procedures, particularly in the context of qualifications frameworks' developments.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Participating countries report an increase in activity in this area but RPL in the IVET context appears to be at a very early stage of development in most countries.

In 2007 Denmark introduced a framework for RPL and all trainees have their prior learning assessed before a personal education plan is drawn up. In Ireland, IVET provider institutions are required to make provision for RPL in the context of the accreditation process. Italy has introduced a competence portfolio and other countries are piloting similar documents for recording non-formal and informal learning such as the 'Profil-Pass' in Germany.

As RPL is quite under-developed there is as yet little evidence that it contributes to making IVET more attractive and the issues inhibiting development are many, including;

developing methods (in particular, for the recognition of non-formal and informal prior learning and building trust in the recognition of the latter), training assessors and developing processes to assist learners to record all learning experiences. The issue of resources for this costly development is considered to be an inhibitive factor.

Credits for learning and credit transfer

Modularisation, and other approaches to increase the flexibility of IVET, opens up possibilities for gaining credit for smaller units of learning. This allows for more individualised learning, facilitates RPL and the possibility to work towards a qualification step-by-step. When qualifications systems are also flexible, learners can transfer their credits to other qualification pathways: this is

In Austria, Examination Boards conduct all examinations, based on the curricula, and deliver the final certificates. The examinations include: written assignments, which amount to 40 hours and the defence and judgement of the optional diploma thesis and an oral examination in front of the Board.

In Cyprus, the assessment of VET training is based on the results of the final exams. The Danish system is competence-based and flexible. All trainees have their prior learning assessed before a personal education plan is drawn up. Individualised learning pathways are drawn up by the trainees, who shape the pace and the content of their own training. Trainees can take one step of a vocational qualification at a time.

In Estonia a VET graduate must cover the full curriculum, take all necessary tests and pass all required assessments, practical training and the final examination. The final examination may be replaced by professional qualification examination.

In Finland skills demonstrations are the primary method for assessing learning outcomes in IVET. Assessment criteria are set in national core curricula. Providers design their own curricula, following national core curricula, that include assessment plans and methods, which have to be approved by the local board for skills demonstrations.

In Germany, the assessment of VET training is based on the results of final exams. Both self assessments of learning outcomes as well as assessments by the inspectorate are implemented.

In the Netherlands, both self assessments of learning outcomes (the help of an external, objective expert is obligatory) and external assessments by the inspectorate are implemented.

In Romania, since 2007, certification examinations and results have been monitored to ensure their relevance and objectivity in relation to the actual level of acquirement of learning outcomes by the learners.

considered to reduce drop-out and provide incentive for further learning. Valuing learning in this way and facilitating access to alternative learning opportunities, when initial choices were misguided, are considered to make learning more attractive.

In the context of 'whole' qualifications, credit systems are considered useful for mobility within education and training systems and for geographical mobility, both intra (important for large regionalized countries) and inter-nationally, for valuing the learning acquired in the context of trans-national IVET training and work placements. The processes for the latter are expected to be enhanced in the context of developments related to the implementation of ECVET²⁹.

Opening pathways for progression

Opening options for progression in the structuring of IVET pathways is becoming more common. In Austria, Cyprus, Denmark and Sweden there are new opportunities for dual qualifications for IVET learners, which allow them to access additional, continuing and advanced VET or further and higher education. In Ireland, Romania and Slovenia parallel pathways exist in upper second-level education, one of which being vocationally orientated: in both cases success in terminal exams facilitates access to higher education as well as VET. In Finland all IVET qualifications provide general eligibility for further studies in higher education and CVET. In Malta progression opportunities between IVET and higher education in some sectors are facilitated, such as; electrical and electronics engineering. In Estonia modularisation enables students to acquire a partial qualification and graduates can take additional subjects and take state examinations for progression to higher education.

Assessment and certification³⁰

Awarding certificates based on the outcomes of the traditional 'final exam' at the end of IVET programmes is still the most common form of validation³¹. However, final exams do not have to follow programmes of formal learning, for example, in Austria applicants may present for IVET exams on the basis of recognised professional experience gained through non-formal and informal learning. Processes and procedures for assessing learning for certification purposes are slowly becoming more diversified to take account of RPL and outcomes-based

²⁹ Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET). April 17, 2009

³⁰ Certification: An official document, issued by an awarding body, which records the achievements of an individual following an assessment and validation against a predefined standard Cedefop Glossary, 2009.

³¹ Validation of learning outcomes: Confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, non-formal or informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with the requirements of a validation standard. Validation typically leads to certification. Cedefop Glossary, 2009.

learning approaches. Offering alternative validation processes leading to certification are considered to be attractive for learners.

Findings

- ✚ Maintaining the coherence, relevance and reliability of IVET qualifications is considered of paramount importance.
- ✚ Implementing policies and practices, which aim to ensure that IVET entrants have appropriate levels of basic skills and effective guidance to ensure they have the motivation, talents and capacities for the learning choice is important in relation to completion rates.
- ✚ Making the learning experience attractive and relevant for learners is important in relation to completion rates and the attainment of a full qualification.
- ✚ Measures that facilitate progression to further learning pathways such as NQFs, RPL and credit systems 'make IVET more attractive'.
- ✚ NQF development and implementation processes serve as a catalyst to modernise IVET: related processes usually demonstrate 'stakeholders' involvement in a culture of quality improvement'.

3.7 Quality management of IVET

The quality of the IVET system is dependent on numerous and inter-linking 'satellites' of competent stakeholders, each operating within 'a culture' of quality development. Quality management within these 'satellites' for; policy development, strategic planning, curricula and content development, teacher education, learner guidance and learning provision, validation and certification of learning etc. can take different forms for different purposes. A key issue is to ensure the transparency of the quality management processes and practices in operation.

Provider Institutions

In Ireland, All providers offering programmes leading to FETAC awards (levels 1 – 6 on the NFQ) have established procedures for quality assurance which will maintain and improve the quality of those programmes.
Process: To access national qualifications on the NFQ, providers must first agree their quality assurance procedures with the awarding body, (FETAC). They must also agree a process for self-evaluation and monitoring of these procedures.
Procedures: The procedures relate to nine key areas that the awarding body has identified as being critical to ensure the quality of programmes and services to learners.
Monitoring: The provider is required to implement a process for its own self-evaluation and monitoring. The external awarding body also 'externally' monitors the provider.

The thematic group discussion focused on IVET provider institutions, their accreditation³² and inspection, and quality development and assurance within them. The dual location of much of IVET, companies and schools, sets it apart from other education and training sectors. Training companies can adopt different approaches to quality management and assurance: approaches can be formal or informal and this usually depends on the sector and size. Companies tend to reference training to all-company quality management, most often related to the international organization for standardization (ISO) management standards. For schools, sector and size also has a bearing on quality management. Large schools and those catering for certain sectors often make use of ISO management standards. In countries where IVET schools are under the responsibility of Education ministries, quality management for the entire education system can apply. The latter can differ from company approaches and practice and achieving synergy and complementarity between the two models is challenging!

Reform in quality management and assurance policies and practices within the IVET school sector in participating countries demonstrate the influence of the models, methods and tools presented in the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF).

This is a good example of how EU reference frameworks can speed up the change process. As the EQARF is based on good EU practice, countries can relate to the inherent

principles, processes and tools and rely on a certain level of common understanding of concepts. In discussions, participants made use of common terms as defined in the EQARF to describe approaches, methods and

tools and found a good deal of commonality in arrangements across the participating countries.

Italy: Self assessment

In 2004, ISFOL produced the Italian Guide for self assessment, based on the EU model. The aim of the guide is to assist VET providers to improve the quality management of their training provision and thus its attractiveness. The dissemination of the self assessment methodology in Italy was linked to three main goals:

- Integration, currently Italy has a two tier VET system: the national school-based VET system and the regional training system;
- The introduction of a model that responds to the need to continuously improve the VET system (better than ISO certification and accreditation) through the development of a culture for continuous improvement;
- The promotion of self assessment is a tool for enhancing the quality and relevance of VET and its visibility and status.

Although the full impact of self-assessment will take some time to be evaluated, already there is evidence that: the network of providers applying the model learn from each other and are developing a common systematic approach; the application of self assessment by both schools and vocational training centres is increasing and providers recognise the influence of the methodology on improved and more attractive training offers.

