

European VET for the 21st century: the balancing of excellence and inclusion

Work assignment 3: Expanding VET at
higher levels and the implications for
excellence and inclusion

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Structure

Key research questions and approach of work assignment 3

Definition: *VET at higher levels*

,Signals ' for identifying vocational excellence and inclusion in VET at higher levels

Policies related to VET at higher levels (examples based on findings from WA1)

Key research questions

Evolution of VET at higher levels over the last 25 years

In 8 EU countries:

- To what extent are institutions and systems of VET at higher levels addressing the objectives and priorities of excellence and inclusion?
- How are the concepts of excellence and inclusion understood and operationalised?
- Which types of learners are targeted and how does this influence excellence and inclusion?
- Which pedagogies are used to support excellence and/or inclusion?

In all EU countries:

- How do VET systems at higher levels differ across Europe in relation to excellence and inclusion?
- What are the institutional and pedagogical factors influencing excellence and inclusion?
- What type of stakeholders are brought together?

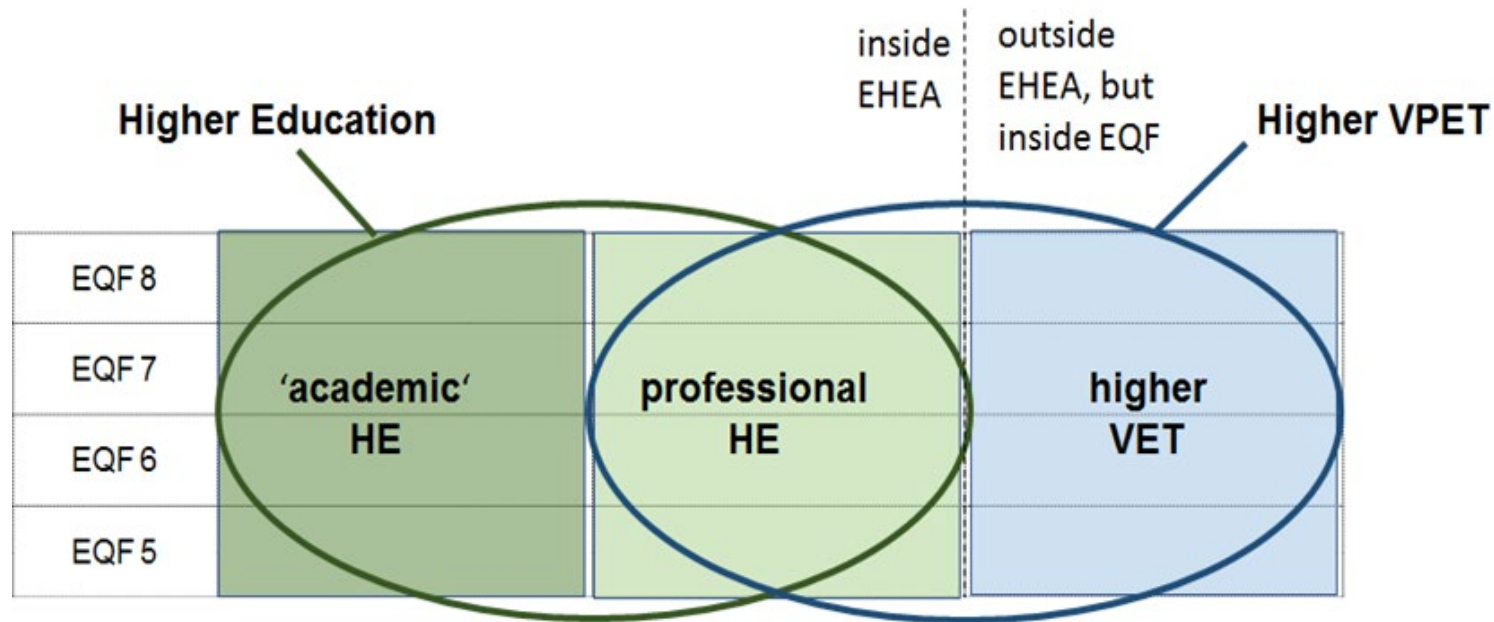
Aim

Work Assignment 3:

- Examines the expansion of VET at higher levels and how this influences the objectives of excellence and inclusion.
- Covers 8 case study countries:
 - Austria
 - Bulgaria
 - Finland
 - Germany
 - Lithuania
 - The Netherlands
 - Portugal
 - Slovenia
- Considers results from work assignment 1 and 2.
- Integrates results from Cedefop ReferNet questionnaire (27 EU Member States)

Definition of VET at higher levels

- No commonly agreed definition
- Broad-perspective definition used in the 'The Changing nature and role of VET in Europe':

