

Key competences in initial vocational education and training

19-20
September
2019
Cedefop
Thessaloniki

#KeyCompetences
www.cedefop.europa.eu

EUROPEAN VOCATIONAL
SKILLS WEEK

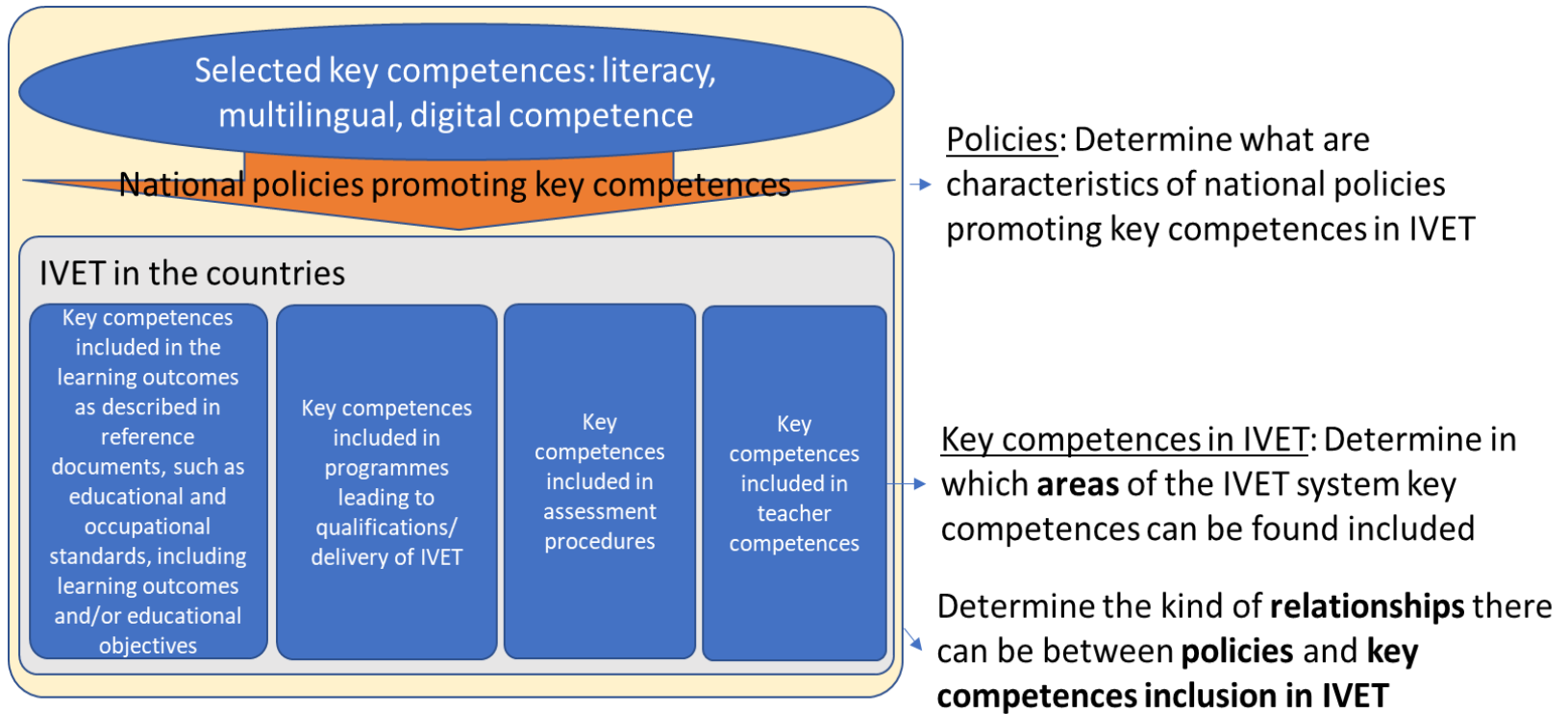
 CEDEFOP
European Centre
for the Development
of Vocational Training



Overview and examples of main challenges
discovered within the study:
literacy/multilingual

Simon Broek, Ockham IPS (Panteia consortium)

Conceptual overview



The study looked at the objectives of the policies and whether these objectives were achieved.