³² A process of quality assurance through which accredited status is granted to an education or training provider, showing it has been approved by the relevant legislative or professional authorities by having met predetermined standards. **Source:** adapted from Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials. Cedefop Glossary 2009

Processes to confer accredited status on a provider institution can differ according to provider type (school, company). Within the vocational education system in Germany³³ a framework for quality assurance has been implemented in recent years. Institutions for teacher training as well as schools are evaluated by the Institute of Quality Assurance. School inspection is another part of assuring quality. Providers of training programmes for the Employment Agency must be accredited.

In Finland, the Ministry of Education grants an authorisation to institutions to provide vocational education. This defines, for instance, the fields of study taught and the total number of students. In Ireland, in order for institutions to offer programmes leading to awards, their quality assurance processes and procedures must be validated by the Awards Council.

In Italy, a decree (2001) of the Ministry of Labour defined an accreditation system for the regional training system to assure the quality of training offers and the accountability of training providers. Compulsory minimum requirements are inspired by the ISO quality-standards, but regional governments have introduced other indicators that better respond to the specific needs of their training systems. Training providers have to apply for the accreditation of each type of training field they intend to offer.

The regional and autonomous provincial authorities assess, using external assessors, whether a training provider meets the necessary accreditation requirements.

In the Netherlands, there is a special quality assurance pillar in the implementation of the competence based learning system, which is the most significant innovation in

SELECTED QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ASSURANCE DEVELOPMENTS

Austria

A Quality System, based on Deming's philosophy, was developed and introduced in 2004 and is mandatory for all upper secondary VET-institutions. A web-based platform and "Quality-Process-Managers" at each provider institution, support the quality development process.

Denmark

Quality rules are built on the CQAF model including the processes. Six selected indicators are used. The latest reform of the regulations for quality was introduced in 2007

Estonia

The aim is to promote the culture of self-evaluation and quality management through the use of the Estonian VET Excellence Model. Internal evaluation was made obligatory for VET schools in 2006. Legislative drafting for accreditation is underway.

Finland

In 2008, The Ministry of Education adopted the VET quality management recommendation. The FNBE is developing, with VET providers and other stakeholder groups, different tools and mechanisms to promote its implementation.

Germany

Soon all IVET schools will implement quality assurance tools for internal evaluation.

Italy

In 2000, the National Institute for the evaluation of the school-based system was established. Since 2003, permanent monitoring and evaluation by testing learning assessment has been applied.

Malta

MQC and the National Commission for Higher Education shall be responsible for the quality assurance of Further and Higher Education.

Netherlands

There is a national quality assurance network for VET providers.

³³ Germany's contributions are applicable in Hessen, the information may differ slightly from Land to Land.

VET this decade. There are inspection criteria rather than accreditation criteria but inspection and accreditation are moving towards each other.

In Sweden, until October 1, 2008, upper secondary IVET providers were accredited by the National Agency for Education. As of October 1, the new Agency for School Inspection is responsible for the accreditation of VET providers as well as inspection, which will be doubled compared with previous levels. The Agency for School Inspection will receive increased resources to improve the quality of Swedish IVET schools.

Quality management and quality assurance

Quality management and quality assurance processes and procedures in IVET schools appear to be becoming more formal. Processes and procedures for self-assessment and external evaluation exist or are being introduced. In many countries intermediary agencies have been given responsibility for developing and monitoring quality management systems and many use the common quality assurance framework (CQAF) as a model.

In Romania, the law on quality assurance (2006) established the legal institutional framework for developing and implementing quality assurance mechanisms. The National Centre for TVET developed the National Quality Assurance Framework, based on the (CQAF). The quality assurance instruments – the Self-Assessment Manual and the Inspection Manual – are being used by all VET providers, since 2006.

The Finnish National Board of Education is developing new methods to assure the quality of work-based training and has started a quality project for transfer of good practices of work-based learning, and its quality assurance, in the context of the CQAF, together with four other European countries.

Findings

- 🚩 In some countries the CQAF is informing national policy developments in the public education and training sector.
- 🚩 Quality management and assurance processes and procedures can differ between schools and between companies and between co-operating schools and companies. It is important that the different practices are transparent and complementary.
- 🚩 The CQAF model is gaining ground in IVET schools. Whether IVET training companies are aware of the framework requires further investigation.
- 🚩 Inspection or accreditation processes help to:

- Place pressure on IVET institutions that are under-performing to make qualitative improvements;
 - Reinforce quality management processes and procedures in provider institutions;
 - Focus the spotlight on the quality of teaching and can act as a driving force for upgrading teacher/trainer qualifications.
- ✚ Whilst quality management is crucial for improving the relevance and attractiveness of IVET, the importance of quality management is implicit rather than explicit for learners.
- ✚ More transparent quality management processes, ideally with the direct involvement of learners, could make the QM more visible and thereby improve the attractiveness of IVET for them.

3.8 The qualifications of IVET learning facilitators

Policies, planning, partnerships, provider institutions and provision all have key roles in improving the attractiveness of IVET but arguably the pedagogical professionals play the most important role of all. IVET reform is heavily reliant on the capacities of vocational teachers and trainers to adapt and implement change: this requires huge effort on their part and wide-ranging measures to support them in the process.

IVET pedagogical professionals tend to be classified as either vocational teachers (schools) or vocational trainers or instructors (enterprises or training centres). Their competences, and the roles they play in IVET provision depends on the IVET typology. The reform of teacher education is changing the profile of new entrants

QUALIFICATIONS OF IVET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

Austria

In the future, it will be obligatory for VET teachers to have at least a Bachelor degree. Teachers need to have at least a Master's degree to teach in upper secondary VET-institutions.

Cyprus

A University Degree or Certificate of Tertiary Education is obligatory to teach in Public Schools. In addition, before appointment graduates must attend pedagogical seminars for one academic year. To improve the quality of teaching some educators work in industry one day per week for a year. There is a huge national effort to train all educators in the use of ICTs.

Denmark

A new teacher training programme has been developed. The new programme is placed at diploma level (ISCED 5a). Teachers' technical and pedagogical competences are to be brought up to date to match the new challenges.

Estonia

Teachers' qualifications are guaranteed by law in Estonia. The National Examination and Qualification Centre is responsible for the quality and development of the teachers' training system. Improving the quality of teacher training is a key objective of the *2008-2013 Programme*.

Finland

The qualifications required of VET teachers comprise an appropriate polytechnic or university degree in the subject; three years work experience, together with pedagogical studies. The Ministry of Education will evaluate and reform the qualification requirements of vocational teachers in 2009.

Netherlands

The quality of teacher training is required by law. Providers are responsible for the recruitment of qualified teachers and their on-going

and countries report some improvement with regard to the continuing professional development of serving staff. In general, the priority given to the latter is considered to low.

In many participating countries pedagogical professionals in IVET schools are ageing, have a lower status than peers in other education and training sectors, can be paid less and have often had fewer opportunities for professional development.

Vocational teachers

A Bachelor Degree, or equivalent, in education or other disciplines together with a post-graduate pedagogical diploma, is the minimum qualification for newly appointed teachers in IVET schools. In some countries IVET teachers have qualifications at Master's level, obligatory in Germany.

Vocational teachers are required to have specialised knowledge. Updating teacher knowledge of the sector, related skills and awareness of change in enterprises and other places of work is integral to many developments to improve the continuing professional development of vocational teachers. The trend to gain on-the-job training experience prior to recruitment is increasing.

In Finland, changes in IVET to ensure a closer partnership with the world of work have strengthened the vision that IVET teacher education should be kept separate from general education. The ideology is that the specificities of the IVET teacher profession justify the consecutive training and strong vocational focus it has today.

Vocational instructors

Germany

A Master's level University degree is obligatory to teach in vocational schools. In addition, teachers must attend a two-year pedagogical training: part time teaching in schools and part-time attending seminars. At the end of the training, there is a State examination. Teachers must improve their qualifications every year through further training in accredited institutes and show this in a personal portfolio. Work-based instructors must pass a test with more than 1000 hours of training. They are also continually supervised by the Chambers.

