



SUPPORTING TRAINING AND LEARNING ABROAD: THE EU MOBILITY SCOREBOARD FOR INITIAL VET

The mobility scoreboard takes stock of European countries' provisions for learning abroad, offering a wealth of comparable information and examples of good practice

'One's destination is never a place, but rather a new way of looking at things'. Learning abroad is generally seen as an enriching and often far-reaching experience, especially for young people, and Henry Miller's way of putting it is as true today as it was 60 years ago ⁽¹⁾. For the European Union, promoting learning abroad is also a necessity, as it strives to match its workforce's skills to labour market needs and reduce youth unemployment, while striking a balance between countries' and individuals' needs and wishes. Learning abroad is also about inspiring young people to think and feel more European at a time where growing nationalism across the continent threatens European cohesion.

ONLINE PLATFORM OF IVET MOBILITY SCOREBOARD: HAVE A LOOK! ⁽²⁾



How did it all start?

In 2010, the Council launched *Youth on the move*, a package of policy initiatives to improve young

Europeans' learning and working opportunities, at home and abroad. The year after, the Council published the recommendation *Youth on the move – promoting the learning mobility of young people*. It advocated the creation of a tool – a 'mobility scoreboard' – which would 'monitor (...) progress in promoting, and removing obstacles to, learning mobility' in Europe.

Later that year the Council also set the goal that, by 2020, at least 6% of all 18 to 34 year-olds with a VET background be granted a learning experience abroad ⁽³⁾.

EAECA/Eurydice ⁽⁴⁾ set out to work on a mobility scoreboard for higher education, based on six indicators measuring student mobility. In parallel, the European Commission entrusted Cedefop with the development of a mobility scoreboard for VET, especially initial VET (IVET). The IVET scoreboard covers the EU Member States, Iceland and Norway. The two scoreboards complement each other.

What is the mobility scoreboard for IVET?

Adding to Europass and ECVET, the IVET mobility scoreboard complements support tools for learning mobility. As a European online tool to help policy-

⁽¹⁾ Henry Miller(1957). *Big Sur and the Oranges of Hieronymus Bosch*.

⁽²⁾ More information is available on Cedefop's website:
<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/mobility-scoreboard>

⁽³⁾ In 2015, Eurostat calculated (based on 2014 data from 16 Member States) that, on average, 3.1% of IVET learners at ISCED 3 level (upper secondary education) travel for learning.

⁽⁴⁾ European Audiovisual, Education and Culture Agency, hosting Eurydice, the European education information network.

makers develop learning mobility in IVET across Europe, it takes stock of policies and structures in place in countries to support the mobility of students and apprentices in IVET. The scoreboard analyses 10 action areas:

- what information and guidance countries provide on learning mobility;
- how countries motivate learners to participate in international learning mobility activities;
- what countries do to prepare young people for learning abroad, such as offering language learning;
- countries' efforts to remove the administrative and institutional obstacles to mobility;
- whether learners can use their grants and loans when learning abroad;
- what countries do to improve the quality of mobility schemes;
- whether countries recognise skills and knowledge acquired abroad;
- what structures countries have in place to support disadvantaged learners;
- what partnership and funding arrangements are available;
- what role multipliers play.

Data are regularly updated by Cedefop's VET information network (ReferNet) and broken down into 14 indicators: 10 corresponding to the 10 areas above, and four 'transversal' indicators capturing countries' performance in:

