



Major Trends in VET Curricula, Institutions and Assessment in Europe

Key results from
the Future of VET Project

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to vocational excellence”, BIBB, Bonn, September 8-9, 2022



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

Shaping VET

Cedefop

- looks into the future of VET
- monitors VET policy developments across the EU
- actively supports the development and use of European tools, such as the European qualifications framework



Structure of the presentation

- Where we started from
- Key results from the previous project
- Overview on publications
- The focus of the current project
- Key results
- Outlook on publications



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
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Decline or Expansion?

Where is European VET heading?

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

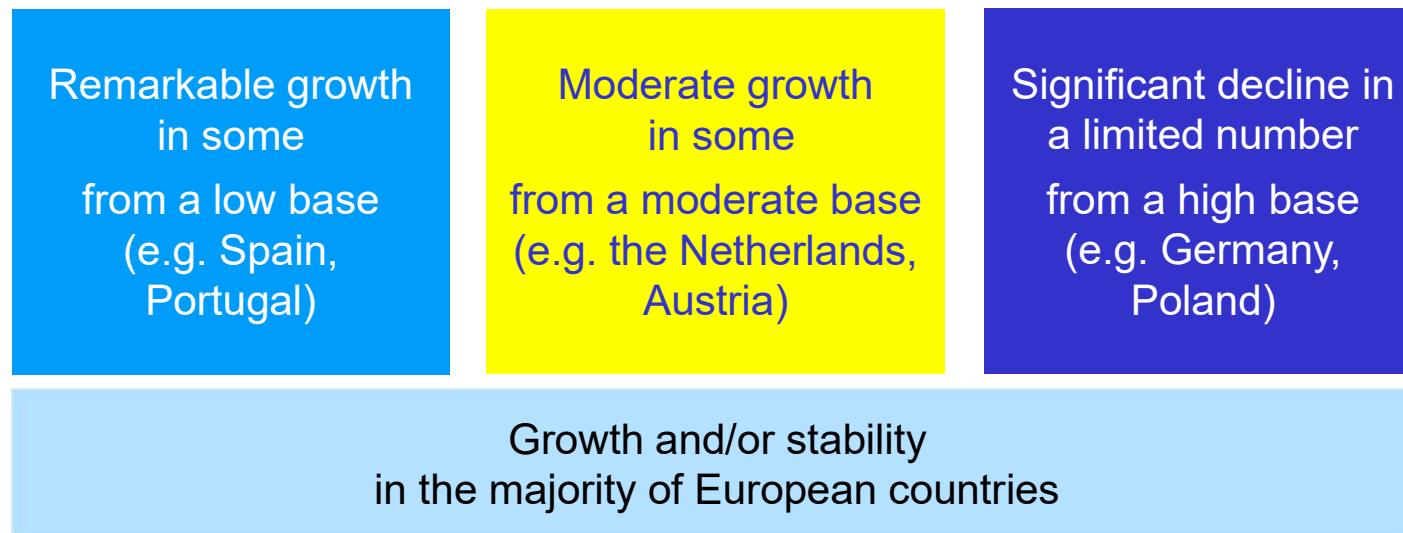
VET is expanding to higher levels and forms the backbone of lifelong learning

The skills provided by VET are essential for continued economic growth and for upholding welfare

