



OBESSU VET Working Group

Greetings from OBESSU and the world of school student activism.

OBESSU is the umbrella body for school student unions in Europe and represents both general and VET students on a European level. While part of our work involves representing school students in our member organisations, we also promote peer learning and the sharing of best practices amongst our membership by organising training and hosting events throughout the year.

While education is generally seen as a national competence, OBESSU sees an opportunity for students to cooperate and learn from each other's national experiences. We welcome the greater focus on VET from the European institutions; however, as learners we must ensure that VET is not just seen as training for employment, but rather a better-rounded, inclusive curriculum available for all VET learners in Europe.

As part of our 2018 work-plan which lists VET as a priority, a working group has been established consisting of VET learners from six countries. Since 2012 OBESSU has worked extensively on VET with the "Claim Your Voice" campaign. The working group is currently reviewing all OBESSU's VET

policies and watching closely developments relating to VET and mobility in Europe.

OBESSU's ongoing research on representation structures for VET students in Europe aims to strengthen the position of learners in decision making in their own countries. School student representation has been alive for almost 100 years on the continent, but these structures and approaches to representation vary between countries. Our research will help future VET student activists to create or strengthen their own structures.

The VET working group will attend the European Youth Event this June in Strasbourg, present their work and deliver workshops to participants.

OBESSU will continue to work on VET in the future – to ensure learners are consulted and central to decision making. The focus of our future work includes ensuring fair compensation for learners for their work and official recognition of their skills abroad. We aim for quality in VET - the inclusion of learners at all levels of decision making is crucial to achieving this.

¹ <https://www.obessu.org/>

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Student involvement in the Netherlands

An article by Marloes van Bussel (Dutch National Reference Point for EQAVET) and Jasper van Doremalen – VET student and Member of the Board of the national youth organisation for vocational education (JOB)



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*Jasper van Doremalen
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— (This image is provided
courtesy of SPN Media)*

Schools and teachers in the Netherlands regard it as very important to involve students in thinking about the quality of education. It is a knife with two edges: on the one hand, students know what can be improved in education and, on the other hand, they get better results because they feel more involved with their education. In the Netherlands, students are involved at all levels from the class level to the national level. This involvement is both formal and informal. In this article we look at students' involvement in quality assurance and what they see as important.

The involvement of students starts in the classroom and includes the daily informal conversations that teachers have with their students. This also includes the possibility that students can approach their teacher's manager to discuss quality issues. Hack Your Class (www.hackjeles.nl) is one recent development

which has provided a structured way to discuss the quality of education with students. It involves two 'hackers' who are former students taking over the class. One of the questions asked by these hackers is 'What would your programme look like if you could organise it yourself?' At the end of the lesson the students complete action plans to improve their education – the students and the teacher use these plans to improve the quality of the VET provision. There are also arrangements to involve students in a formal way in the quality assurance of their education – these include the completion of satisfaction surveys and panel discussions in which the quality of learning is evaluated.

At a school level there is a legal obligation to establish student boards. These student boards reflect the work that is done by the School Board and they focus on the

quality of education, represent the voice of the student and organise activities for students. Their role includes thinking about how to improve the school environment, for example the canteen or the places where students learn. From the students' perspective these types of issues are important aspects of quality.

For the last couple of years schools have used information from alumni to improve the quality of their education and training programmes. Establishing a well-functioning alumni policy also contributes to the lifelong development agenda which is important for the Netherlands and Europe.

At the national level there is a youth organisation for vocational education - Jongerenorganisatie beroepsonderwijs (JOB). Students from different VET schools are elected to represent the students' voice at the national level. As part of their work, JOB encourages students from VET schools to complete a national questionnaire once every two years. This questionnaire (the JOB monitor) provides schools with a large amount of data which can be used to improve the quality of education. The JOB monitor has played an important role in raising the importance that is given to the opinion of students. For schools it is important that they know what students think of their education and schools recognise they cannot provide high quality care if the students' opinion has no role. In addition, students have realised they can have an opinion on their education and they show an increasingly active attitude when it comes to thinking about quality.