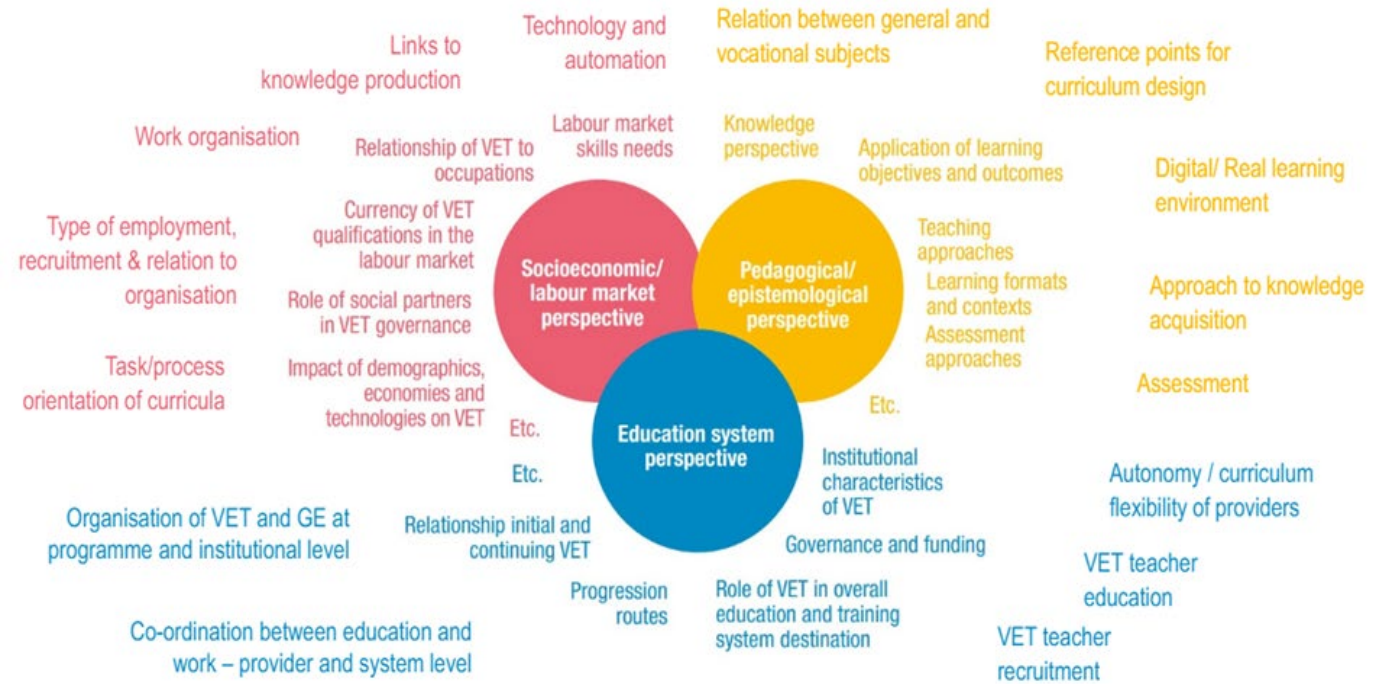


Source: Cedefop

Analytical approach

- Refined 'three-perspective' model based on the lessons learned in WA1 and WA2
- Adjusted research approach based on selected aspects frequently identified with the two concepts and that can be used as 'signals' for excellence and/or inclusion regarding VET at higher levels

The 3-perspective model



'Signals' for identifying vocational excellence and inclusion in Higher VET

Aspects of excellence (examples)	Aspects of inclusion (examples)
Educational perspective	
<i>Aims to</i> improve professional preparation for the labour market, ensure a supply of highly skilled workers , including those with innovation skills	Aims to improve access to vocational education at higher levels for non-traditional students , improve social and geographic access to higher education
<i>Programmes for</i> learners with an IVET qualification and possibly a HE-entrance qualification, and work experience for deepening and updating their competences	<i>Programmes for</i> learners with or without a formal qualification accessible through additional bridge courses; opportunities to validate and recognise professional experiences
Socio – economic perspective	
<i>VET offers</i> exclusively serve excellence and high achievers	<i>VET offers</i> predominantly serve people with disadvantages and who face barriers accessing higher qualification levels

It is possible to pursue both objectives - vocational excellence and inclusion - at the same time, e.g. regarding target groups

Policies related to VET at higher levels (mostly based on findings from WA1)

Austria

Higher VET Act, 2024 : develops new practical vocational qualifications (EQF levels 5-7) aligned with labor market needs that allows skilled workers to gain a formally recognised higher-level qualification outside universities or other HEIs.

Focus on both: excellence and inclusion.

Italy

Law No. 99, 2022 : provides pathways to excellence at post-secondary level at EQF level 4 and 5 and thus aims to reform Higher Technological Education (Higher Vocational Training) Set-up of ITS Academies. **Strong focus on excellence.**

Norway

Strategy for Higher Vocational Education : one of the strategic priority areas is to stimulate excellence in vocational colleges; the strategy aims at opening up for delivering qualifications on higher EQF levels (above level 5). **Strong focus on excellence** .

Germany

Shaping the future - innovations for excellent vocational training (InnoVET), 2019 : the projects are targeted at increasing the attractiveness, quality and equivalence of VET through innovation and excellence, with a focus on higher VET (above DQR level 5). **Strong focus on excellence.**

Thank you!



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