Enrolment in IVET

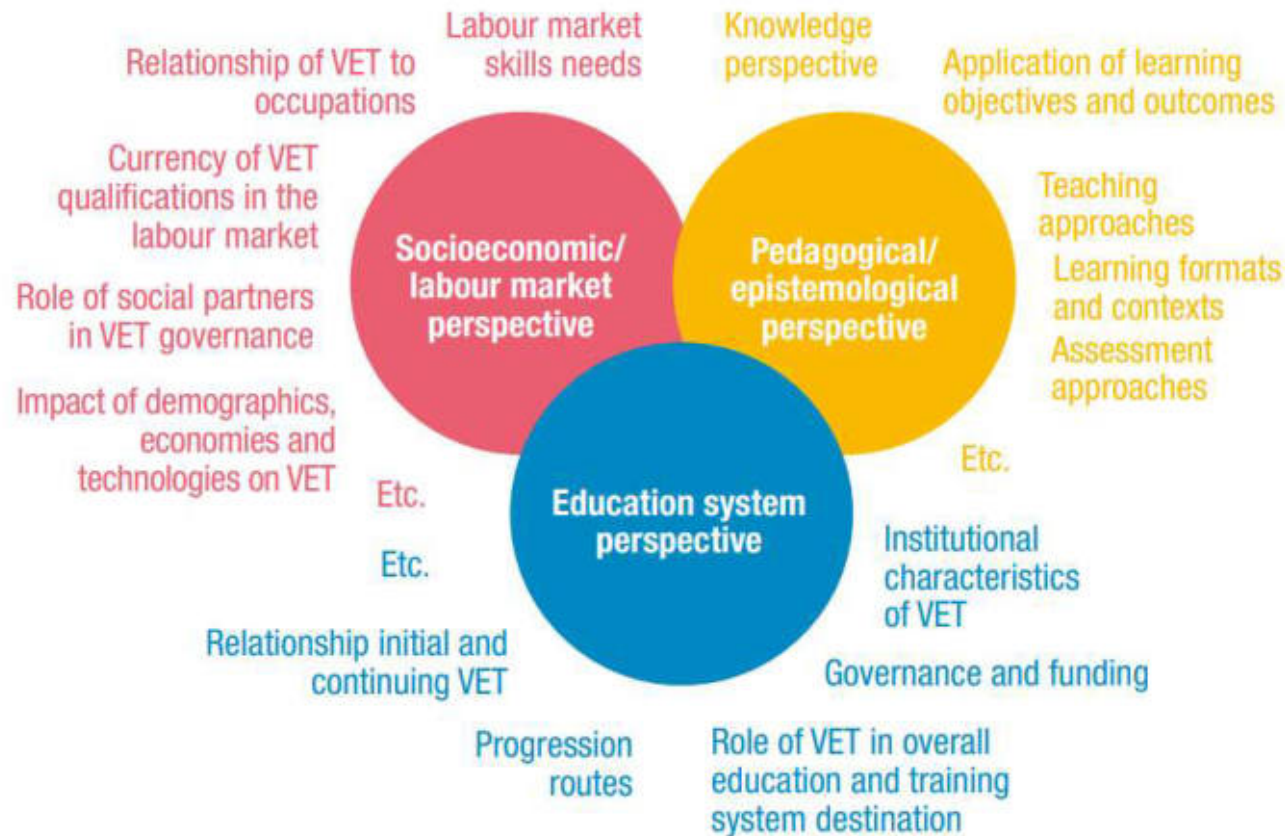
National differences

National statistics 1995-2015: **diverse developments**



Overall, IVET has (so far) upheld its position relative to general upper secondary education in most countries

