The changing role and nature of VET in Europe

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The changing nature and role of VET in Europe

Our aims

Take a step back and analyse:
How has VET changed during the past two decades?

- The VET system as such
- The relationship with the rest of education and training
- The relationship with the labour market and society overall
The changing nature and role of VET in Europe

Our aims

Analyse the past to look ahead:
Which trends for VET in the coming decades?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key dimensions (and tensions) likely to influence VET</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main potential future development paths (scenarios)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key policy choices that VET stakeholders will face</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
European VET since 1995
What changed?
COMPETING STORIES – OPPOSING EXPECTATIONS

The negative story
VET is declining and losing out to general and academic education

The skills provided by VET are less in need due to digitalization and job polarization

The positive story
VET is expanding to higher levels and form the backbone of lifelong learning

The skills provided by VET are essential for continued economic growth and for upholding welfare
Enrolment in IVET: the European picture

Aggregate European statistics: declining trend since 2005

Share of upper secondary students in VET: from 60.7% in 2005 (absolute top) down to 47% in 2015
Enrolment in IVET: National differences


- Remarkable growth in some from a low base (e.g. Spain)
- Moderate growth in some from a moderate base (e.g. the Netherlands)
- Significant decline in a limited number from a high base (e.g. Germany)

Growth and/or stability in the majority of European countries

Overall, IVET have (so far) upheld its position relative to general upper secondary education in most countries.
An analytical model supporting policy dialogue and development

3 perspectives

- Knowledge approach
- Pedagogical approach
- Teacher – student relationship
- Professional ethos
- Learning outcomes specifics
- Learning sites
- Pedagogical - didactic
An analytical model supporting policy dialogue and development

3 perspectives

Education level

Age

Outcomes / Destination

Socio-economic and labour market

Sources of funding

Parity of esteem with general education

Key providers

Education system

Sources of funding

Parity of esteem with general education

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Key providers
An analytical model supporting policy dialogue and development

3 perspectives

- Pedagogical - didactic
- Education system
- Occupations’ hierarchy
- Focus / purpose
- Governance
- Student’s identity and legal status
- Context of justification
- Socio-economic and labour market

Focus / purpose

Student’s identity and legal status

Context of justification

Socio-economic and labour market
Changing content and pedagogics

1995

- VET and general education conceptually distinct
- Work-based learning underdeveloped outside apprenticeship systems
- Much school based IVET ‘input driven’ and weakly linked to labour market
- Programmes and qualifications narrowly defined and specific

2015

- Crossing boundaries (school-workplace; general-vocational)
- Increased work-based learning in all IVET forms
- Reorientation to learning outcomes and competences
- More flexibility in time and place of learning; increased acceptance of prior learning
Changing IVET systems and institutions

### 1995
- Provision often fragmented, strong links to industries and sectors, weaker links to overall education and training systems
- Dead-end programmes, restricted to medium levels with little progression to higher levels
- VET narrowly defined as IVET
- VET addressing a narrowly defined target group (16-20 year olds)

### 2015
- More coherent VET systems integrated within the overall education and training systems
- Increased permeability and fewer dead-ends
- More centralised standards setting
- Fewer qualifications and broadened profiles
- Diversification of target groups, including adults
Changing socio-economic context

1995

- Limited goals; preparing for job entry and securing skilled labour
- Industry and sector based standard setting and anticipation of needs
- Jobs requiring medium-level skills dominate in the labour market
- Digitalisation one of several factors influencing VET

2015

- Broader goals: social as well as economic; excellence as well as integration
- Increasing role of skills intelligence systems
- Jobs requiring medium-levels skills starting to decline; future developments contested
- Digitalisation a key-driving force
Reflecting on the future
European VET scenarios 2035
Three different Visions of VET (Stakeholder survey)

Patterns of visions of VET for 2035

- VET as a distinct educational sector
- VET available as a standard educational pathway for all
- A higher VET sector in parallel to HE
- VET more driven than now by private investment
- VET oriented towards economic needs
- More local decisions and autonomy regarding VET
- More competition between VET providers
- More similarity between national VET systems in the EU
- EU accounting for a larger share of VET funding
- VET as an indistinct part of lifelong learning
- Targeting specific groups only
- Higher VET as part of the HE sector
- More driven than now by public investment
- VET oriented towards social needs
- More central decisions and regulation
- More cooperation between VET providers
- More diversity of national VET systems in the EU
- EU accounting for a lower share of VET funding