For JOB evaluating what they do is an important aspect of their work. They have evaluated the JOB monitor and looked at how it can be improved. This evaluation has led to a desire for the JOB monitor to be developed further and for students from VET schools to have greater ownership over the questionnaire.

JOB is also politically active through its work to lobby, inform and question politicians. Recently, they contributed to the successful implementation of the legislation to ensure that students who meet the national criteria have the right to study their chosen course. Before this law was implemented, students were sometimes denied entry to a course even though they had met the national criteria. JOB is proud they were able to make this legislation work.

Jasper van Doremalen from JOB highlights the importance of ensuring that the students' voice is heard. A student wants to feel that something is actually being done with their input. In addition, they want feedback from the schools so they know what has been changed and what could not be changed. This gives students a better understanding of their education programmes and ensures there is greater satisfaction. It is important for VET schools

to create an atmosphere which supports conversations with students - this atmosphere must be safe and students should feel they can talk freely.

In the Netherlands it is important that students are involved at all levels of VET provision. Quality will improve and students will be more satisfied when they contribute to the quality of their education.

Students' role in the quality assurance of VET – benefits and challenges - The Romanian Case

An article by Serban Iosifescu, Chairman, Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education



Serban Iosifescu

Students' involvement in the decision-making processes in education, particularly in quality assurance, is relatively recent. The first initiative was the 2006 establishment of the advisory National Students Council (see <https://consiliulelevilor.com/>) as a formal consultative organisation of the Ministry of Education. In addition, during the last five years, several independent Student

Associations with the legal status of NGOs at the county level have emerged (e.g. the Students' Association of Constanta - <https://www.asociatiaelevilor.ro/>).

These organisations are increasingly visible and involved in preserving and extending students' rights – including their advocacy of students' legal rights e.g. in 2015 and 2016 they successfully negotiated with the Ministry of Education to make a legal change in the regulations regarding school management and secondary schools are now obliged to include student representatives in the School Board. In other situations they have succeeded in forcing central and local authorities (including through court action) to observe the regulations regarding scholarships, the reimbursement of students' travel expenditure, the provision of free textbooks for all students etc.

Over time their involvement has become permanent, more consistent and it has covered all areas of education e.g. curriculum and assessment, the structure and financing of the system and quality assurance. The Ministry of Education and other institutions with a role in education provision involve the student organisations in all public consultations and debates on educational reform. Moreover, the student representatives are entitled to become members of the working groups which consider reform.

The student organisations have also produced their own resources (using independent experts), national reports and other public documents. For instance, in 2016 the National Students' Council published a National Report on the status of the education system from the students' perspective and in 2017 an independent report on the implementation of the Statute of Students. The Students' Association of Constanta has produced a "Barometer" on the observance of students' right in Constanta County.

The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education is responsible for school accreditation and the external evaluation of the quality of all schools (including IVET schools). As evaluating quality includes measuring the beneficiaries' satisfaction, the Agency has signed agreements which enable the National Students' Council and the Students' Association of Constanta to appoint observers during site visits to schools. The student observers focus on ensuring students' rights are observed; specific areas of interest (e.g. the quality of the teacher-student relationships and communication, how "student-friendly" is the school environment etc.) and the evaluation process e.g. its independence and objectivity.

The Agency considers feedback from the student observers as part of the external evaluation and, when there are issues, informs the Ministry of Education and/or the local authorities or the school inspectorate. The 2018 External Evaluation procedure (due to be adopted this



Student representatives with the Minister for Education in Romania

³ This covers students from general education and IVET offered by schools.



Student leaders outside the court following a trial on students' rights

year) strengthens the observers' role by entitling them to send formal reports to the Agency

The Agency considers this type of cooperation to be mutually beneficial as the evaluators are able to focus on the aspects of quality which are important to students, and the students' organisations increase their

understanding of how the education system works. Mr. Alexandru Manda, the Students' Association of Constanta's former Chairman, comments:

The participation at the external evaluation visits was a learning experience. The first time I was an external observer was in May 2015 when I was 16 years old - the two days helped me to understand better how we can assure the quality of education for all students and how we can connect the realities from the grassroots with the national public policies. The discussions I had with students, teachers and parents during the external evaluation visits were used to develop the School Students Statute - the code of school students' rights and duties which was approved by the Ministry of Education in August 2016 after 10 months of negotiations.