Three perspective model of VET



Source: Cedefop, 2017c



European VET 1995 vs. 2015

**VET and General Education
conceptually distinct**

Dead-end programmes

Focus on IVET

**Focus on medium-level skills
and preparing for job entry**

Blurring Boundaries

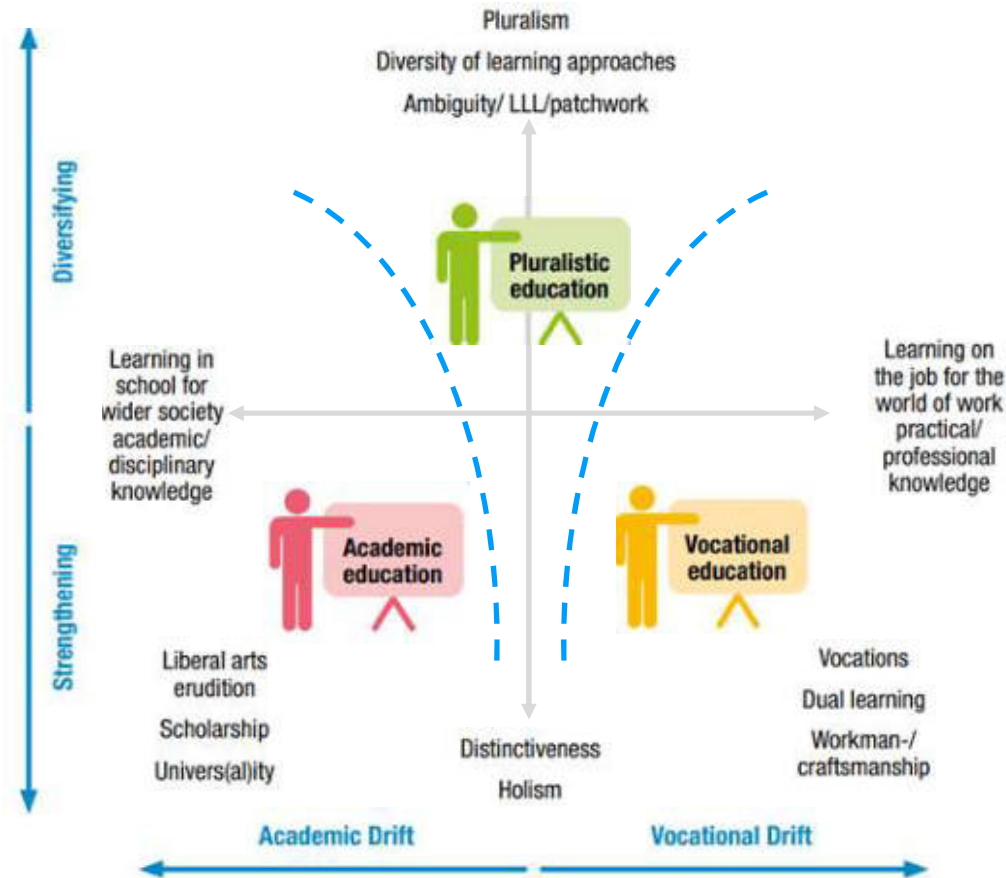
Increased permeability

Opening up to adults

**Move towards higher levels
and broader goals, social as
well as economic**

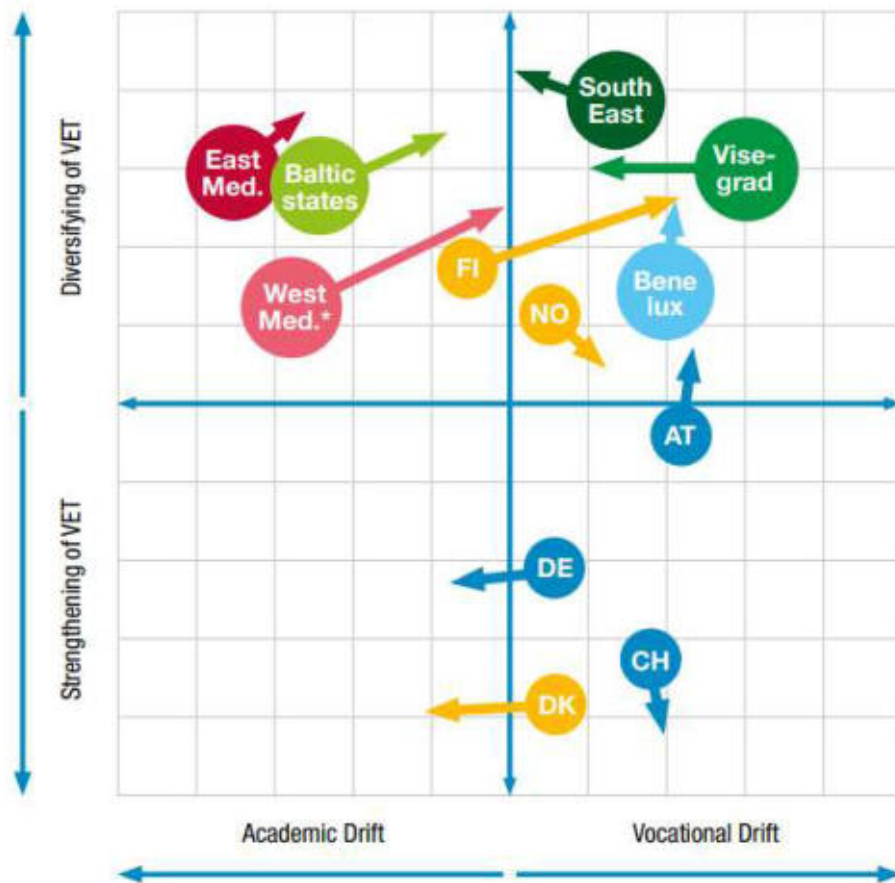
A model to describe the changing role of VET

Strengthening vs. Diversifying VET, Academic vs. Vocational Drift



The 'big picture'

Selected countries' trajectories



Both academic and vocational drift
Still large variety
Some convergence towards balance of VET and GE
Pluralisation as common trend
No fundamental system change

VET in Europe 1995-2035

A vision of VET spanning 40 years, looking into the past and the future



Volume 1: Definitions and conceptions of VET

Volume 2: VET developments 1995-2015

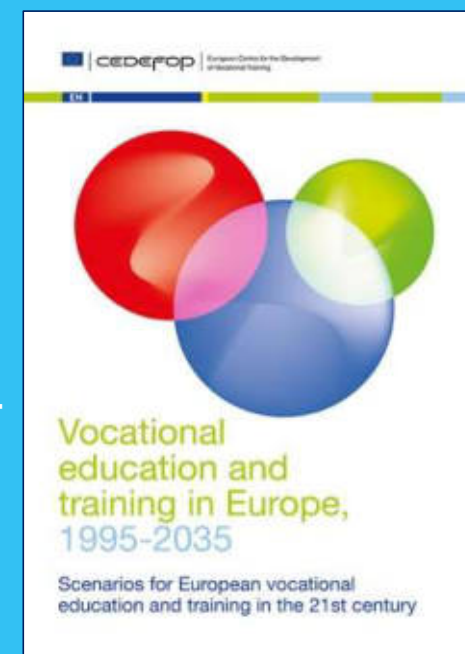
Volume 3: External factors influencing VET