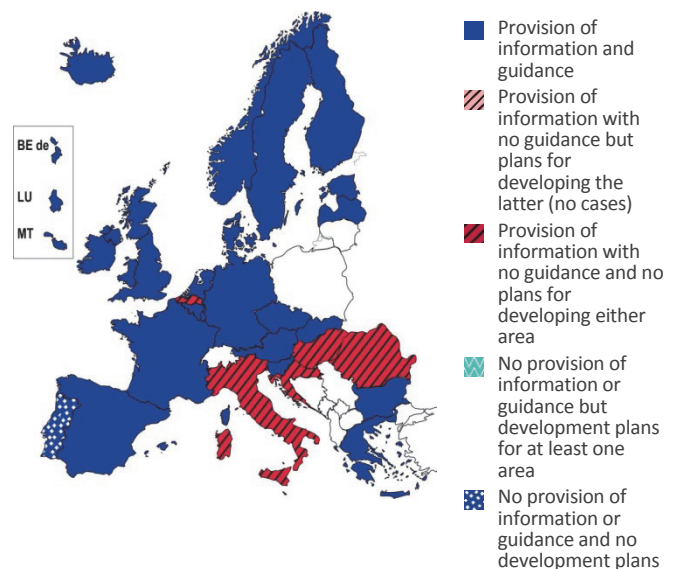
- setting up targets for mobility policies;
- coordinating mobility policies;
- evaluating mobility policies;
- having an overall strategy for mobility in general.

In the long term, the mobility scoreboard will help national policy-makers keep abreast of VET developments in their countries in crucial areas of mobility, while enabling them to learn about policies and practices in other countries, which may inspire them. The indicators also make it easier to identify categories of countries with a similar degree of implementation of the *Youth on the move* recommendation. This information helps European stakeholders identify areas of common concern which can be shared between countries to enable them to raise VET's profile and make it more attractive to learners, employers and other stakeholders. The scoreboard is not a comparative tool of achieved success in mobility but a work in constant process to

support VET reform in areas that increase visibility of learning in different work and cultural environments. It is a new way of looking at VET and making it more appealing for lifelong learning.

The scoreboard has maps which allow the user to identify, at a glance, the variety of country situations on a range of mobility issues.

FIGURE 1. MAP SHOWING PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE ON INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY FOR IVET LEARNERS



The scoreboard also has country 'scorecards' which offer a snapshot of a single country's situation across the board. These may be helpful for policy-makers to understand which areas may need more attention than others.

FIGURE 2: EXAMPLE - FRANCE SCORECARD

1. Information and guidance	3.3. Time limit
1.1. Mechanism for provision	3.4. Visibility policy
1.2. Coordination	3.5. Use of EU tools
1.3. Evaluation	
2. Adm. & institutional issues	4. Partnerships & funding
2.1. Integration & targets	4.1. Creation of partnerships
2.2. Facilitating measures	4.2. Funding learners' mobility
3. Recognition	4.3. Arranging mobility
3.1. Scope	
3.2. Coordination	
	COUNTRY'S OVERALL AVERAGE

Overview tables show the current position in countries and allow for comparison between them. The use of different colours, corresponding to their overall 'rating', helps both national and European policy-makers locate the different levels of performance and take action where needed.

FIGURE 3. OVERVIEW TABLE: COUNTRY PERFORMANCE ACROSS INDICATORS

	1	2	3	4	5
AUSTRIA					
BELGIUM-ALL					
BELGIUM-DE					
BELGIUM-FR					
BELGIUM-FL					
BULGARIA					
CROATIA					
CYPRUS					
CZECH REPUBLIC					
DENMARK					
ESTONIA					
FINLAND					
FRANCE					
GERMANY					
GREECE					
HUNGARY					
ICELAND					
IRELAND					
ITALY					
LATVIA					
LUXEMBOURG					
MALTA					
NETHERLAND					
NORWAY					
PORTUGAL					
ROMANIA					
SLOVAKIA					
SLOVENIA					
SPAIN					
SWEDEN					
UNITED KINGDOM					
AVERAGE EU-26					
AVERAGE EU-26+IS+NO					

NB: 1 – Information and guidance
 2 – Administration and institutional issues
 3 – Recognition
 4 – Partnerships and funding
 5 – Overall country average

Detailed descriptions of individual country structures and policies along with analyses of their situation compared to the requirements of the Council recommendation can be found in the country fiches. These act as a repository of good practices and highlight shortcomings. To address the latter, the scoreboard includes suggestions for improvement.

