



Study on Higher Vocational education and training

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Why Higher VET?



- Growing **economic sectors' demand** for skills beyond upper secondary education/ initial VET (healthcare, ICT, business, technical/ engineering specialities)
- Growing **labour market demand** for flexible and fast responds from education and training on skills provision
- Needs to foster **VET excellence and innovation**
- Growing number of **young people** who wish to continue studies (e.g. - after IVET, or upper sec. education) not necessarily within academic and 4-years bachelor or master HE studies
- Needs to ensure **“one step up” and LLL for adults**, employed or not
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What is Higher VET?



Characteristics:

- VET/PET (?) at higher qualification levels (EQF level 5 and up; ISCED-1997 4-6/ ISCED-2011 4-8;
- Pre-dominance of professionally oriented aspects in terms of profile and content of a programme and qualifications
- Intense integration with the world of work in several aspects
- Diverse picture across EU, rarely common understanding and agreed definition

•Twofold purpose:

- i) primarily prepare for direct entry to the labour market in a certain field or area, provide access to a certain profession;
- ii) currency for entry or progression to education and training programmes at higher levels



Narrow definition: higher professional and vocational education and training outside the EHEA

- Post-secondary level VET, offered outside higher education
- Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) and other LLL programmes offered in the formal education system
- Higher-level CVET provided outside the formal education system (often – RNFIL)

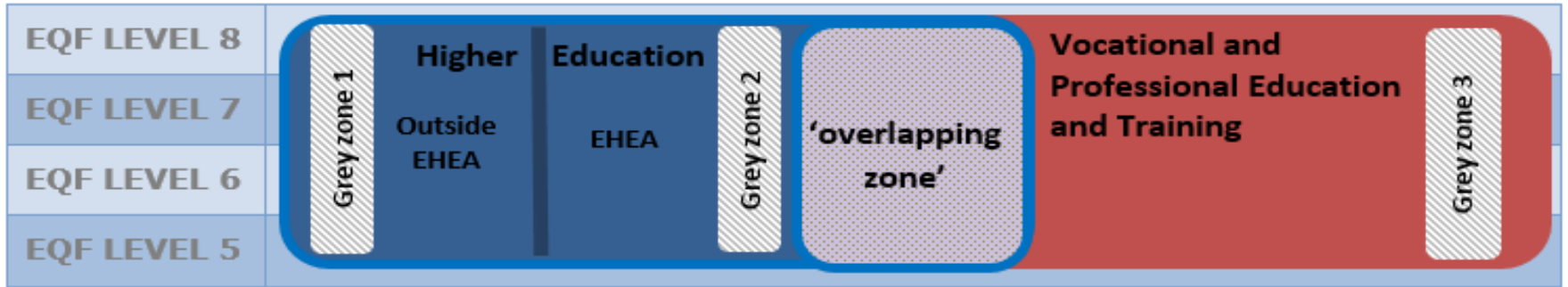
Broad definition: Professional programmes/qualifications at level 5 and above, including those, covered by the EHEA

- Short-cycle higher education;
- Professional Bachelor and Professional Master degrees;
- Dual studies (apprenticeship or 'alternance' types) at Bachelor, Master or Doctoral level.



- CVET programmes/qualifications, provided by higher education institutions, but which are not considered qualifications covered by the EHEA
- professional-type higher education programmes/qualifications offered by traditional academic universities other than short-cycle degrees, Professional Bachelor or Professional Master Degrees. This may include certain programmes/qualifications related to teacher training, medical studies or engineering
- programmes and qualifications for which it cannot be clearly determined whether they are above upper-secondary level (or above EQF level 4). CVET programmes not linked to an NQF level/ ISCED classified

OVERVIEW



'Narrow' definition of higher VET (VET outside EHEA)



'Broad' definition of higher VET

Defining Higher VET and overview of the situation in EU-28 - 3

		EQF level 5	EQF level 6	EQF level 7	EQF level 8
HE ('overlapping zone')		AT, BE-nl, DK, ES, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, SI, UK	AT, BG, DE, DK, EE, FR, IT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, SI	AT, IT, LU, LV, NL, PL	IT
Higher professional and vocational education and training offered outside EHEA ('narrow' definition of higher VET)	Post-secondary	AT, BG, CY, EE, EL, ES, HU, IE, IT, RO, SK, SE, UK	DE, IT, SE	CZ, IT	IT
	CVET	BE-nl, CZ, DK, FI, FR, HR, IE, LU, NL	AT, BE-nl, CZ, DE, DK, FI, NL	BE-nl, CZ, DK	
	Outside the formal system	EE	EE	EE	EE