The Agency plans to deepen their cooperation with students by organising conferences, workshops and training seminars. These will help to make the participation of student observers a permanent feature of external evaluation.

Graduate Tracking and Alumni Relations in VET Schools: two sides of the same coin?



*Iván Diego ;
is the coordinator of
TRACKTION project*

An article by Iván Diego, TRACKTION Project coordinator

TRACKTION is a three year Erasmus+ project (2017-2020) which puts the spotlight on VET graduate tracking at the provider level. Tracking is understood as all systematic approaches that VET institutions use to record information on graduates with regard to their

learning progress; skills acquired; perceptions; routes into employment, self-employment, or further training.

TRACKTION began with a mapping exercise to better understand VET schools' existing approaches to tracking and system-level data requirements in the countries represented in the partnership (Estonia, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK). Although this is still a work in progress, the preliminary findings suggest this information is usually collected at a single point in time, mainly via e-mail or phone surveys. Although there are regional and school variations, most initiatives collect information directly related to two EQAVET indicators, "Indicator 5 - Placement rate in VET programmes" and "Indicator 6 - Utilisation of acquired skills at the workplace".

Bearing in mind the success of tracking systems is largely conditioned by the ability to communicate with graduates (Gaebel, M. et al, 2012); this small-scale survey covered a section on alumni relations. The evidence suggests that developing and strengthening an alumni culture in VET schools may help to overcome recurring obstacles in tracking studies such as low response rates.

These early insights slowly make the case for obtaining much more finely grained information that sheds light on the complex interplay between individuals' expectations, their learning trajectories and destinations. It also raises questions such as:

- What happens to in-year withdrawals?
- How does the previous (job) experience of learners have an impact on their future employment outcomes?
- Is their current job aligned with their expectations before they completed the training? If not, is the retrospective evaluation of the study programme negatively biased?
- Is progression into further learning a good thing per se?

As usual the devil is in the detail; and the need to consider the purpose, time and resources available to make tracking happen.

Obtaining accurate, reliable and comparable data on learner destinations is a necessary but not sufficient

condition. VET schools and VET administrations need to reinforce their capacity to act on data, other than for marketing or self-assuring purposes. So while we fully agree that tracker studies are an excellent way to listen to the voice of graduates on the quality culture of VET, we are slightly more cautious about the extent to which graduates' feedback on their destination influences the VET provision/system.

Some authors have cast doubts about destination tracking as an appropriate measure of the value of learning if it is considered in isolation. (Berger-Voigt, B. & Overell, S., 2015) Avoiding the risk of misinterpretation requires the

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Soufflearning – an innovative and successful approach for work-based-learning

An article by Kristin Simon, Mediator and communications trainer

For more than ten years, the Bonn Science Shop (Wila Bonn) has provided 'Soufflearning' as a personalised training concept for staff in small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). In addition the Bonn Science Shop has provided workshops for trainers and coaches in Europe through finance provided by the European Commission under the Leonardo da Vinci - Transfer-of-Innovation scheme. The main objectives of this approach to learning are to improve a company's performance, to strengthen the competence of the staff, and to create a continuous improvement cycle at the individual, group and company level.

Approximately 75 coaches from Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, Spain, France, the Czech Republic and Germany received training from 2012 to 2014 in the Soufflearning methodology. This includes an eight-hour practical workshop which develops trainers' competences to provide in-house coaching in their specialised fields of expertise.

The Soufflearning methodology focuses on work-based learning. This involves:

- the employer making a contract with an external coach rather than sending staff to an external seminar with questionable long term effects;

inclusion of a wider range of context variables such as the unemployment rate, economic structure and economic cycle, individuals' motivations and so on (Schomburg, H., 2016). Taking all of the above into consideration, TRACKTION is now devising a tracking protocol methodology for use in the 2018-2019 school year. Stay tuned for more details.

Updates are available from: www.tracktionerasmus.eu

The project partners are Valnalon (Spain), Alfa College (The Netherlands), Tknika (Spain), Cometa Formazione (Italy), PKHK (Estonia) and Education & Employers Taskforce (UK).