Volume 4: Enrolment patterns in IVET

Volume 5: Education and labour market outcomes of VET

Volume 6: VET at higher education levels

Volume 7: VET from a lifelong learning perspective



Vocational education and training in Europe, 1995-2035: scenarios for European vocational education and training in the 21st century.
Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop reference series; No 114. <http://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/794471>

A photograph of a DJ in a dark room, wearing a blue beanie with a red pom-pom and a grey sweater, focused on a DJ mixer with many colorful knobs. Other people are visible in the background, some wearing hats.

The Future of VET Project 2020-2022

Research findings and research gaps

What we found out (2016-2019)

Changes in enrolments

Academic and vocational drift
at system level

Trend towards WBL and vocational drift
of Higher Education

Increasingly adult learners
in IVET

What we need to find out (2020-2022)

Changes in curricula

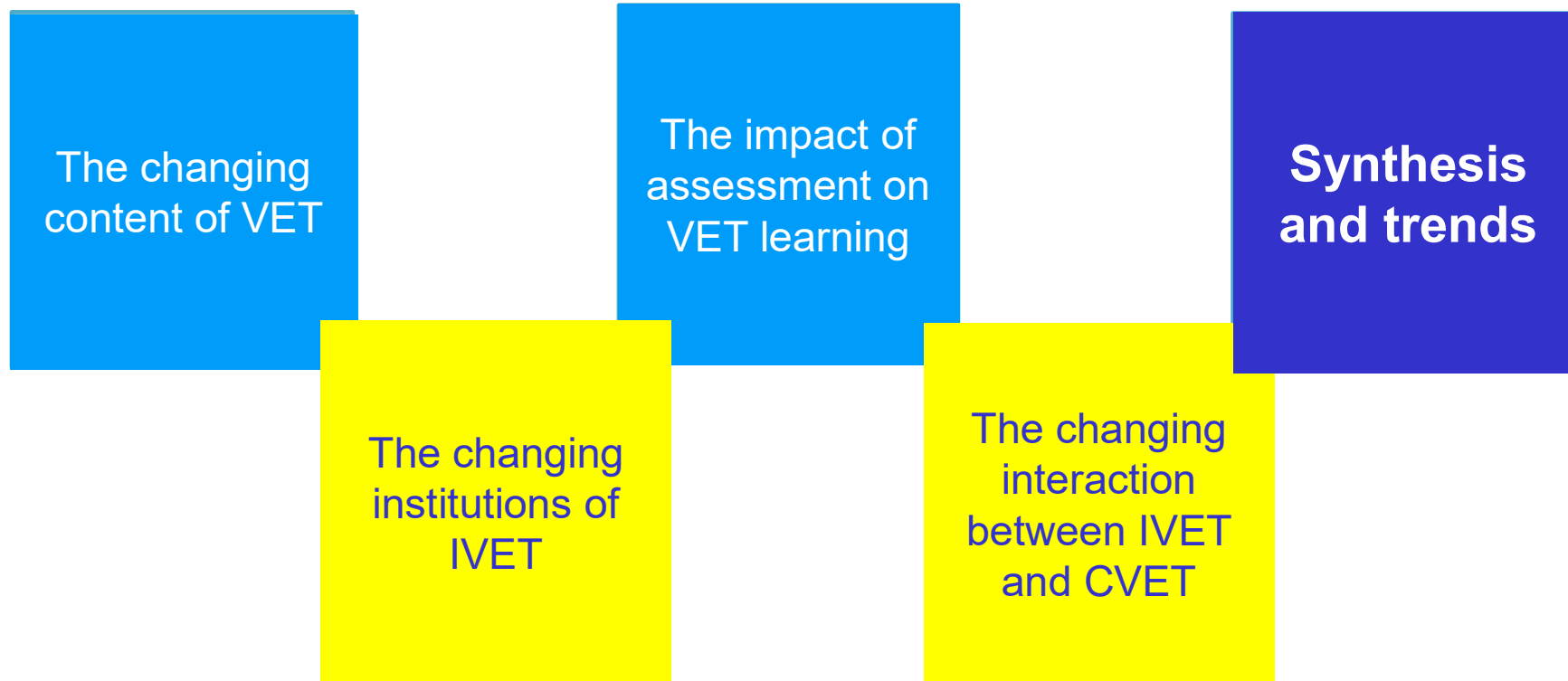
Specific institutional arrangements
combining VET and GE