- **Per education sub-systems/sectors:**

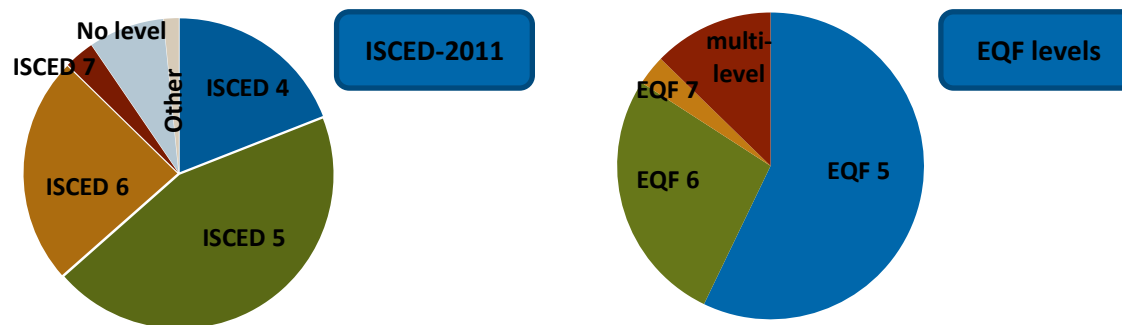
- Post-secondary: CY, EL, RO (post-high schools); SK-certified specialist
- HVET, covered by EHEA: PT (only- I 5); SI (Short cycle – I5; other – level 6); PL (State HV Schools. I 6, 7; (Foreign Language) Teacher Training colleges – I 5, 6); LV (I 5-7)
- CVET: HR, LU- Master Craftsperson; FR-Masters qualifications – Chambers of trade; BE-fl – Professional qualifications (I 5-7) can be obtained based on recognition; DK – further adult education, I 5;

- **Per countries**

- Out of 63 studied programmes – 36 refer to level 5
- In most countries with HVET at level 5, level 6-8 are predominantly “reserved” for HE
- In one third of the countries, levels from 5 up are in principle open for all types of qualifications (AT, BE-fr, CZ, DE, EE, FI, IE, IT, NL, PL, UK)

Main Features

- **History/tradition:** more than one third of higher VET types studied are considered 'recent' (< 10 years)
 - clear tendency towards EQF level 5 in recently introduced qualifications (19 out of 22)
- **ISCED/EQF levels** of higher VET types analysed



- ISCED-97 levels: almost half ISCED level 5b – 'more practically oriented and occupationally specific than programmes at 5a'
- **Segment of education and training:** post-secondary non-tertiary VET and higher education each account for approximately one third

Main features of higher VET - 2

▪ Governance:

- **Awarding body:** In 2/3 cases awarded by the provider; some directly by a ministry; a very small number by social partners or sectoral bodies
- **Funding:** almost all cases studied rely on some form of public funding
- **QA:** for programmes/qualifications studied *outside* higher education, almost three quarters have some kind of accreditation procedure in place (responsible body: often ministry, sometimes accreditation bodies or qualifications bodies);

Cases *without* any accreditation in place can be found at post-secondary non-tertiary level and in IVET.

Main features of higher VET - 3

- **Key focus/purpose:**

- Preparation for employment (50 out of 63) followed by up-skilling (29) and re-skilling.
- Preparation for further learning or training seems to play a much less prominent role.
- Cases of CVET and post-secondary non-tertiary education and training significantly more often focus on re-skilling and up-skilling (as compared to IVET, HE cases).

- **Permeability:**

- Only 4 out of 10 CVET and post-secondary non-tertiary cases studied provide access and progression to further learning (significantly lower than for HE and IVET cases).

- **Content and type of learning outcomes:**

- The majority of cases focus on vocational LO (i.e. more than 50% of LO); one third display an equal balance between academic (general) and vocational LO.
- No or very little research included (54 out of 63) in most cases.