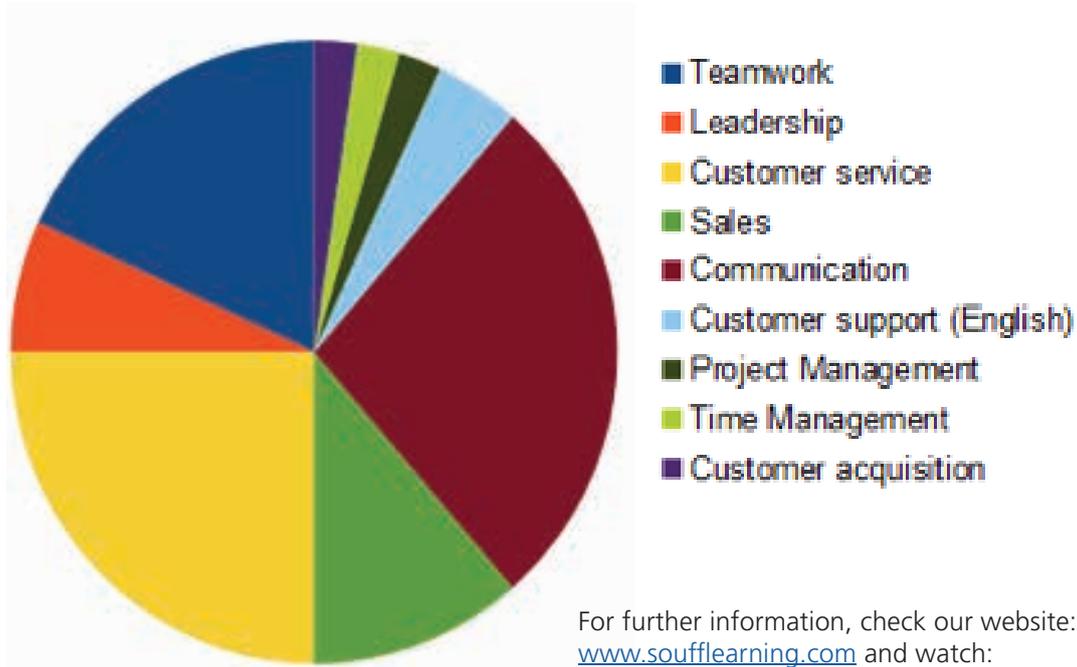
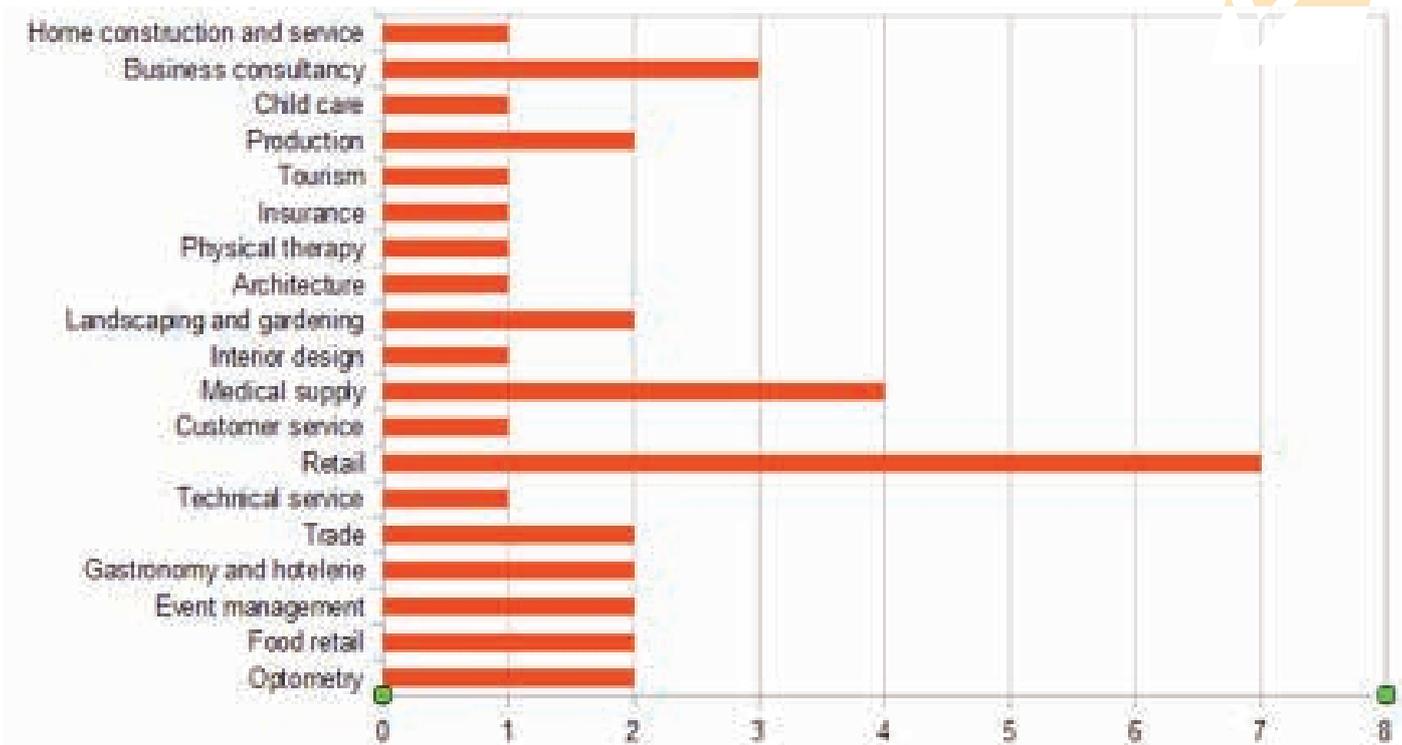
*Kristin Simon;
Mediator and
communications trainer*