Changes in assessment practices
regarding WBL

Pedagogical implications / practices for
opening up IVET to adults

Cedefop project: Future of VET in Europe (2020-22)

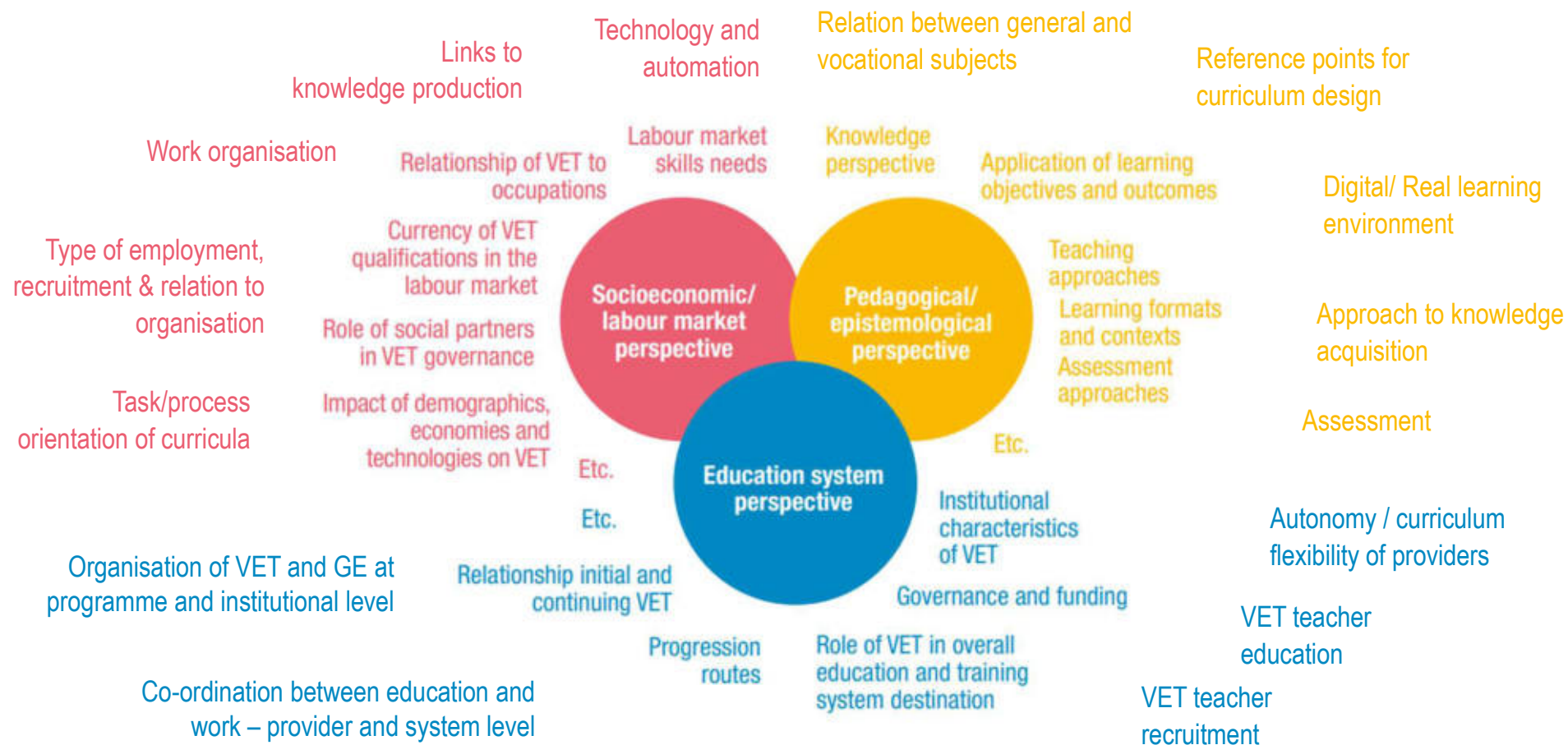
Five key objectives structured in five work assignments



