

VET graduate tracking

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 CROATIA

Timeline



ID number 28822

Background

Graduate surveys at VET provider level inform providers of graduate destinations and allow a retrospective evaluation of the education process and its outcomes. Creating feedback loops, graduate surveys may thus improve VET provision and VET qualifications. The VET graduate tracking initiative is in line with the VET system development programme (2016-20).

Objectives

This policy development aims to develop and test instruments for graduate tracking at the VET provider level. It also aims to increase VET provider awareness of the relevance of VET graduate tracking and feedback loops, strengthen their capacities for graduate tracking, and encourage measuring indicators 5 and 6 of the EQAVET framework.

Description

In the framework of the Erasmus+ grant Support to European quality assurance in vocational education and training: national reference points (2017-19), the Agency for VET and Adult Education (ASOO) developed a model for school-based VET student tracking upon completion of formal education. In 2017, ASOO conducted one peer learning activity which brought together 14 institutions from six countries, discussing models for monitoring VET graduates. In 2018, the agency (ASOO) started piloting school-level graduate tracking in three Croatian VET schools with different sector profiles and geographic locations. In preparation for the survey, tracking instruments were developed, including background document, exit survey, main survey questionnaire and implementation guidelines. Training and guidance were delivered to participating VET schools.

The VET graduate survey comprised three major sections:

- (a) completed studies and outcomes (including learning outcomes and qualifications, satisfaction with the education received, self-assessment of skills acquired);
- (b) graduate destinations (including the relevance of education received to progression and employment);
- (c) unemployment (including NEET status and the history of employment).

The pilot implementation stage began with statistical data collection from participating schools and development of databases with student contact and education information. From November 2018 to January 2019, the graduate survey was conducted online and via telephone for the target cohort of students who graduated in the school year 2016/17. Depending on the school, 37% to 57% of the contacted graduates responded to the tracking survey. Based on the pilot results, future steps for graduate tracking will be defined.

2017 Design

2018 Pilot

2019 Pilot

The final report on the implemented 2018/19 graduate tracking survey was drafted for each participating VET provider and the results were presented to other VET providers from all 13 VET sectors in 2019. Based on the pilot experience, a draft handbook on graduate tracking surveys for VET providers was produced in 2019. In the same year, ASOO started a peer-learning activity on VET graduate tracking with EQAVET NRPs from Greece, Slovenia and Finland. ASOO also started the second round of graduate surveys, engaging three providers that participated in the pilot survey in 2018-19 and expanding the pool of participating schools with four new VET providers. Through the second round of graduate surveys, ASOO proposes to review and fine-tune the tracking instrument and encourage more VET providers to use it.

2020 Pilot

The second round of pilot graduate tracking surveys was completed by the end of 2020, encompassing seven VET providers across Croatia.

2021 Pilot

In early 2021, the graduate tracking survey was presented in an online conference on quality assurance in VET. 350 representatives, including 170 self-assessment coordinators at 205 VET providers across Croatia, participated in the conference, and many expressed interest in graduate tracking.

2022 Pilot

During 2022, the specifications for the development of a VET graduate tracking app were finalised and an external developer was selected to develop it. The contract was signed at the end of 2022 and the development of the app will continue until 2023.

2023 Pilot

In 2023, the third pilot cycle was completed involving 15 VET providers. A new online application for data collection, processing, and reporting was developed to facilitate the process for VET providers in the forthcoming period. Furthermore, ASOO conducted training events to discuss the tracking methodology and best practices with VET providers, generating considerable interest in joining the initiative. In 2023, 22 months after completing vocational education, the survey results indicated a high proportion of favourable outcomes for VET graduates who progressed to further education or employment (92.3%), as well as a low unemployment rate (4.8%). Among participants, continuing education is significantly more common than entering the labour market, which is consistent with the administrative data on higher education enrolment (especially for graduates of 4-year programmes that offer access to State Matura exams, which is a prerequisite for higher education enrolment). Subjectively, most participants were satisfied with the programme and school they attended, though to a slightly lesser extent with the programme's relevance for continuing education and their current job. Given the convenient sample, the results are not indicative for the entire population of VET learners. The results were analysed, and reports were prepared at the level of each participating provider. Methodological recommendations

were also prepared to ensure survey reliability and sampling in the future tracking cycles. Survey design was also streamlined to facilitate participation and identification of key indicators in consideration of the EQAVET indicators 5,6 and 7 and the Commission expert group on graduate tracking.

2024 Pilot

The 4th cycle of graduate tracking started, involving 34 VET providers that conducted the exit survey in 2024 to their graduating cohort of IVET learners and attended training in graduate tracking methodology and tools. The exit survey serves to collect contact information and consent from learners to participate in the main survey, conducted about one and a half year after graduation. The exit survey familiarizes graduates with the survey and includes a question on general satisfaction with the education programme.

2025 Pilot

The 5th cycle of graduate tracking started, involving 45 VET providers that conducted the exit survey in 2025 to their graduating cohort of IVET learners and attended training in graduate tracking methodology and tools. The exit survey serves to collect contact information and consent from learners to participate in the main survey, conducted about one and a half year after graduation.

Bodies responsible

- Agency for VET and Adult Education (ASOO)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Further developing national quality assurance systems
Establishing and developing skills intelligence systems

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

VET underpinned by a culture of quality assurance

Subsystem

Further reading

Bacalja, D. (2021). Tracer studies after completion of education: Handbook for VET providers [Studije pracenja učenika nakon završetka školovanja: Priručnik za provedbu u ustanovama za strukovno obrazovanje]. Zagreb: Agency for VET and Adult Education

Related policy developments

2023 **Completed**

VET system development programme 2016-20

The VET system development programme 2016-20 provides the strategic framework for VET development and reform. The programme was adopted by the Croatian Government in September 2016 and a related action plan was adopted two months later by the ministry responsible for education.

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Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). VET graduate tracking: Croatia. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

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