1 = very strong preference to an option on the left;
2 = strong preference to an option on the left;
3 = equal preference for options on the left and the right
4 = strong preference for an option on the right;
5 = very strong preference for an option on the right;
Desired VET profile – stakeholder views

Views of more than 1300 VET experts

- To prepare students to fully participate in society and to become active citizens: 73%
- To prepare students for working life in a specific occupation or occupational field: 61%
- To combat youth unemployment and/or foster economic growth: 47.5%
- To foster personal growth and fulfilment: 45.5%
- To provide students with the basis to engage in further education: 40%
- To promote social inclusion: 31%

Source: Cedefop survey, Changing VET 2035 (2018), n= 1308 Multiple answer question
VET scenarios 2035 – Underpinning dimensions

- General Education / Academic Knowledge
- Pluralistic Education and Training
  - Pluralistic education dominates
  - General education dominates
- Vocational Education / Professional Knowledge
  - Vocational education dominates
  - Distinctive GE/VET
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>How is VET understood?</strong></th>
<th>VET is understood as ‘vocationally oriented learning’ in various contexts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is VET’s position in the wider education and training system?</strong></td>
<td>VET takes place in various settings within the wider education and training system and is regarded as a particular feature of education (having closer links to the labour market) rather than a sector of its own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is VET’s key organising principle?</strong></td>
<td>Key concept: (certified) ‘core ‘competence’; VET is organised around qualifications.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Who is it for?</strong></td>
<td>Increasing diversity of target groups; covering lower levels as well as medium and higher levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What type of pathways?</strong></td>
<td>Numerous VET pathways operate side by side; school and work-based pathways have the same status and are mixed pragmatically; strongly individualised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What type of provision?</strong></td>
<td>Wide variety of provisions at diverse institutions, with some emphasis on project- and problem-based as well as self-directed learning.</td>
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</table>
## Distinctive VET

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<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
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<td><strong>How is VET understood?</strong></td>
<td>VET is understood as a modernised version of ‘vocational education and training’</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What is VET’s position in the wider education and training system?</strong></td>
<td>VET is a clearly defined sub-sector of the education and training system consisting of clearly defined institutions. The workplace is regarded as integral element of most VET programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is VET’s key organising principle?</strong></td>
<td>Key concept: ‘professional competence’; VET is organised around occupations/professions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who is it for?</strong></td>
<td>Focus is on professional entry, associated with medium to high-skilled professions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What type of pathways?</strong></td>
<td>Work based learning and apprenticeships have high status, stand out as the ‘gold standard’ and are offered up to level 8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What type of provision?</strong></td>
<td>Combination of school-based and work-based learning, partly seconded by learning in employer led VET centres.</td>
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</table>
### Special-purpose VET

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<th>VET is understood as ‘skills training’ for labour market inclusion</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What is VET’s position in the wider education and training system?</strong></td>
<td>Most VET takes place outside the education and training system in re- and up-skilling measures of ALMP; some in second chance programme within the education system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is VET’s key organising principle?</strong></td>
<td>Key concepts: ‘skills, competencies and employability’; VET is organised around jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who is it for?</strong></td>
<td>Mainly for adults with low qualifications and early school leavers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What type of pathways?</strong></td>
<td>No particular pathways; emphasis on (re-)entry into the labour market; frequent back and forth between jobs and (re-)skilling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What type of provision?</strong></td>
<td>Short training courses mainly in classrooms and workshops, with some on-the-job-training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Six detailed scenarios...

VET is understood as specific skills training / ALMP programmes

VET is understood as 'vocationally oriented learning' (across sectors)

VET is understood as 'vocational' simply signifies more employability

VET is understood as comprehensive education and pre-requisite for any job

VET is understood as specialised 'professional learning and education'
Scenarios will never materialise in the pure or ideal form, but can become dominant and influence developments.

Scenarios acknowledge that VET systems are path dependent and will to varying extent reflect the past.

We are not predicting the future, but seek to illustrate the implications of different choices.

Scenarios help to alert policy-makers to different trends and the implications of these.
Research outcomes and publications

www.cedefop.europa.eu

Volume 1:
Definitions and conceptions of VET

Volume 2:
VET developments 1995-2015

Volume 3:
External factors influencing VET

Volume 4:
Enrolment patterns in IVET

Volume 5:
Education and labour market outcomes of VET

Forthcoming
Volume 7: VET and lifelong learning (2019)
Final scenario report (2019)
Thank you

www.cedefop.europa.eu

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