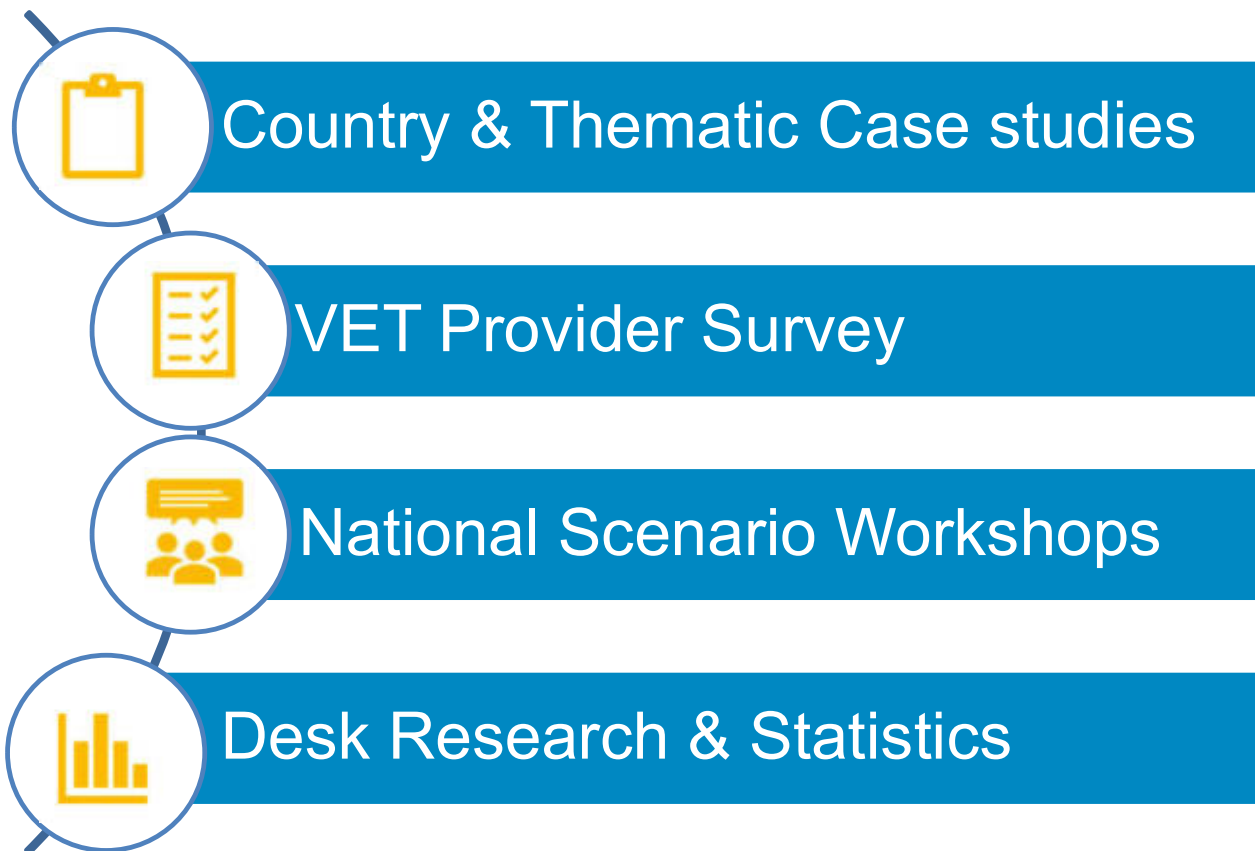
A man wearing a grey hoodie and a blue cap is standing in a meeting room, smiling. He is positioned in front of a large projection screen that displays a presentation slide with a prominent orange trapezoidal shape. The room is dimly lit, with the primary light source being the projection. In the foreground, the blurred backs of several audience members' heads are visible, indicating a workshop or training session. A whiteboard with some handwritten notes is partially visible on the right side of the screen.

Which approaches and methods are applied?

Expanding the three-perspective model



Main Methods



A photograph of a classroom setting. In the foreground, a woman with blonde hair in a bun, wearing a black t-shirt, is looking towards another woman on the right. The woman on the right has dark hair in a bun and is wearing a blue top. In the background, there are anatomical models of a human skeleton and muscles. A blue banner with white text is overlaid at the bottom of the image.

Key Results Work Assignments 1 to 4

Work assignment 1: The changing content and profile of VET

- ✓ The number of IVET qualifications decreased in most countries
- ✓ Increase of general subjects and transversal skills
- ✓ Increase in workplace learning & more integration into the learning process
- ✓ Considerable variations in integrating vocational and general content
- ✓ Individualisation and modularisation add complexity to the research task



Example A: Changing balance between general and vocational components in Czech VET

Form of study	Period	Length of study	General component		Vocational component		TOTAL	
			Length per week	%	Hours per week	%	Hours per week	Ratio (weekly hours per year)
ISCED 3C (353)	Before 1989	3	38	37%	66	63%	103	35
	1990-97	3	28	28%	72	72%	100	33
	1998-2004	3	29	29%	70	71%	98	33
	After 2004	3	28	30%	71	72%	99	33
ISCED 3A (354)	Before 1989	4	51	39%	80	61%	131	33
	1990-97	4	54	41%	78	59%	132	33
	1998-2004	4	53	39%	82	61%	134	34
	After 2004	4	69	52%	64	48%	132	33

Note:
Some subjects (ICT and economics) were moved from the vocational component to the general education component, i.e. re-categorised.