Italy

A University degree is obligatory for VET teachers in the education system.

Malta

Public education institutions are legally bound to employ teachers with a University degree, often in education studies thus incorporating teaching practice. A degree in another field requires a one-year teaching practice course.

Romania

In the pre-university system, all teachers have to achieve 90 credits in a 5 year period of time, through in-service training. In recent years, the number of teachers following master courses at Universities has increased.

Sweden

A national commission reported on a new series of teacher qualifications in 2008. A separate commission has the specific task to investigate and make recommendations regarding VET teachers. New "train the trainer" initiatives are also being introduced to ensure trainers in the workplace have the skills required.

Vocational trainers or instructors who facilitate work-based learning in IVET pathways with periods of on-the-job training on-the-job training, tend to have considerable, and up-to-date, experience of the occupational sector and its needs. Their role is to relate learners' knowledge and skills sets to real job requirements, including expected standards, and to facilitate learners' further development.

The qualifications of vocational instructors are not as homogeneous as those of vocational teachers. Sector qualifications and work experience in the sector may be sufficient to 'qualify' a trainer to train IVET learners on-the-job. Increasingly, work-based trainers are gaining complementary pedagogical qualifications. In Germany training companies must have at least one trainer with a 'Meister' qualification, which includes a VET training module, or with trainer aptitude qualifications.

Continuing training

The continuing professional development of existing staff is a matter of concern in most countries. Reform in some countries requires the vocational teacher to acquire (or update):

- New pedagogical skills e.g. related to the learner-centred approach, outcomes-based learning, work-based learning, the use of ICTs and learner assessment know-how;
- Vocational/occupational skills and knowledge in response to changing work practice;
- Quality assurance skills and competences;
- A wide range of competences related to management, organization, team-working, liaison, networking etc.

These expectations often also apply to vocational instructors.

It is expected that the quality of vocational education and training and especially the quality of work-based learning will be improved by allocating financing to the development of the working-life skills of vocational teachers and to the training of workplace instructors. However, in the participating countries the continuing professional development of IVET teachers and trainers is rarely obligatory. Many countries report that this area is being

Quality process managers supporting a culture of quality improvement in Austrian schools

In 2004, the QIBB (Quality in VET) system was launched and Quality process managers (QPMs) were appointed in all upper secondary VET-schools.

The QPMs support the school Principal, who has overall responsibility for quality, in managing the continuous improvement process. The web-based QIBB infrastructure is maintained by all the QPMs. The weekly workload paid for that service is eight hours per one thousand students.

In each of the nine Austrian provinces there is one QPM to support the province-authority. She or he organizes province-meetings for all QPMs and represents the province in federal-meetings. This structure guarantees a top-down and bottom-up transparency and development of quality.

addressed in the context of the Structural Fund period 2007–2013. Some countries have already developed new policies in this area and it is an issue under debate in the context of provider accreditation and other quality processes. For example, in Romania, teachers' professional development schemes are in place and developed in correlation with the quality circle. Usually, providers develop a Human Resources Development Plan, as part of the School Action Plan activities established are implemented and evaluated and the feedback obtained is used for the new HRD Plan. In Malta the continuous professional development of VET teachers is linked to MCAST's Collective Agreement and career progression and salary. Many of the participating countries are implementing measures to encourage vocational teachers to gain on-the-job work experience.

Findings

- ✚ Vocational teachers and instructors play pivotal roles in ensuring the quality and relevance of IVET. Insufficiently qualified professionals, lacking up-to-date skills, knowledge and experience of work in the sectors for which they are preparing learners or lacking appropriate pedagogical competences, will have a negative effect on the quality and relevance of IVET and its attractiveness for learners.
- ✚ The qualifications of vocational teachers and instructors need to be up-graded and more relevant: this is an issue for initial and continuing vocational education and training provision.
- ✚ IVET pedagogical professionals must have a suitable combination of occupational and pedagogical knowledge and know-how to effectively perform the exigencies of their roles and responsibilities.
- ✚ The roles and responsibilities of school-based and work based teaching staff may differ but in a dual-based system they must be complementary and support structures must be in place to facilitate synergy between both.
- ✚ The experience of vocational instructors must be valued. The role of RPL in providing them with alternative routes to pedagogical qualifications should be fully exploited.
- ✚ Engaging vocational teachers and trainers in '*a culture of quality improvement and accountability*' requires strong managerial leadership. Teachers tend to be detached and used to working independently.
- ✚ As role models it is important for students to observe their teachers and instructors engaging in lifelong learning
- ✚ Parity of esteem for vocational teachers and trainers with their counterparts in general and higher education is a pre-requisite for parity of esteem for IVET.
- ✚ Full account of the training needs (including resources) of teaching staff must be factored into planning for IVET reform.

3.9 Career guidance³⁴ and information

Career guidance

Over the past decade measures to enhance career guidance provision have been introduced in the participating countries to support lifelong learning. As learning opportunities become more numerous and diverse and qualifications systems more flexible the more learners need quality information and advice to guide them in making choices.

Possibly the most significant development in career guidance is the use being made of the internet. Without doubt, the internet with its access to innumerable websites and communication facilities has vastly increased the amount of accessible information. The internet offers citizens opportunities for self-help, more convenient and quicker access to guidance experts for targeted information and advice and it acts as an invaluable data resource to improve the services of the latter.

The quality of advisory services is being addressed through improving the professional qualifications and continuing education of guidance specialists, improving cross-sectoral co-operation, establishing support structures (agencies, associations, networks, fora, etc.), introducing quality assurance and improving resources.

COUNSELLING OFFENSIVE IN THE SKILLS CRAFTS SECTOR

The Confederation of German Trade Unions, in co-operation with the University of Cologne and the German Confederation of Skilled Crafts recently launched this project to develop and trial in-service training for guidance specialists and educators in the sector, particularly in small and medium sized enterprises.

The aim is to achieve a qualitative improvement in counselling services for apprentices and workers to encourage them to avail of further vocational training and other learning pathways.

In IVET, guidance provision relates to the dual nature of provision: for school-based IVET, guidance specialists tend to be educationalists and/or psychologists concerned for the psychological development of learners and the advice they need with regard to further learning, this service can be complemented with career advice provided by employment

³⁴Definition: Guidance refers to a range of activities that enables citizens of any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competences are learned and/or used. *Draft Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Member States meeting within the Council on Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the field of Guidance throughout life in Europe 18 May 2004*

agencies, whereas the latter often play a more prominent role in apprenticeship and *alternance* training.

With regard to the role of career guidance in making IVET more attractive, issues of concern include:

- The availability and quality of guidance offered to young people regarding the choice of IVET as a learning pathway;
- Maintaining the relevance of guidance provision with particular reference to learner employability;
- The capacities of career guidance services to cater for very diverse learners in IVET (including non-nationals), with regard to future employment and further learning options;
- Ensuring that guidance maintains a balance between encouraging learners' aspirations and the reality of possible employment options available.

GUIDANCE

In **Malta**, the guidance and counselling unit uses computerized exercises that help the students with career choices given their choice of subjects, personal qualities and preferences.

On line commercial self assessment tools offer guidance to VET career paths in the **Netherlands**.

In **Romania**, quality criteria have been developed and applied to evaluate the results of information, guidance and counselling services.

In **Sweden**, there are online tools to support career guidance.

CAREER GUIDANCE AND TOOLS

In **Austria**, the Ministry of Education publishes guidance materials for lower secondary schools.

In **Denmark**, among the initiatives to have a positive impact on reducing the drop-out rate are: initial interviews with the trainees, clarifying their competences; the provision of social and psychological guidance; teaching, mentoring and other kinds of support from adults. Mentorship is particularly efficient, in relation to ethnic minorities that have the highest drop-out rate.

In **Finland** a pilot scheme of preparatory instruction and guidance for IVET was launched in 2006. It aims to reduce 'drop-out'. It is directed especially at young people who do not have a clear picture of their choice of occupation or are not sufficiently prepared to apply for VET courses.

In **Estonia**, Legislation was introduced (2000) and guidelines for guidance in education. The way forward is to implement systematic career education at all levels of education and the further development of high quality web-based guidance tools www.rajaleidja.ee/index.php and other resources.