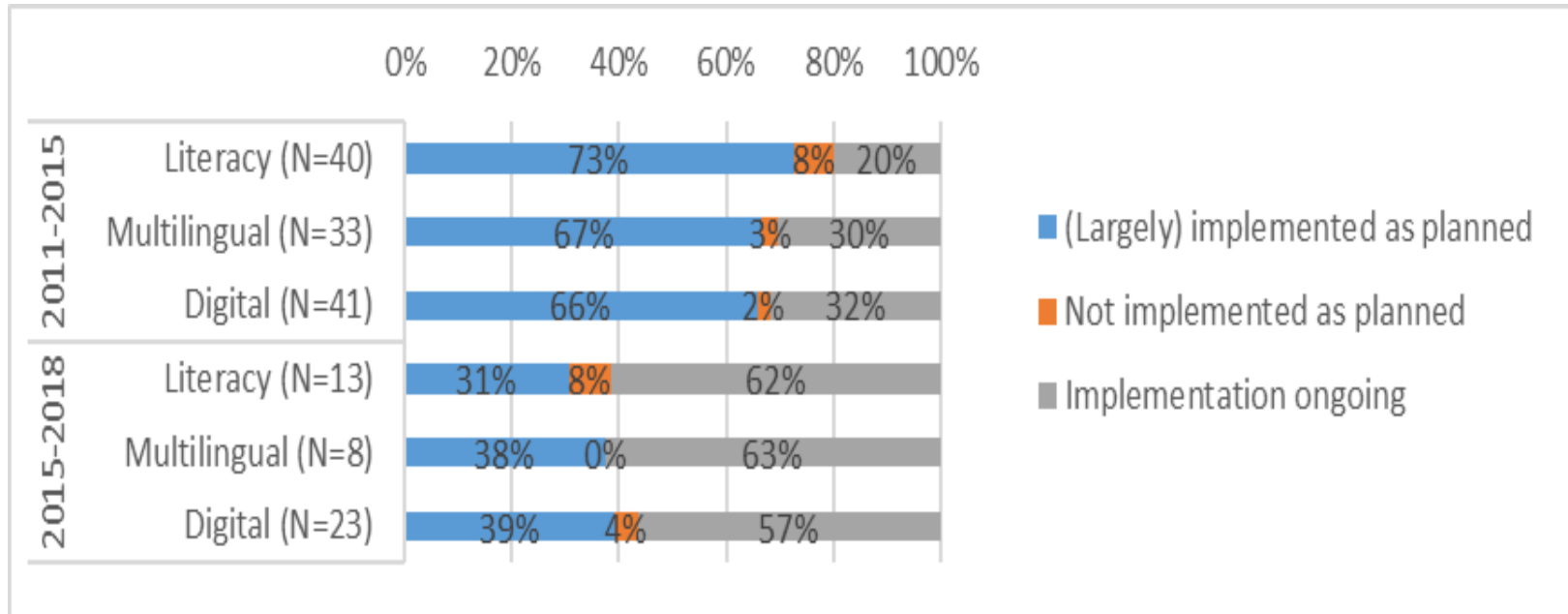
Note on effectiveness and success of policies

Any assessment of the effectiveness faces a number of structural challenges:

- Policies that promote the selected key competences differ on many accounts
- Key competence inclusion in IVET: Studying key competences inclusion in IVET is challenging as IVET is a very heterogeneous sector (difference per sector, EQF level etc.)
- Influence of policies on key competence inclusion in IVET: Given the above, exactly determining the influence of policies on how specific key competences are included is challenging



Implementation of policies



Policies that aim at embedding key competences in reference documents and assessment standards can take longer to reach results than policies focusing on programme delivery and teacher training.



Literature review on for policy challenges

Reasons for policy failure (McConnell, 2014; Lane & Hamann, 2003):

- policy is not able to meet original objectives;
- policy is not implemented as intended;
- policy does not benefit the intended target group;
- policy is not able to meet criteria highly valued in that policy sector.
- Form and Content not right
- Policy Communication not in place
- Policy Implementation Capacities not in place

Policies can also fail at different stages in policy cycle:

- Preparation
- Implementation
- Follow up and monitoring



Literature review on for policy challenges

Area of challenge	Context	Stakeholder engagement, commitment and ownership	Coordination, management and political priority	Resources
Policy cycle				
Policy preparation and development				
Policy implementation (planning and conducting activities)				
Policy monitoring and follow-up				

Source: Authors based on McConnell (McConnell, 2014) and Lane & Hamann (Lane & Hamann, 2003).