- three or four personal training sessions* at the workplace alongside self-learning-activities in between the training sessions. The training starts with a kick-off-workshop for all participants, continues with a several face-to-face sessions during regular working-hours and finishes with a closing workshop;
- company based training which lasts between 3 to 6 months, depending on the size of the company and the number of staff who will be trained. Employers have found this training methodology to be much cheaper than expected.

"Soufflearning" uses the European EQAVET building blocks to assure the quality of its provision. The focus is mainly on the following four building blocks – 'train', 'communicate', 'improve' and 'respond'. The learner's view is central to the whole process and there is a strong focus on communicating and responding to the needs of the learner. The employer sets the initial goals for the process of change (e.g. in an area of business such as client services or sales) but the training is personalised and each participant can focus on their own priorities to maximise the impact of the training.

The learning approach is based on a structured framework of clear and measurable steps which can be adopted easily to different training fields. The training is easy to implement, and there is an effective transfer of skills, because learning takes place alongside and within the working process. The learners' feedback is used to support the process of work based learning.

Companies in eight European countries have used the idea of Soufflearning. These employers include companies in the following sectors:



For further information, check our website: www.soufflearning.com and watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lygpy3weBE>
 Contact: Kristin.Simon@wilabonn.de

⁴ The trainer helps the trainee like a prompter in a theatre: in French this is "souffler".

⁵ The Soufflearning approach and its use of the EQAVET Building Blocks to ensure the quality of the learning process are described in the "Complex methodological handbook for work-based learning in CVET", 2017. This was published by The Government Office of Békés County, ALFA KISOSZ Advocacy and Training Association, Gyulahús Ltd., South Savo Vocational College, CIOFS-FP and Wila Bonn.

⁶ The EQAVET network has developed six Building Blocks for the quality assurance of work based learning - <https://www.eqavet.eu/Aligning-with-EQAVET/Work-based-learning/Building-Blocks>

A strategic view on quality assurance – the learners' voice

An article by Thea van den Boom, Chair of the EQAVET Working Group on the role of QA in the broader policy context, 2018



Thea van den Boom
Chair of the EQAVET
Working Group

The 2017 Annual Network Meeting established a strategic working group to provide advice to policymakers engaged in EU level discussions relating to quality assurance. The EQAVET Network members agreed that the work should involve a reflection on strategic developments beyond 2020 and the role EQAVET should play, considering the potential revision of EQAVET in 2019.