Example B: Comparison of Austrian VET college curricula

Curricular categories	Higher VET college for mechanical engineering (EQF 5)		Higher VET college for business administration (EQF 5)	
	1993	2015	1994	2014
Year of curriculum	1993	2015	1994	2014
General education subjects	37%	41%	53%	50%
Occupation-specific theory	40%	36%	36%	33%
Occupation-specific practical learning	19%	18%	11%	11%
Work placement	4%	4%	0%	5%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total number of hours of education and training	7,441	6,931	6,014	5,956
Programme duration in years	5	5	5	5
Number of hours of education and training per year	1488	1386	1203	1191

Findings for school-based VET in Austria suggest both an increase in workplace learning and in practical learning in workshops over time. When analysing individual qualifications, the picture becomes more differentiated.

Work assignment 2: Delivering IVET - Institutional diversification and expansion

- ✓ The Number of VET schools decreased in many countries
- ✓ Hybrid pathways & hybrid schools are common, but not a new big trend
- ✓ VET retains a strong distinct identity (at upper-secondary level)
- ✓ IVET strengthened links to HE
- ✓ Increasing autonomy of VET providers



VET providers co-operation with higher education institutions over the past 10 years (in percent, rounded)

	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased	Don't know	Not applicable	Total
Cooperation in research & development	25	40	4	0	21	100
Joint delivery of programmes and/or courses (e.g. bridging courses)	24	39	4	4	23	100
Cooperation in accrediting prior learning	16	42	4	14	24	100

Source: Future of VET, providers survey

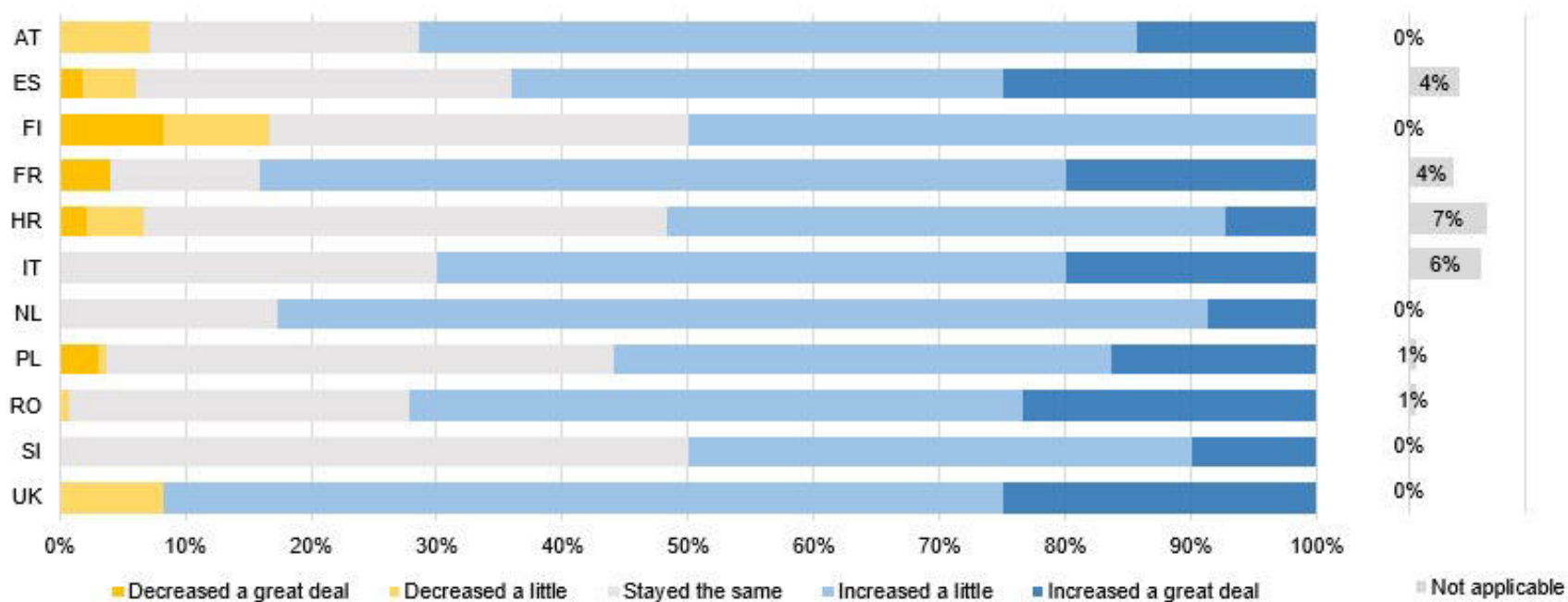
Work assignment 3: Trends in VET Assessment

