

Taster opportunities

Description

Taster opportunities – giving young people the chance to try out different vocational areas before they choose a VET programme – help to tackle misconceptions around VET.

Countries

 France

 Luxembourg

Why is this approach useful?

Misconceptions about VET programmes are an important risk factor leading to early leaving from education and training. Giving students the opportunity to observe and try out different vocational options before they choose a VET programme allows them to compare their expectations against the reality of a given VET programme or profession.

Activities to observe and try out different vocational areas should help VET providers reply to the question:

- Are our students choosing the best possible pathway?

Why is it a quick win?

There are different types of activities that allow students to better get to know the different vocational options available to them. Some activities can be directly implemented by VET providers at a relatively low cost. This would be the case with visits of secondary students to VET schools and companies; open days at VET schools for potential candidates; and short discovery workshops.

Other activities involve higher costs. An example would be the implementation of a vocational orientation programme lasting several weeks.

How to make this approach successful?

Useful tasting measures give young people the possibility to try out various options based on their interests and capacities. This involves:

- Discussions between pedagogical staff and learners about their interests and expectations.
- Coordination between the current education and training provider and the entities where the tasting activities will take place (VET schools and companies).
- Inviting inputs from existing students to give a student viewpoint.

The inclusion of some practical activities for the learner to try out different vocational areas, and not just observe, is particularly useful. Informal discussions with students already enrolled in VET programmes or apprenticeships are also important.

Examples of measures using this approach

Student visits to VET school to help with choice of pathway. An example from France

A VET school in Strasbourg (France) has implemented an initiative focusing on the students' choice of educational pathway, which is an important factor linked to early leaving. The initiative gives students from lower secondary schools the chance to visit the VET school before choosing a pathway. The VET school liaises with various lower secondary schools in the region and organises visits. During the visits, students meet the pedagogical staff for an individual interview. They also attend practical workshops of their choice. At the end of the day, a debriefing takes place with pedagogical staff. At the beginning of the new school year, the VET school provides newly arrived students with the opportunity to attend an individual interview and workshops if they did not previously have this opportunity.

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Local Action for Youth (Luxembourg). Short 'orientation' traineeships.

Since 1984, in cooperation with secondary schools, the Local Action for Youth (Action Locale pour les Jeunes, ALJ) organises short 'orientation' traineeships (stage d'orientation). These traineeships target pupils in the final year of lower secondary vocational education ('preparatory regime'), leading to the vocational strand of Technical and Vocational Education and Training. This strand comprises around 2,000 pupils each year.

The short 'orientation' traineeships consist of two company-based traineeships of a fortnight each. The ALJ supports pupils with the administrative procedures of securing a taster traineeship, while teachers make use of informal networks built with local employers to support this programme.

[Read good practice factsheet](#)

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Related intervention approaches

Related intervention approaches



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Guidance: supporting youth to manage their careers



Improving VET image and attractiveness

Related resources

Statistics and data

 Statistics and data

Data on Vocational education and training in Luxembourg

VET in Europe is the most comprehensive information resource on vocational education and training (VET) systems in Europe. ReferNet, Cedefop's European network, provides descriptions of national VET systems in the European Union, Norway and Iceland based on a common template designed by Cedefop.

 **Luxembourg**