In **Germany**, through co-operation between chambers, employment agencies, schools and vocational schools students in secondary schools are informed about VET and associated careers. A national forum for guidance in education, career and employment has recently been established.

In **Ireland**, career guidance is an entitlement (1998). Guidance forms part of the curricula in the IVET pathways in schools and careers services are offered to students in post upper second-level IVET institutions. The National Centre for Guidance in Education supports the sector. The State Training and Employment Authority, provides careers advisory services

Career information

The provision of interesting information on IVET pathways and programmes, making best use of media, plays an important role in attracting young people. The quality and accessibility of information is a vital resource for career guidance specialists when counselling learners on career options and pathways. Companies make use of this information in advertisements to attract future employees into training.

The reliability of the information used to promote IVET is an important issue. Young people are highly sensitive to targeted, attractive branding and aggressive marketing strategies but may not be sufficiently discerning with regard to the quality of the 'product'. In this regard, the need for measures to assure the quality of information and quality guidance for young people is an issue for quality management.

Career information is mostly made available on websites with links to data-bases of IVET programmes and providers. Advisory services can be built-in, for example with free-phone facilities to access assistance and guidance or self-assessment tools. The involvement of guidance specialists in the development and use of these tools is considered important to ensure quality.

3.10 Improving the status and image of IVET qualifications

The status of IVET qualifications is objectively attained, based on whether and how they lead to sustainable employment and/or are embedded in an integrated system that supports lifelong learning.

To merit high status the quality and relevance of IVET qualifications have to be assured and the benefits measurable in terms of high employability success. Furthermore, the

QUALITY INFORMATION: SELECTED EXAMPLES

All institutions in **Denmark** are obliged to publish information about the courses they provide on their website.

Estonia has an integrated publicity programme (including: the Skills Competition system, communications and PR training for school managers and a VET catalogue on VET learning opportunities). An Internet based service (SAIS) facilitates electronic application for places in one third of all VET institutions. It is administered by the National Examination and Qualification Centre, https://www.sais.ee/index_en.html

In **Ireland**, In 2008 QUALIFAX, learners' database providing information and guidance on further and higher education was incorporated into the website of the National Qualifications Authority.

Most secondary schools in **Italy** conduct advertising campaigns and guidance to VET paths, to present their services and their offers and to attract a larger number of students.

In **Malta**, the MQC is working on a project to make VET more visible (conferences, seminars and a guidance tool etc). Annual careers conventions are organized by the University Students Council and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport with the support of around twenty companies from industry. There is also a television programme on careers, with a website: www.karrieri.com

occupations, to which IVET learners aspire, need to be valued both by the economy and by society as a whole. The image of IVET pathways and qualifications is linked to the status they enjoy.

Image is subjective and depends on perception. Participants considered that much needed to be done to portray IVET pathways and qualifications in a different and more attractive way. Learners often perceive IVET through the eyes of their parents and older generations and the image IVET had in times past. New technologies have considerably altered the nature of many of the traditional occupations accessed through IVET qualifications. Moreover, many new occupations that are attractive for young people can be accessed through IVET pathways, in fields such as; media, sports, leisure, fashion, ICTs and green energy. Working contexts, work practices and remuneration patterns have also been transformed. In spite of this, image appears slow to change.

The image of IVET can be improved through information that is presented in an attractive way. Making good use of the internet and involving employers and young people in web-page design and content development can contribute to improved accessibility of information on IVET. Learners currently following an IVET programme and graduates with attractive profiles ('role models') are considered to be effective resources for demonstrating a positive image of IVET. Skills-demonstrations and skills competitions at local, national EU and world-levels

are achieving high levels of success in making IVET more attractive. Awards for IVET learners, teachers and institutions are highly motivating, raise the profile and enhance the image of the sector, see appendix three.

ENHANCING THE IMAGE OF IVET

Based on a high level of satisfaction the Federation of **Austrian** Industries invest a lot in different advertisement campaigns to make VET even more attractive.

<http://www.qibb.at/>

Open Days in **Cyprus** offer young people and their parents the opportunity to visit IVET schools get information and become familiar with different specializations.

In **Denmark** there have been a lot of campaigns in all kinds of media to attract more students to IVET. Right now there is a campaign for more apprenticeships. The Ministry of Education, the industries and the schools organize the campaigns in partnership. In recent years, investments have been made in projects aimed at supporting increased attention on young people with special backgrounds or talents. A national talent centre is under construction.

The **Finnish** Ministry of Education is preparing the attractiveness strategy for VET together with an advisory committee it set up in 2002. The Ministry publishes a magazine on VET twice a year for comprehensive school leavers and yearly for comprehensive school teachers, VET teachers and industry. National skills competitions (Taitaja-kilpailut) are organized annually, as are Taitaja9- competitions for comprehensive school leavers.

In the **Netherlands**, MBO Marshals (famous and less famous people) promote the importance and attractiveness of VET.

Young people are attracted to IVET pathways that are closely linked to the world of work. Companies can improve the image of these pathways by sponsoring advertising campaigns and promotional events. The age of enrolment in IVET has risen in most countries in the last decade and entrants often have higher general education levels than heretofore. Such entrants are more discerning and selective about learning environments and likely to expect IVET institutions and conditions to compare favourably with those at tertiary level that attract their peers, including grants³⁵. The image of an IVET pathway can be enhanced by the attractiveness of the learning context: Well-designed and well equipped buildings, state of the art technology, ICT facilities, library, shower facilities etc. with extracurricular facilities for students; sportsgrounds, café/dining rooms, leisure rooms (for societies etc) in pleasant surroundings facilitate affective learning environments³⁶.

Trans-national training and work experience opportunities can also improve the image of IVET. All the participating countries make good use of Leonardo da Vinci mobility opportunities and some countries fund their own schemes.

Findings

- ✚ Learners opt for IVET pathways on the basis of available information and guidance sources: reliability and excellence is imperative so that learners can make well-informed choices.
- ✚ Learners access information from different sources; 'hear-say', peers, family, neighbours in occupations related to an IVET qualification, from provider institutions through publicity material and open days and increasingly from internet web-sites, etc. Learners need guidance to help them match the information with their aspirations, talents and capacities.
- ✚ The image and status of IVET and associated occupations attract learners. The quality and relevance of IVET are the critical factors in enhancing the image and status of IVET but they need to be much more visible for learners.

³⁵ In Estonia, for example, the payment of study allowances to vocational students is regulated with the *Study Allowances and Study Loans Act*. Study allowance consists of a basic allowance and a supplementary allowance. Students who are studying full-time (state-commissioned education) can apply for a basic allowance. Supplementary allowance is meant for students acquiring vocational education based on secondary education whose place of residence is not under the same local government as the school. Transport allowance is also paid to students acquiring vocational education based on basic education to compensate the cost of travelling between school and home.

³⁶ In Eastern European countries, the up-grading of VET institutions was undertaken in post Soviet times and making the physical environments more attractive is a continuing goal. For example, in Estonia a new wave of developments (new and renovated/re-designed buildings, accommodation, restaurants and state-of-the-art equipment) will be carried out between now and 2013 with ERDF support.

- ✚ The status of IVET can be enhanced by society placing higher esteem on the related occupations.
- ✚ The image of IVET can be improved by offering attractive learning environments for learners, involving companies in promotion strategies and publicly demonstrating the outcomes of IVET by means of e.g. Skills Competitions and Awards.
- ✚ The development of a national strategy for promoting IVET, such as the Finnish model, is considered to be a good example for 'making IVET more attractive.

4. FINDINGS AND POLICY-USEFUL MESSAGES

4.1. Introduction

This report examines developments in participating countries that aim to make IVET more attractive for learners. Improving the quality and relevance of IVET and enhancing its status and image are the key ingredients for making IVET more attractive and these goals can be best achieved by:

- ✚ identifying change requirements through reliable research;
- ✚ consulting with stakeholders at different levels to raise awareness of the need for change;
- ✚ developing comprehensive policies to support change in, inter alia; governance arrangements, teacher/trainer education, pedagogy, curriculum and contents, assessment and certification, quality assurance etc.;
- ✚ gaining consensus and devolving ownership of change processes, as appropriate;
- ✚ engaging relevant stakeholders in multi-actor partnerships to execute change through quality development processes;
- ✚ evaluating the positive outcomes of change and disseminating information on successful achievements and re-shaping policy to address remaining or new challenges.