The working group met on three occasions to prepare papers for discussion at the 2018 Annual Network Meeting.

One of the main issues considered by the working group was the role which learners can and should play in the quality assurance process – both at the provider and the system level. In considering the effectiveness of quality assurance, the working group recognised that VET provision is designed to meet the needs of learners and the needs of the labour market. In this context ensuring the provision is suitable for learners is as important as ensuring it is suitable for employers. It is widely recognised that VET providers and policy makers must ask employers whether their needs are being met (this is a strong element of the EQAVET framework and the Network's development of EQAVET+). However it is not so widely recognised that learners should be asked. It is possible to do much more. Students can be involved in improving the quality of teaching, the curriculum, work-based learning, examinations, the school environment and the guidance service etc. These are all issues that concern them. By asking learners regularly for their views and experiences, and by involving them in decisions and debates, the quality of VET provision can be improved. In this way learners can be part of the quality assurance of different stages of the education process at different levels, in the classroom, at the school level and at the system level.

The working group has thought about these ideas and the papers which were discussed at the Annual Network Meeting (ANM) illustrate how a future strategic approach to quality assurance needs to take account of the views of learners. (Further information on EQAVET is available at <https://www.eqavet.eu/What-We-Do/annual-network-meeting>) Increasingly VET providers use

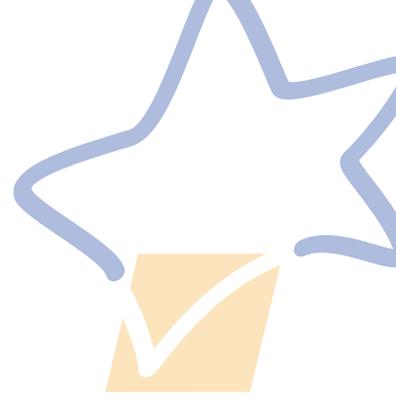
a range of teaching and learning approaches based on coaching, guiding and other forms of pedagogy which are learner centred. In this less traditional environment it is particularly important for learners to have the opportunity to influence developments, to comment on the pedagogy and to provide feedback on whether their learning needs are being met. These new ways of training are equally prevalent in the school and work-based environments, and learners have much to contribute in both of these contexts.

The working group has also thought about the EQAVET indicators and whether some of these are particularly useful in enabling VET providers and policy makers to improve the quality of provision. This has led to debates about whether or not the indicators should cover outcomes or outputs; processes; or the learners' perspectives should be emphasised. In practice there is a need for all these measures but, at the moment, it seems that the learners' voice is under-emphasised in the EQAVET framework. The reflections of the working group and the discussion at the Annual Network Meeting in Sofia in June 2018 have provided an opportunity to make recommendations about how this could be addressed and the learners' voice could be strengthened.



Study on mapping of VET graduate tracking measures in EU Member States

An article by Arancha Oviedo, EQAVET



Arancha Oviedo
EQAVET Secretariat

ICF Consulting was commissioned by the European Commission to undertake this study. The final report was published in March 2018 and is available [here](#).

POLICY CONTEXT

The [Council Recommendation on tracking graduates adopted](#) in November 2017 underlined that graduate tracking is a key policy priority. This Recommendation is linked to the [Riga Conclusions](#) and is part of the new Skills Agenda for Europe. It aims to improve the availability of qualitative and quantitative information on graduates from VET and higher education programmes. Member States are invited to make progress, by 2020, to establish graduate tracking systems that may include the:

- collection of relevant administrative data from education, tax and social security databases;
- development of longitudinal graduate surveys; and
- possibility to link, on an anonymised basis, data from different sources to build a composite picture of graduate outcomes.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to:

1. provide an overview of the existing VET graduate tracking systems and measures in EU countries;
2. review options for EU actions in order to meet the policy objectives of the [Council Recommendation on tracking graduates](#).