- **Mode of delivery, acquisition and pathways: flexibility as a key aspect**

- More than half of the cases are offered both in full-time and part-time format. Flexible formats available across all segments of E&T, most prevalent in HE.
- The extent of work-based learning is considered 'medium' or 'large' in 47 out of 63 cases.

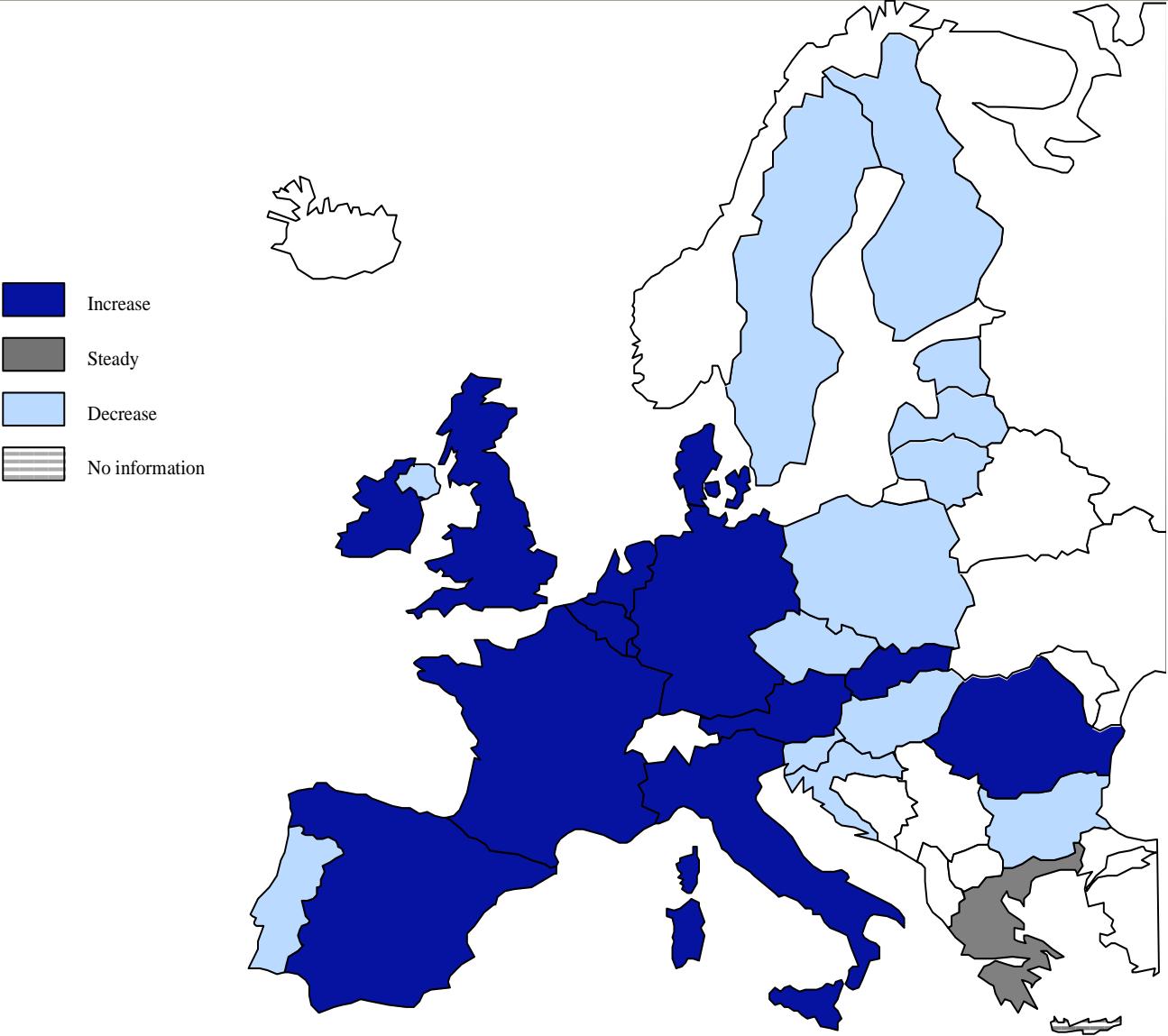
Main features of higher VET - 4

- **Teachers and trainers:** specific level of qualification (20 out of 63) or qualification and related work experience (27 out of 63); large variations across institutions and subjects taught.
- **Partnership and cooperation with businesses:** in nearly all cases; in 80 percent of the cases, the extent of cooperation was stated as being of either 'medium' or 'large' extent.
- **Cooperation with other training institutions:** less prevalent; 1/4 without cooperation with other training institutions
- **Sectoral prevalence:** various fields and sectors; three top sectors of the cases studied: business, engineering and health.