Whilst participants report that goals are similar, the implementation of actions for change depends on the unique circumstances of each country and region. Thus, actions for change can differ as a result of diverse country-specific conditions (social-political, economy) and the organization of IVET in relation to the latter. Additionally, actions are prioritised at national/regional level priorities according to the differing contexts/conditions and available resources. This report presents a range of examples of both change processes and actions for change that are working well in context and contributing to the attractiveness of IVET.

In reviewing the examples of policies and practices a range of actions emerged, which were either common to all countries or considered as good practice and with potential for adaptation in other contexts. These findings are clustered in the form of lists in this final chapter. These lists are not intended to be either comprehensive or tailor made. Countries, not represented in the group, may find the lists useful to examine their own approaches to making IVET more attractive: they will also most likely be in a position to add more policy initiatives that work well to the lists. In this regard, it is proposed that the lists are further discussed in the ENQAVET web environment and the Quality Assurance National Reference Points' websites. A template is available for the collection of examples of policies and practices that aim to make IVET more attractive (see appendix four). In the final part of this chapter, a number of messages are presented for consideration by policy makers charged

with the responsibility to implement the Recommendation for a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework.

4.2. Placing the findings in context

The difference between ‘policy learning’ and ‘policy borrowing’ was an issue of discussion in the thematic group. Policy development at EU-level is, for the most part, informed by policy developments within the EU member states and regions. Thus, EU policy can be considered a hybrid of the latter. This is an important factor in decision-making, regarding the implementation of EU recommendations. The goal should be to learn from EU-level policy and use it to inform organic development. However, sometimes the urgency to meet implementation deadlines results in the borrowing of ‘ready made solutions’ and this can lead to problems in the longer-term. Change is a continuum that is rooted in the past, responsive to present conditions and focussed on the future. In this regard the groups’ findings must be considered in relation to the following factors:

- ✚ National/regional IVET is inextricably linked with country-specific macro-level factors, including; the nature, size and organization of the economy, the division of labour, learning culture and work culture.
- ✚ IVET provision is unique to each country, and region, and is embedded in deep-rooted traditions and functions. An important distinction within IVET and across the EU is whether and how the ‘world of education and training’ and the ‘world of work’ are linked.
- ✚ The complexity of IVET systems and arrangements within and across the EU, as demonstrated in the ‘snapshot’ in appendix two, militates against taking a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to the modernization of IVET. For example, when the function of IVET provision is pre-dominantly to facilitate social inclusion or employability there can be wide-ranging differences in the governance, organization and provision of learning and the currency of the respective qualifications can differ in labour market terms. Both orientations are important for society and for the life chances of young people but their differences need to be acknowledged and protected.
- ✚ ‘Making IVET attractive’ is a common and continuous goal for all the participating countries, regardless of how high their IVET system may be esteemed nationally and internationally: In the words of a participant, ‘even a winning team needs change’. What elements of the system, provision and outcomes need to be made more attractive, for what purpose and how differs considerably across the participating countries, in accordance with current priorities and resources.

4.3. Conditions for making IVET more attractive for learners

The lists relate to the following conditions that contribute to making IVET more attractive for learners:

1. IVET qualifications must have currency in the labour market.
2. IVET must offer access to other education and training opportunities.
3. IVET must be appealing, have high status and a positive image.
4. Information on IVET must be reliable and guidance services must be effective.
5. The quality and relevance of IVET must be assured.

Conditions 1-4 are most relevant for learners and should be transparent. Condition 5 is a pre-requisite for 1-4 and expected as a given by learners, even though it tends to be less visible for them. All conditions are considered relevant in making IVET more attractive for employers.

1. IVET QUALIFICATIONS MUST HAVE CURRENCY IN THE LABOUR MARKET

- ✚ Ensure that public authorities take overall responsibility for the development of accessible, high quality, relevant and sustainable IVET qualifications.
- ✚ Establish formal structures and mechanisms to engage employers and social partners with public authorities in IVET planning, governance, organization and evaluation, as appropriate: relying on goodwill alone is not sufficient.
- ✚ Inform IVET developments with evidence from research. Establish reliable skills forecasting mechanisms and processes and procedures that translate future skills needs into training provision. Aim for close fit between supply and demand. Plan for the future: it can take five years from the time new skills/training needs are identified to a first set of graduates. Make plans to safeguard learners in the event of changes in the economy that may affect their employability.
- ✚ Provide for a full range of labour market qualifications for low, medium and high occupations/jobs to meet the needs of a balanced economy now and in the future.
- ✚ Ensure that IVET leads to full qualifications. Enable learners to gain full qualifications and to build on them by accumulating credit for units of learning.
- ✚ Develop standards, curricula, contents in close partnership between education and economy stakeholders. Ensure that the knowledge, skills and competences acquired through training match the knowledge and know-how required for employment in the desired occupation.
- ✚ Integrate valuable work-based training into IVET pathways and programmes and assess learning outcomes in the context of the full qualification.
- ✚ Facilitate enterprises that provide training to co-operate with competent authorities in relation to assessment and examinations. Enterprises are more likely to engage when the gains to industry are transparent. Agree with employers and social partners on the need for complementary education and training provision to ensure the acquisition of key competences, including basic skills.
- ✚ Maintain close links between education and economy stakeholders throughout the learning and validation of learning process.
- ✚ Make arrangements for the assessment of learning that are meaningful for learners and employers.

2. IVET MUST OFFER ACCESS TO OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

- ✚ Engage employers and social partners in policy developments for lifelong learning.
- ✚ Consult with key stakeholders and build consensus with regard to the integration of IVET in a continuum of lifelong learning.
- ✚ Encourage co-operation measures and mechanisms that link decision-makers, including social partners, and providers, including enterprises, within and across VET pathways at every level.
- ✚ Support co-operation between IVET providers and further and tertiary-level education and training providers, to build trust and surmount barriers that may exist between them.
- ✚ Develop open and flexible qualifications systems that maximise possibilities for access, transfer and progression.
- ✚ Establish mechanisms to enable access, transfer and progression e.g. modularisation, credit systems, recognition of prior learning.
- ✚ Establish frameworks of qualifications that facilitate different combinations of knowledge, skills and competences sets to co-exist at the same level with the same progression possibilities.
- ✚ Ensure IVET qualifications enable and entitle IVET graduates to access further and tertiary level education and training. Integrate key competence development, including 'learning to learn' in IVET provision.
- ✚ Ensure that all the learning outcomes of IVET are transparent and comprehensible.

3. IVET MUST BE APPEALING, HAVE HIGH STATUS AND A POSITIVE IMAGE

- ✚ Develop approaches/methods that suit the learning styles of the target group. (Learners often choose IVET to have a different kind of learning experience than they had in general education or would possibly have in higher education).
- ✚ Ensure that the knowledge, skills and competences of learning facilitators are of excellence and up-to-date.
- ✚ Ensure that technology and equipment are 'state-of-the-art'.
- ✚ Organise IVET provision to incorporate on-the-job learning and/or in simulated work contexts of high quality.
- ✚ Ensure coherence for learners between school-based and work-based learning, for example assignments that straddle both contexts.
- ✚ Integrate processes for learner self-assessment and assessment by peers, teachers/trainers and employers and provide continuous and constructive feedback.
- ✚ Adopt assessment processes that are suitable for the learning outcomes-based approach providing possibilities for learners to demonstrate attainment (knowledge and know-how) through presentation.
- ✚ Promote learner involvement in skills competitions.
- ✚ Establish 'award' ceremonies at different levels to reward excellence
- ✚ Support the involvement of learners in quality development and management via learner councils/associations/unions.
- ✚ Give IVET learners status through, integration in the world of work, title (e.g. trainee chef), appropriate remuneration for work, when applicable (e.g. in apprenticeship training) and equitable conditions as peers in further and tertiary level education e.g. grants. Develop titles for holders of IVET qualifications.
- ✚ Ensure equity, in relation to learning environments, with peers in other education and training pathways; attractive physical environment and buildings, transport connections, student facilities and resources etc.
- ✚ Undertake surveys, including electronic, to gauge the levels of learner satisfaction.