Who is the mobility scoreboard intended for?

The scoreboard is addressed to:

- national policy-makers, whom it can help undertake reforms to improve mobility policies, using not only indicators of their own countries but also examples of other countries' good (and bad) practices;
- EU level policy-makers who monitor the implementation of EU mobility policies. The scoreboard can help them adapt European requirements according to how countries perform and assist those lagging behind in certain areas;
- organisers of mobility projects, such as IVET institutions, companies and staff (teachers, trainers, counsellors) involved in mobility projects who may find inspiration in other people's or countries' projects. In turn, their own experiences with developing such projects may be valuable to others;
- unions, associations and student organisations whose mission is to protect the interests of their constituents. They are well placed to identify problems both incoming and outgoing learners may face. The scoreboard may help them identify good practices in use abroad and design suggestions for reforms accordingly;
- employers who will be looking for new skills and new knowledge for their services or products.

Why is the mobility scoreboard useful?

The scoreboard is a unique source of information on mobility in IVET across Europe. It offers a wealth of information on aspects of VET learner mobility, including the help and guidance they receive in the key action areas. It allows its users to take stock of what is being done to promote learner mobility in Europe, helps policy-makers locate areas of concern, provides a database of useful practices, and offers a space to formulate policy suggestions suited to the Council's recommendation.

As it matures over time, the mobility scoreboard will reveal trends and convey an ever-sharper picture of policy responses to the various challenges identified. The labour market evolves at a faster rate than education and training: mobility bridges the differences in speed between the two.

Insights, comments and policy recommendations: a sneak preview

One of the first success stories told by the mobility scoreboard is the good performance overall of the participating countries in terms of partnerships and funding: 27 countries fund learners to stay abroad, 26 countries also grant support to the organisers of such stays, and 24 countries support cross-European partnerships between IVET institutions and companies.

There is evidence suggesting that the success can be linked to EU programmes such as Leonardo and Erasmus+. In many countries, these programmes are the only available mobility schemes, their financing ensured by European funds.

Countries wishing to build on this success and steer further action could evaluate mobility schemes and transform their attractiveness into VET reform reflecting the ten areas of action outlined in the *Youth on the move* recommendation. Catch-up efforts by countries lagging behind in specific areas will help.

A less successful story revealed by the scoreboard concerns recognition of skills and knowledge acquired abroad: only about 12 countries recognise more than three types of learning components and outcomes ⁽⁵⁾, 19 countries do not offer any or only very lengthy recognition procedures (three months or longer), while 18 do not provide information to learners on where to address inquiries on recognition of their learning.

Actions for improvement in this field do not have to be costly: extending the scope of recognition procedures (which in some countries are at the discretion of training

providers and VET schools), time-framing these procedures, and making contact points for information more visible, require only limited resources.

Looking ahead

The IVET mobility scoreboard is a work in progress. It will continue to be improved as feedback is received from users and stakeholders. Data are regularly updated.

The scoreboard will be available online by the end of 2016. Its official launch, together with that of the higher education mobility scoreboard, will take place during the European VET week between 5 and 9 December 2016. Its full version, including all thematic areas and all indicators, is expected to be available in August 2017.

With the first round of evaluations of Erasmus+ and the launch of the Erasmus+ Pro experiment, mobility is on the political agenda: both the European Parliament and the Jacques Delors Institute have shown increased interest in the matter. The scoreboard will help identify priorities for action, support policy reforms in the Member States, and help mainstream mobility schemes for VET students and apprentices. It will support the exchange of good practices, reinforcing Cedefop's role as a knowledge broker who thinks European and acts local.

⁽⁵⁾ The mobility scoreboard distinguishes countries in terms of the variety of learning components and outcomes covered by their approach to recognition. It takes into consideration six learning components and outcomes: courses, credit points, units, modules, programmes, and qualifications. The more 'generous' a country's recognition provisions, the better for learner mobility.



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