The study's findings covered four key areas:

FINDINGS	KEY AREA 1 – THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 EU countries implement at least one VET graduate tracking measure, but only 19 carry this out in a regular manner • three countries have a regional but no national measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in eight countries the measures cover IVET and CVET (not just IVET) 	<p>There is a lack of regular and systematic measures in some Member States. This is likely to be because this issue is not a national or regional priority or the lack is resources.</p>
FINDINGS	KEY AREA 2 – DATA COLLECTION METHODS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the most commonly used data collection method is surveys • 40% of measures use administrative education and employment data and • 10% of measures combine administrative and survey data 	<p>The limited use of administrative data is mainly related to limited cooperation among the authorities with responsibility for different policy areas (education, employment, social security and tax).</p> <p>Combining data from different sources is often restricted by data protection regulations; national legislation or technical difficulties of combining anonymised data.</p>

⁷ Information on how EU Member States are progressing on quality assurance issues set out in the Riga Conclusions is available in the EQAVET Secretariat Survey 2016-2017 available at: <https://www.eqavet.eu/Eqavet2017/media/Documents/Report-implementation-of-EQAVET-Results-EQAVET-Secretariat-Survey-2016.pdf>



FINDINGS	KEY AREA 3 – USING DATA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% of the surveys are based on a sample of VET graduates e.g. 1-2 years after graduation. The remaining surveys cover the all VET graduates • only a few measures compare VET graduates destinations compared with early VET leavers • very few measures are used to collect longitudinal data on VET graduates’ destinations. 	<p>The limited use of longitudinal approaches is likely to be due to a lack of resources and limited know-how.</p>

FINDINGS	KEY AREA 4 – TYPE OF DATA AND STAKEHOLDERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nearly all the measures collect information on employment status and over 50% capture information on employment type • relatively few measures collect information on salaries and the match between qualification and job • most measures collect information on learner participation in further learning • 33% of measures collect information on learner satisfaction • the links between EQAVET (particularly indicators 5 and 6) and tracking systems are not clear in most countries. 	<p>Stakeholders have limited access to data. Their access seems to depend on the type of data collected and the cooperation mechanisms in place between authorities, VET providers and other stakeholders</p> <p>Stakeholders’ willingness and capacity to use data to inform their decision making is also limited.</p>

Based on these findings, the study recommends:

- systematic measures for tracking VET graduates in IVET and CVET should be developed in all countries;
- national and EU stakeholders should be encouraged to use the results from VET graduate tracking measures;
- the availability of comparable data at EU level should be ensured.

WHAT COULD BE DONE AT THE EU LEVEL?

The study gathered feedback from stakeholders on possible options for EU level intervention. The study appraised each option by assessing their potential to achieve policy objectives, costs, risks and the EU added value. The results are presented on the following scale:

Preferred option		Least preferred options	
			
Provide support or incentives to create measures at the national, regional or provider level	Adjust an existing EU survey to enable/improve VET graduate tracking	Develop a new EU measure to track VET graduates based on national administrative data	Develop a new EU survey to track VET graduates and/or Continue with the status quo – no additional actions are needed at the EU level

CONCLUSION

The information from the study will support the European Commission and Member States to modernise national VET systems including the development of systems for tracking graduates. The study provides valuable insights into how data from tracking graduates can be used to inform policy making and monitor the performance of VET in relation to the needs of the labour market. From an EQAVET perspective these are key issues which are part of an effective quality assurance approach.

⁸ Tracking measures that could support indicators are often not used and the experts with responsibility for tracking were often not, or only to a limited extent, informed about EQAVET (page 44) of the ICF report.
⁹ Representatives of national governmental departments or agencies in charge of education, employment, VET or qualifications, EQAVET EU-level experts, experts in graduate tracking, representatives of EU VET providers’ associations and Cedefop.

Events

The Directors-General for Vocational Education and Training met on 23-24 April 2018 in Sofia, Bulgaria.

The meeting was organised as part of the Bulgarian Presidency of the EU Council and included peer review workshops at which participants reflected and discussed how countries are addressing the November 2017 [Council Recommendation on tracking graduates](#).