4. INFORMATION ON IVET MUST BE RELIABLE AND GUIDANCE SERVICES MUST BE EFFECTIVE

- ✚ Produce reliable, up-to-date information on occupations and jobs and related training programmes and providers and make the information accessible and attractive using relevant media for young people.
- ✚ Ensure that the information makes explicit changes in occupations/jobs brought about by; new technology, new forms of work organization, policies (health, safety, working hours, unsocial hours etc), which may enhance the image and status of the occupation/job and related training.
- ✚ Highlight the relevance of IVET for employability purposes: this is also important for employers.
- ✚ Target information for different groups, take age, gender, nationality, interests and abilities into account.
- ✚ Provide vocationally orientated guidance services of excellence from an early age; prior to decision-making milestones regarding entry into IVET.
- ✚ Provide career guidance and counselling services of excellence for learners in IVET programmes. Guidance specialists must have wide-ranging up-to-date knowledge of work and jobs and further learning options as well as the capacities to cater for very diverse learners. IVET teachers need career counselling competences.
- ✚ Ensure that guidance maintains a balance between encouraging learners' aspirations and the reality of possible employment options available.

5. THE QUALITY AND RELEVANCE OF IVET MUST BE ASSURED

- ✚ Develop and implement a national/regional policy framework to assure the quality of IVET and promote the benefits of quality assurance.
- ✚ Encourage networks of providers, including enterprises, and intermediate bodies, to operate as 'communities of practice' for the quality development and management of IVET.
- ✚ Promote a holistic and inclusive approach to quality assurance at provider level that involves staff and learners and external partners in a culture of continuous quality improvement.
- ✚ Implement policies and procedures for the objective quality assurance of IVET programmes, for example accreditation and inspection processes.
- ✚ Support the appointment of 'quality managers' in provider institutions with the capacities, time and resources to foster an institutional culture of quality improvement and ensure its openness to stakeholders from the 'outside world' including economy partners.
- ✚ Include planning for the training needs of learning facilitators when planning qualification/provision reform.
- ✚ Require that IVET teachers and instructors are specialised in the occupational area with up-to-date knowledge and that they have effective and up-to-date pedagogical methods and skills. Occupational and pedagogical knowledge and know-how may be shared between school-based and work based learning facilitators (e.g. in a dual-based system) but they must be complementary and support structures must be in place to facilitate synergy between both.
- ✚ Make it mandatory for teachers and trainers to engage in continuing professional development (pedagogical and occupational), this must involve close links between the 'world of school' and the 'world of work'. As role models it is important for students to observe their teachers engaging in lifelong learning.
- ✚ Take measures to ensure 'parity of esteem' for vocational teachers and trainers with their counterparts in general and higher education (this is a pre-requisite for parity of esteem for IVET) by, for example awarding equivalent qualifications on the basis of RPL, supporting their professional development and addressing differences in pay and work-load and working conditions.
- ✚ Involve learners in quality development processes.

4.4. European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF)

The outcomes of the thematic group's deliberations are intended to feed into and add value to the debate on the attractiveness of VET in the context of the ENQA-VET mandate to improve the quality of VET. Additionally, the findings are intended to inform approaches to the implementation of the EQARF Recommendation. Thus, the EQARF Recommendation is the initial filter through which the report will be read. The following set of messages is considered to be of particular importance for those decision-makers charged with the responsibility for implementing the EQARF at EU and national levels. The messages should be considered in relation to the report as a whole and in particular the conditions for making IVET attractive for learners and the lists in the previous section.

EU level

- ✚ EU action to improve the quality, relevance and attractiveness of IVET must take full account of the heterogeneity of IVET and how it is governed and organised to serve different functions in the regions and countries of the EU. IVET develops in accordance with the culture and traditions of society and the economy at local, regional and national levels; quality management and assurance need to develop organically as an integral part of IVET.
- ✚ Key stakeholders, including employers, social partners and IVET providers, including teachers and trainers, need to be more widely consulted and represented in EU-level processes for the development of the quality of IVET.
- ✚ Much of IVET provision in different countries has well established quality development and quality management and assurance policies and practices; the EQARF needs to embrace the diversity of existing quality mechanisms.
- ✚ Countries will respond to EU drivers from different starting points and this must be respected, otherwise national efforts and resources may be channelled towards reforms that are not the main priority. In this regard countries should not be pressurised to adhere to time lines at the expense of careful planning and effective implementation of change.
- ✚ Shifting emphasis to 'involving stakeholders in a culture of continuous improvement' is the key to enhancing the quality and relevance of IVET.
- ✚ Trust-building, in relation to the quality of IVET systems in the EU, not only requires access to transparent and reliable qualitative information but also the means to understand that information in context, which can be best facilitated by continuing to provide opportunities for the engagement of stakeholders in trans-national working groups, networks, peer review, peer learning, study visits and projects.

National/regional level

- ✚ Comprehensive policy planning is essential to entrench the principles of partnership and practices that are conducive for the quality development of IVET. 'Communities of practice' that influence the quality and relevance of IVET are numerous and each must take account of the diverse functions and stakeholders of IVET and the need to be more inter-connected. Defining objectives and criteria for partnerships engaging in 'a culture of continuous improvement' for the development of IVET and verifying their success is an important aspect of quality assurance.
- ✚ Quality assurance processes and procedures must be responsive to diverse IVET provision by being relevant and realistic. 'One-size-fits-all' procedures are not appropriate. Employers and the social partners' need to engage pro-actively in policy planning for IVET quality development and assurance at local-level, regional-level and national-level. Their engagement may need to be facilitated through the establishment of appropriate structures and mechanisms. Co-operation must be purposeful and realistic; the 'added value' of assuming joint responsibility for and ownership of, the quality of IVET must be visible for employers.
- ✚ Existing policies, processes and procedures for IVET quality assurance may need to be made more explicit, including the obligatory regulations that govern IVET, compliance with mandatory directives (e.g. related to the 'licence to practice', health, welfare, safety etc) and compliance with standards (generic and specific occupational standards and educational standards).
- ✚ Capacity-building for quality development and quality management must be integrated in formal initial and continuing education and training for IVET teachers, trainers, and other staff (including guidance specialists). Capacities may also be developed non-formally by creating conditions for pedagogical staff to engage in 'cultures of continuous quality improvement'.
- ✚ Quality assurance practice must be 'fit-for-purpose' and should not introduce inappropriate rigidity that may inhibit the responsiveness of qualifications to labour market needs.
- ✚ Learning 'on-the-job' increases the attractiveness of IVET for learners and enhances the quality and relevance of their qualifications for employers. The quality development and quality management of this highly valued component of IVET requires particular attention.
- ✚ IVET quality development and assurance processes and practice should deal with the 'attractiveness' issues addressed in this report.

- ✚ National representatives who engage in EU-level processes related to IVET quality improvement should be effective as multipliers and contribute to the dissemination of European practice and innovation throughout the national IVET system.

ANNEX 1: A snapshot³⁷ of IVET³⁸ in the participating countries

	Institution type	Programme	Company-based learning.	Learner age profile	% of cohort ³⁹ (entry)	% of cohort ⁴⁰ (finish)	ISCED
AT	1. VET schools ⁴¹ 2. VET colleges ⁴² 3. Companies and schools ⁴³	1.IVET for certain occupations 2. General education & IVET, regulated occupations 3.Apprenticeship	3. 80%	1.14-18 2.14-19 3.15-19	1.14.6% 2.26.9% 3.39.6%		1. 3B 2. 3A&4A ⁴⁴ 3. 3B
CY	1.STVE Schools ⁴⁵ 2. STVE Schools 3. Colleges (e.g. Forestry, hotels etc) 4. Technical Schools	1.General Technical and Vocational Education 2. Apprenticeship ⁴⁶ 3. Sector specific training 4.Lifelong learning and training programmes	2. 60%	1.16-18 2. 15-18 3. 18 4. Adults	1. 20% 2. 0,5%-1%		1. 3A, 3B,3C 2. 2C 3. 4B 4. 2C
DE 47	1. IVET Schools ⁴⁸	1.Occupational training	1. 4 weeks per year	1. 15-18	1. BVJ 8,6%,	1. BVJ 96%, BGJ	1.3B

³⁷ **The purpose of the snapshot is to indicate the diversity of IVET within and across the participating countries. The data are incomplete and come from different sources and different years and therefore serve no other function than to illustrate diversity.**

³⁸ For the purposes of the study, IVET is defined as vocationally orientated education and training in second-level or further education and training, normally for young people under the age of 25, which leads to a qualification with labour market currency. It 'can be carried out at any level in general or vocational education (full-time school-based or *alternance* training) pathways or apprenticeship'. Cedefop Glossary 2009

³⁹ The percentage of the annual cohort that have completed lower secondary school/compulsory education and enrolled in an IVET programme, leading to a formal qualification (Data are approximate and not intended to be comparable, their purpose is to give a general idea).