- ✓ Stronger focus on formative assessment and VET learners' self-assessment
- ✓ Increased assessment of separate units or modules
- ✓ Externalisation and standardisation of examinations related of general skills
- ✓ Increasing use of final practical exams (incl. skills demonstrations in real work environments)
- ✓ Trends towards digital assessment



Change in the assessment of learners' transversal/soft skills

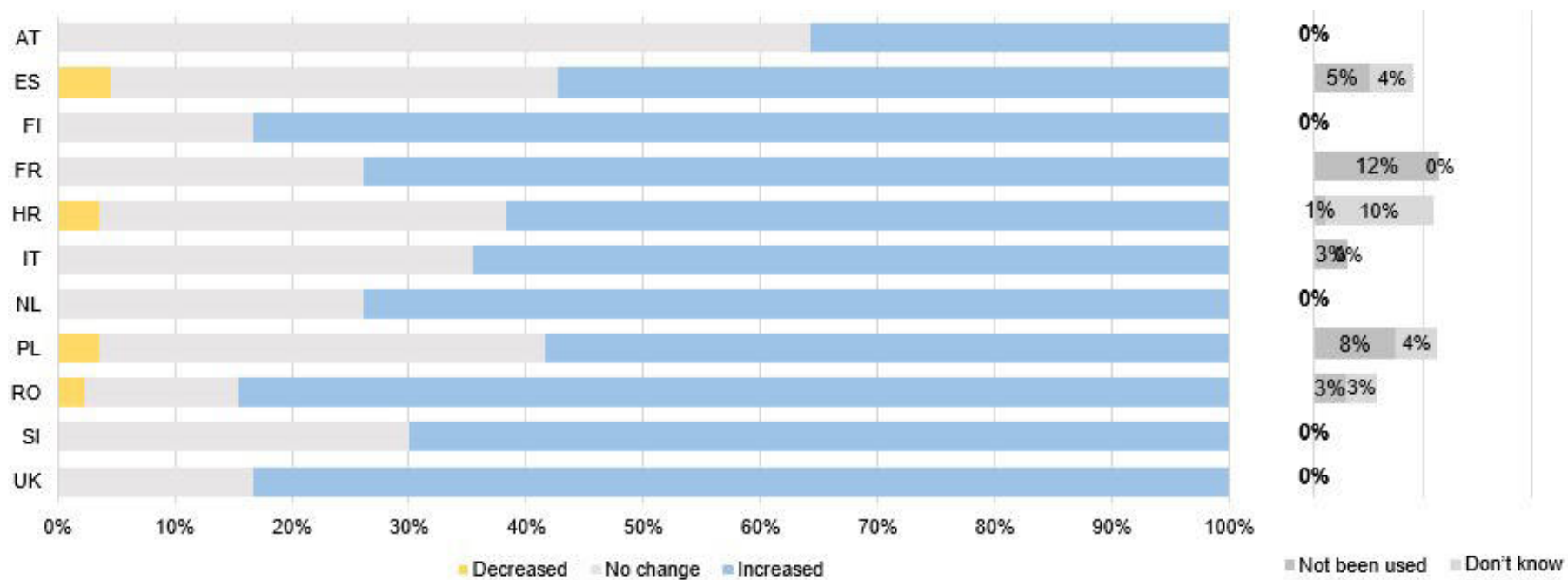
Over the past 10 years, the assessment of learners' transversal/soft skills (e.g. being able to work with others) has...



Source: VET provider survey. Data from selected countries. n = 893.

Changes related to the use of skills demonstrations in real work environments

Over the past 10 years, skills demonstrations in real work environments have...



Source: VET provider survey. Data from selected countries. n = 893.

Work assignment 4: The changing interaction between IVET and CVET

- ✓ IVET in Europe is now less 'youth-centered' than it used to be
- ✓ The role played by IVET providers in up- and reskilling is still limited
- ✓ IVET providers mostly provide formal VET programmes to adults (less so non-formal, general or basic skills training)
- ✓ The specific role played by IVET providers does not correlate with the participation in adult learning in general



Photo: Campaign Creators/unsplash

The Future of VET in Europe - Publications



<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/projects/future-vet>

Already Published:

Volume 1: the changing content and profile of VET: epistemological challenges and opportunities

Volume 2: Delivering IVET: institutional diversification and/or expansion?

Forthcoming:

Volume 3: On Assessment

Volume 4: On IVET/CVET relationship

Synthesis Report

Analytical Framework

VET-Provider Survey Report

Thank you

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