As part of the workshop discussions representatives from BE-fr, CZ, SE, PL, EE, SK, DE and FI presented their experiences of how:

1. data from graduate tracking measures is used as part of effective feedback loops between VET provision and the labour market;
2. to build comprehensive graduate tracking systems that provide both quantitative and qualitative data;
3. to develop effective longitudinal graduate tracking or multiple measurement points in graduate tracking systems.

The workshops were supported by the EQAVET Secretariat and its experts as data from tracking VET graduates is part of the quality assurance process at system and provider levels.

The workshop discussions highlighted challenges in establishing and developing tracking systems. These included:

- addressing the differences between IVET and CVET;
- the time-lag between collecting data and making changes;
- the need to involve stakeholders and ensure tailored usage of data;
- data protection and privacy;
- the value of combining administrative and survey data.

The representatives agreed on the importance of identifying policy issues which need to be addressed and then considering whether tracking is the best solution.

For further information on the meeting visit: www.eupresidency2018.com/media/files/downloads/Agenda-DGVT.pdf

Peer Learning Activity: March 2018, Cyprus

EQAVET's Peer Learning Activity on 'Higher VET and the role of Quality Assurance' took place in Larnaca, Cyprus on 20-21 March 2018. It was organised by the EQAVET Secretariat in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Culture in Cyprus and included a half-day visit and dinner at the Techniki Scholi Larnacos. It was attended by 45 participants from 17 Member States and the European social partners.

The focus was on VET qualifications at EQF Levels 5 to 7 which are provided outside the HE sector/provision. The discussions considered how:

- the provision of higher VET increases the attractiveness and relevance of VET;
- quality assurance can contribute to fostering parity of esteem between qualifications from the higher education sector and higher VET.

During the PLA most of the available time was dedicated to discussion following short presentations from three Member States (Cyprus, Austria and Ireland) and UEAPME – the European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises. The PLA was supported by a background paper and led to the publication of a policy brief. All the material can be found on the EQAVET website at:

<https://www.eqavet.eu/What-We-Do/peer-learning-activities/Higher-VET-and-the-role-of-QA>



Students from the Techniki Scholi Larnacos

EQAVET Annual Network Meeting: June 2018, Bulgaria

The Annual Network Meeting will be on 20-21 June. It will be hosted by the Ministry of Education and Science, Bulgaria. The discussion will focus on the papers produced by the EQAVET working group which considered the strategic role of quality assurance in VET within an EU policy context.

The presentations, background papers and report of the discussion at the Annual Network Meeting will be available on the EQAVET website [here](#)

What's New?



- Germany's Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB - <https://www.bibb.de/en/index.php>) has published an overview of the centralised quality assurance mechanisms which underpin the company-based part of initial training. The brochure covers the most important regulations, procedures and stakeholders which secure and pursue the further development of training quality at the company. The brochure is written for education and training experts from academia, policy making and practice in Germany and Europe. Copies of the brochure can be downloaded from the BIBB website at:

<https://www.bibb.de/veroeffentlichungen/de/publication/show/8548> (English version)

<https://www.bibb.de/veroeffentlichungen/de/publication/show/8455> (German version)

- The Recommendation on the quality and effectiveness of apprenticeships has been accepted. This Recommendation (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=89&furtherNews=yes&langId=en&newsId=2873>). complements EQAVET but differs in relation to two fundamental areas:

the focus is on the quality of apprenticeships not quality assurance;

it includes working conditions and health and safety issues associated with apprenticeships which are not included in EQAVET.

- The EU pilot survey on graduate tracking in tertiary education including higher VET was launched in January 2018. An expert group to support this study has been established and the contractors will distribute questionnaires in September 2018.
- The mapping study on graduate tracking was published in March 2018 and is available at <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=8073&type=2&furtherPubs=no>
- The European Education Area was launched in November 2017. It contains several dimensions affecting VET such as the recognition of school leaving and higher education diplomas. More info: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/news/towards-european-education-area-2025-2017-nov-14_en
- The study being organised by contractors (ICF and 3s) on the future options for ECVET and EQAVET included a stakeholder meeting in April 2018. The report of this study is due to be available in September 2019.
- The EQAVET Secretariat survey was launched in April 2018.



EQAVET

European Quality Assurance
in Vocational Education and Training