⁴⁰ The percentage of the yearly cohort that successfully completes the IVET pathway (Data are approximate and not intended to be comparable their purpose is to give a general idea).

⁴¹ Berufsbildende mittlere Schulen oder Fachschulen

⁴² Berufsbildende höhere Schulen

⁴³ Berufsschulen

⁴⁴ Double qualification

⁴⁵ In Cyprus, students attending public Secondary Technical and Vocational Education (STVE) programmes represent, approximately, 20% of the total student population. Two types of STVE programmes are offered; theoretical, for those who intend to continue on learning at tertiary level and practical, for those who want to directly enter the world of work.

⁴⁶ A 2-year programme (3 days on the job and 2 days at school per week)

⁴⁷ The German data refer to the State of Hesse in the first instance

	2. IVET ⁴⁹	2. Occupational training	2. 4 days per week	2. 16-20	BGJ 6,8%	99%,	2.3B
	3. IVET Schools ⁵⁰	3. 2 year further IVET	3. 4 days per week in the first year	3. 16-21	3. 13,1%	3. 99%	3.4A
	4. IVET Schools ⁵¹	4. Vocational and academic learning on a higher level		4. 16-21	4. 5,0%	4. 82%	4.4A
	5. Companies and schools ^{52 53}	5. Apprenticeship company based learning (3-4 days) school (1-2 days)	5. 3-4 days a week	5. 17+ ⁵⁵	5. BS 55,2%	5. BS 95%	5. 3B, sometimes 3A or 4A
	6. IVET Schools ⁵⁴	6. Full IVET in companies and schools with certified degrees, further occupational training	6. Minimum 4 weeks during whole education	6. 17+	6. 21,9%	6. 88%	6. 3B, sometimes 4A
DK	1. Vocational institutions 2. Companies Vocational institutions	1. 1½-5 year IVET with company training 2. Apprenticeship 2/3 company based learning	2.66% (block)	16+	1. 17%	1. 50%	1. 3C

⁴⁸Berufsvorbereitungsjahr (BVJ) (1 year education) Preparation for those young people who do not have a training contract to prepare them for work or further IVET, Berufsgrundbildungsjahr (BGJ) (1 year education) Basic vocational training year at upper secondary level, full-time vocational school that prepares students for work or further IVET. The education in both kinds of school is consistent with grade 10. Berufsfachschulen (BFS) (2 years education) are full-time vocational schools at upper secondary level that prepare students for work or further IVET and also provide further academic education.

⁴⁹ Programme of the Federal Employment Office of Germany to avoid youth-unemployment

⁵⁰ Fachoberschulen and Berufsoberschulen are vocational schools at upper secondary level which prepares students for work and university studies

⁵¹ Berufliche Gymnasien/Fachgymnasien are types of school at upper secondary level offering a three year course of education that prepares students for university studies

⁵² Berufsschulen (BS), the apprenticeship company based learning is consistent with grade 11.

⁵³ Meister (Chambers of industry and commerce or Chambers of industry and craftsmanship) , Betriebswirte (business economists), Fachwirte is further occupational education that prepares students to deal with the exigencies of a self-owned business

⁵⁴ Berufsfachschulen mit Berufsabschluss, Höhere Berufsfachschulen are vocational schools that give in at least two and up to 3,5 years a fulltime certified vocational degree

⁵⁵ A few might be younger

EE	1. Vocational Education Institutions ⁵⁶	1. 2.5 years IVET (persons without basic education)	Generally at least 25% of IVET courses	1. 17+			1. 2C
	2. Institutions of Professional Higher Education ⁵⁷	2. 1-3 years IVET (persons with basic education)		2. 16+			
		3. 3+ years IVET (vocational training +general education)	66% Apprenticeship (provided at all four levels)	3. 16-19+	3. 30% (2007/8)	3. 25%	2. 2B 3. 3B
		4. 0.5-3 years IVET (after upper 2nd-level education) ⁵⁸		4. 18+	4. 10%	4. 30%	4.4B
FI	1. Vocational institutions ⁵⁹	1. 3-year IVET with company training	1. at least 17 % (6 months over 3 years)	1. 16-20+	1. 42 % (2008)	1. 61 % (after 3 yrs) 69 % (after 4 yrs). 2008	1. 3A
	2. Companies and vocational institutions	2. Apprenticeship ⁶⁰	2. 80%	2. 15+	2. ⁶¹		2. 3A
IE	1. Schools ⁶²	1. Vocationally orientated upper second-level education ⁶⁴		1. 16-18			1.3A
	2. Colleges ⁶³	2. 1-2 year IVET courses	2. 4 weeks	2. 18-			
	3. Companies and schools	3. Apprenticeship ⁶⁵	3. 75% approx.	20+	3. 16-		3.4C
	4. Companies and Training Centres	4. Traineeships ⁶⁶	4. Dual system	20+			4.4C

⁵⁶ {IVET Instruction shall be provided in the form of school-based or workplace-based study (apprenticeship). (2) School-based study is based on vocational, professional or occupational training of which work practice in an enterprise or institution shall not exceed one half of the total volume of the vocational training part of the curriculum. (3) Workplace-based study is based on vocational, professional or occupational training of which work practice in an enterprise or institution shall constitute at least two thirds of the total volume of the vocational training part of the curriculum. (4) The procedure for the application of workplace-based study shall be established by a regulation of the Minister of Education and Research. (24.11.2005 entered into force 01.01.2006 - RT I 2005, 65, 498)}

⁵⁷ Institutions of Professional Higher Education were established at the beginning of 1990, mostly on the basis of Vocational Education Institutions. In some Institutions of Professional Higher Education there are IVET programmes as well.

⁵⁸ 1. For vocations or professions in which no restrictions relating to the level of education are set for the commencement of studies – 2.5 years. 2. 1-2.5 years; in music and performing arts curriculum group, not less than 3 years. 3. Not less than 3 years, 40 weeks of study of general educational subjects. 4. 0.5 -2.5 years; in music and performing arts curriculum group, not less than 3 years. 5. In formal education: full-time and part-time studies, in continuing education from 8 to 80 hours courses.

⁵⁹ Called 'ammattilliset oppilaitokset' and 'yrkesläroanstalterna'

⁶¹ About 15 % of all IVET students are in apprenticeship training. Only about 5 % of students in apprenticeship training are over 20 years (most of them 19 - 18 years).

				4. 16+			
IT	1. Schools ⁶⁷	1. Technical education		1. 14-19	1. 33.1%	1. 68%	1. 3A
	2. Schools ⁶⁸	2. Vocational Schools		2. 14-17 17-19	2. 22.7%	2. 50%	2. 3A 3. 3C
	3. Companies and schools	3. Vocational training	3. 25%	3. 15-18 18-29	3. 6%	3. 70%	
	4. Training centres	4. Apprenticeship ⁶⁹			4. 1.7%		
MT	1. Institute of Tourism	IVET: Types A, B and C	A: 315hrs-450hrs ⁷⁰	1&2 16-18 19-20	1&2 ⁷¹ 26.86% 35.24%		1.2-4 2. 2-4
	2. College of Arts, Science and Technology	IVET: Types B and C	B: 8 weeks or 28 weeks	21-24 Over 25	30.28% 07.62%		
	3. Employment and Training Corporation Institutions	IVET: Type A	C: 14 calendar weeks	3. 16-18 19-20 21-24 Over 25	3. 26 % 50% 23% 1%		
RO	1. IVET Schools	1. Technical education & General education	10 weeks per year	14-19	59% ⁷²	1. 90% , of the cohort ⁷³	1. 3A & 3B
		2. Vocational school, lower secondary level		14-16			2. 2

⁶²In Ireland, IVET is an integral part of the Further Education and Training Sector, which, for the most part follows the completion of upper second-level education. However there are IVET Pathways in General Education Schools leading to the Leaving Certificate Vocational (level 5 NFQ) and Leaving Certificate Applied (level 4 NFQ)

⁶³Responsive to local employment needs (50% vocational, 25% work experience 25% further education)

⁶⁴ These pathways are part of general education. Qualification facilitates access to employment, further and/or tertiary level education and training. They are not included in the 'Further Education and Training 'Sector.