In summary: HVET is

- a dynamic area
- a demand driven sector: higher skills and flexible responds to LM needs and good employment chances
- less regulated sector (in many cases) –in terms of Q and curricula
- a sector with vibrant cooperation (with increasing number of apprenticeships) between employers and educational providers
 - Involvement of employers in governance structures
 - Joint definition of the need of the programme, curriculum design and teaching
 - Provision of WBL (AT: dual studies at Uni of AS; DE; FI; FR; IT; PL, PT, SE, UK)
- actor in regional development and supporting innovation
- often offering flexible learning paths and progression, still with obstacles in adequate recognition of VET qualifications at HEI

Participation in higher VET



Trends

- **Evolution of the relationship between Higher VET and HE**
 - development or reforms of short cycle qualifications or professional bachelor degrees
 - Examples: AT the introduction of short cycle degrees is being considered; CZ replacement of the higher VET qualification Qualified Specialist (DiS) with professional bachelor degrees was considered;
- **NQFs development and how to position higher VET**
 - No non-university qualifications levels 6 and above (BG, DK, EE, EL, ES, HR, HU, RO)
 - Set of parallel levels for HE and higher VET (AT, BE fr, BE nl, PL)
 - All levels open to all types of qualifications:
 - Higher VET qualifications are included at levels 6 and sometimes even above (DE, FR, IE, LV, MT, NL)
 - No higher VET qualifications above level 5 in practice so far (IT, LT, LU, PT, SI)

Conclusions 1/4

Conclusions	Recommendations
<p>There is no consensus on the definition of higher VET. Higher VET does not correspond exactly to any of the segments of education and training.</p> <p>Higher VET is also not a homogeneous area. There is great diversity within this field. It could be questioned whether it is meaningful to analyse this field as a single group of qualifications when in reality it encompasses every different types of programmes and qualifications.</p>	<p>Use the term professional education at higher levels rather than the term vocational education and training at higher levels.</p> <p>Reflect on whether this field should be referred to as a discrete sector</p>

Conclusions 2/4

Conclusions	Recommendations
<p>One important difficulty in delimitating higher VET is that most national qualifications frameworks do not yet involve qualifications awarded outside the formal education and training. There are many qualifications and qualifications types, mostly vocational or professional, outside formal education and training. However as these are not aligned with NQFs it is not possible to judge whether they are 'higher'.</p>	<p>Further research would be needed to better understand the extent to which the qualifications not covered by this study could be seen as higher VET.</p> <p>Support cooperation among countries on how to integrate higher qualifications that are outside the formal system into NQFs and how to position them in the education and training systems.</p>

Conclusions 3/4

Conclusions	Recommendations
<p>There is little evidence about outcomes of higher VET programmes but where these exist the studies show positive results. Most countries have very little hard data on this field of education and training. In particular there is very little data on the programmes and qualifications outside higher education area and formal post-secondary VET.</p>	<p>Develop activities to improve the evidence base about the different groups of qualifications and programmes that fall under higher VET. In particular those sub-groups that are outside higher education area. Such further work could contribute to develop an identity within the sector.</p> <p>Improve data collection on higher VET. Beyond participation data improve availability of evidence about employment outcomes of higher VET.</p>

Conclusions 4/4

Conclusions	Recommendations
<p>The main trends shaping higher VET are: the evolving relationship with the rest of the education system, growing demand that is in many countries linked to good employment outcomes, strengthening of workbased learning programmes. The challenges are linked to these trends as well and concern mostly the ambiguous relationship with higher education when it comes to competition for students, absence of clear positioning and limited recognition of higher VET in higher education.</p>	<p>Support mutual learning on issues that are commonly recognised by several countries. Promote innovative models of higher VET by peer-learning or study visits. Ensure these exchanges are based on evidence-based review of the example being discussed.</p>



**Thank you for the attention!
Questions? Comments?**

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