⁶⁵ Generally, the duration of an apprenticeship is a minimum of 4 years comprising 3 college/training centre (generally 40 weeks in total) and 4 'on-the-job' phases. The key factor of the off-the-job training phase is that it is delivered in a single training environment to ensure the integration of practical training with the necessary theoretical and personal skills.

⁶⁶ Traineeship programmes generally range from 24 to 40 weeks and commence in a training centre where the trainee acquires skills and knowledge that will be further developed in the host company. The workplace training provides structured training for the trainee, which is carried out under the normal operational conditions of the host company. The State Training and Employment Authority (FÁS), provides training for experienced company employees to support the trainee on-the-job.

⁶⁷ Istituti Tecnici (Technical Schools) offer 5-year programmes leading to the 'Diploma di maturità tecnica' (facilitates university access) for middle-level occupations

⁶⁸ Istituti Professionali (Vocational Schools) offer 5-year programmes leading to the 'Diploma Professionale'.

⁶⁹ 'Apprendistato': Type 1 for 15-18 year olds with broader educational aims; Type 2 traditional occupationally orientated apprenticeship and Type 3 leading to an award at university level.

⁷⁰ some have 1-year international internships in industry

⁷¹ The percentages relate to the numbers entering programmes broken down by age-group and not as the percentage of the entire cohort

SE	1.Schools ⁷⁴	1. Vocationally orientated upper second-level education ⁷⁵	1. 15 weeks over three years	1. 16-19	49% ⁷⁶	67% ⁷⁸	3A
	2. Companies-Sectors	2. Apprenticeship	2. 50%	2. 16-19	4,7% ⁷⁷	N.A.	3A

⁷² For both pathways

⁷³ About 35% finish upper second level

⁷⁴ 'Gymnasieskola' are upper second-level schools, which offer 17 programmes that lead to a Leaving Certificate (and university access).

⁷⁵ 14 of the 17 programmes offered in the 'Gymnasieskola' are vocationally orientated, with 15 weeks work experience, and are taken by 50% of the cohort.

⁷⁶ Approximately 49% of those registered in upper secondary programmes are in vocationally-oriented programmes.

⁷⁷ Approximately 4.7% of the upper secondary population is projected to enrol in upper secondary apprenticeship pilot projects in 2009. Upper secondary apprenticeship is scheduled to become a permanent part of upper secondary education in 2011.

⁷⁸ Approximately 67% complete an upper secondary vocationally-oriented programme with sufficient courses and grades to enter higher education.

ANNEX 2: Survey of awards in the participating countries (conducted by the participants from Estonia and Malta)

Country	Award	Level	Model/Type	Name of Award	Objectives	Organization	Awarding body	Funding
Austria	1. Teachers award 2. Skills competitions						Federation of Austrian industries	
Cyprus	1. Best VET student since 1989		Prize	Best academic achievement	Motivate	The School Award Committee reviews the results of the final examinations and elects the pupils who have achieved the best learning outcomes	The Ministry of Education	Parents Association, Banks, Individuals
Estonia	1. Best adult learner since 1999, during the adult education week. The most Education Friendly Organization 2. Most Education Friendly Local Government 3. Best VET school since 2003 4. National and International (World	Local/ National/ International (competitions)	1. Prize 2. Prize/Quality mark 3. Certificate/ Prize	1. Best Adult Learner of the Year Educator of the Year The most Education Friendly Organization Most Education Friendly Local Government of the Year 2. Estonian VET	1. Value of education, networking 2. Promote the culture of self evaluation and quality management	1. Best achievement of learning outcomes, successful training in industry 2. Achievement oriented focused on pupils needs, partnership, LLL and innovation social	1. Association of Estonian Adult Educators <i>Andras</i> in cooperation with Ministry of Education and Research 2. Foundation for Lifelong Learning Development <i>INNOVE</i> in cooperation with Ministry of Education and Research and Estonian Association for Quality (EAQ) 3. Foundation for Lifelong Learning Development <i>INNOVE</i> in cooperation with Ministry of Education and	Government and project-based funding

	Skills, Euro Skills) competitions World Skills since the year 2007, Euro Skills since 2008			Quality Award 3. Different skills competitions		responsibility, purposeful, unified objectives, management basing on facts and processes	Research, Companies and Trade organizations.	
Finland	<p>1. The annual quality award of VET and the annual quality award of apprenticeship training have been in use several years.</p> <p>2. The adult student of the year and the adult students of different fields are rewarded during the adult education and training week. Also at school level.</p>					Skills Finland coordinates all skills competitions.	4. Awards are granted by the Minister of Education.	

	3. National and World and Euro Skills Competition (Taitaja-kilpailut) are organized on an annual basis							
Ireland	1. Best student 2. National and International Skills Competition (since 1956)	Local/ National	Medal Prize	National Skill Comp		Department of Ministry of Education and Science	1. The Ministry of Education 2. International Organisation (competitions)	
Malta	Not yet, but there should be an award for every category		A quality seal, certificate, Medal Prize Trophy	Popularization VET, promoting LLL	There must be an agreed set of criteria to be decided by the awarding bodies such as the national qualifications authority and ENQA VET	An objective and neutral institution	National Qualifications Authority	Public-private-partnership
Romania	1. Skills competitions 2. School award (infrastructure, programme)	Local/ national	Certificate Prize	increase the quality and attractiveness of VET	External Monitoring process, on	Regional structures		

					annual basis		
Sweden	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Best student 2. Best mobility program 3. Skills competitions 		Certificate/ Medal			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth Skills Sweden, The Governmental organizations, 2. partners 3. Swedish International Program Office for Education and Training 	1. public-private-partnership

ANNEX 3: Bibliography

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ANNEX 4: List of Participants ⁷⁹

Title	Name	Country	Organisation name
Mr	Franz Reithuber	Austria	Higher College of Engineering in Steyr
Mr	Iosif Pahitas	Cyprus	Ministry of Education and Culture
Ms	Gunvor Krarup Vedstesen	Denmark	Ministry of Education
Ms	Rita Siilivask	Estonia	Ministry of Education and Research of Estonia
Ms	Seija Rasku	Finland	Ministry of Education
Mr	Wolfgang Kreher	Germany	Hessisches Kulturministerium
Ms	Ágnes Barátt	Hungary	National Institute of Vocational and Adult Education
Ms	Marie Gould	Ireland	Further Education and Training Awards Council
Ms	Ismene Tramontano	Italy	Institute for the Development of Vocational Training of Workers (ISFOL)
Mr	Mindaugas Misiunas	Lithuania	Methodological Center for VET
Ms	Doris Mangion	Malta	Malta Qualifications Council
Ms	Petra Velthuysen	The Netherlands	MBO Raad Dutch Association for Vocational Education and Training
Ms	Ildiko Pataki	Romania	National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development
Mr	Branko Kumer	Slovenia	Solski Center PTUJ
Ms	Almudena Jaspe Rodríguez	Spain	Ministry of Labour and Immigration; Public State Employment Service - INEM
Mr	Shawn Mendes	Sweden Chairperson	Swedish National Agency for Education
Ms	Elizabeth Watters	TG Expert	

⁷⁹ Leena Koski represented Finland and James Calleja represented Malta at the first meeting. The representative from Hungary attended one meeting and those from Denmark, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands (previously working with MBO Raad), Slovenia and Spain attended two meetings all other representatives attended either three or all four meetings.



European Network for Quality Assurance
in Vocational Education and Training

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