CEDEFOP | WORKSHOP

**Key competences in initial VET:
digital, literacy and multilingual**

Thessaloniki, 19-20 September 2019

Literature review on for policy challenges

Area of challenge	Context	Stakeholder engagement, commitment and ownership	Coordination, management and political priority	Resources
Policy cycle				
Policy preparation and development	Lack of quality data and analysis Not a good understanding of the problem the policy supposed to solve Policy not well aligned with other policies	Key stakeholders not involved in policy design and development; lack of ownership	Lack of effective coordination of key stakeholders	Lack of capacities on the topic in policy design and development
Policy implementation (planning and conducting activities)	Context appeared to be more challenging than expected Context changed while implementing	Key stakeholders are not (sufficiently) involved in the policy implementation The policy does not provide incentives for key stakeholders to implement the policy Lack of communication the policy to inform and involve stakeholders	Decreased political will and priority Lack of effective coordination of the implementation activities	Lack of capacities build among stakeholders to implement the policy Lack of financial resources
Policy monitoring and follow-up	No monitoring system in place to make changes to the policy and implementation No feedback loops between key stakeholders in the policy implementation			

Source: Authors based on McConnell (McConnell, 2014) and Lane & Hamann (Lane & Hamann, 2003).



CEDEFOP | WORKSHOP

**Key competences in initial VET:
digital, literacy and multilingual**

Thessaloniki, 19-20 September 2019

Challenges in the context of this study...

In the context of the study, challenges are defined as difficulties met in one or several project cycles due to contextual reasons and/or other reasons concerning stakeholder involvement, management and coordination and/or availability of resources.

Challenges does not mean that a policy failed!

In fact, challenges can be resolved within the timespan of the project and thus contribute to its success or improvement.



Case study approach for identifying challenges

While the study looked at challenges in **all identified policies**, 7 case studies were conducted focusing on specific challenges:

- BE FL: Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)
- NL: Support measure 'quality arrangements VET'
- LV: Guidelines for Information Society Development 2014-2020
- HU: Digital Education Strategy
- RO: National Strategy for the Digital Agenda 2014-2020
- DE: Education in the digital world
- IE: Languages Connect 2017-2026

Main criteria for selecting the case studies were:

- policies that promoted one of the three key competences, but did not promote many other key competences (policies focusing on more than 4 key competences were excluded from selection);
- policies facing implementation challenges in at least one area as specified in the analytical framework;
- challenges in policy implementation are not solely related to budgetary constraints.



Case study approach for identifying challenges

Each case study was structured to consider the following issues:

- policy objectives related to implementation of the key competence in IVET;
- main activity/policy actions addressing the objective(s);
- governance levels and stakeholders involved;
- areas of difficulty in implementing the key competence, or no implementation;
- reason(s) for failure;
- strategies for dealing with the difficulties;
- end result.

Based on the analysis of the case studies and identified challenges in all policies, the following list was created with challenges.



Overview of main challenges discovered in policies promoting key competences in IVET

Main challenges	Identified in
1. Policies covered not only IVET , or only have the promotion of key competences as a side objective among others causing that the success in terms of promoting key competences in IVET to be marginal or non-existent.	3 policies
2. Face challenges related to complying with funding regulations causing that (ESF) funding for policy implementation was disbursed with delay	2 policies
3. Require more time to reach their objectives than the scope of this study permits (complexities related to legislative arrangements)	2 policies
4. Vague and abstract objectives in relation to embed specific key competences in IVET (identified in at least 1 policy).	1 policy
5. Lack clearly operationalised implementation plans in relation to the objective to embed specific key competences in IVET making it difficult to monitor on results and impact	3 policies
6. Lack human resources and support for the implementation at VET school level	4 policies
7. Lack effective coordination between stakeholders in the implementation of policies	2 policies
8. insufficiently take into account contextual factors in the design of policies e.g. <i>uneven development in rural and urban areas in countries</i>	3 policies

Overview of main challenges discovered in policies promoting key competences in IVET

Main challenges	Identified in
1. Policies covered not only IVET , or only have the promotion of key competences as a side objective among others causing that the success in terms of promoting key competences in IVET to be marginal or non-existent.	3 policies
2. Face challenges related to complying with funding regulations causing that (ESF) funding for policy implementation was disbursed with delay	2 policies
3. Require more time to reach their objectives than the scope of this study permits (complexities related to legislative arrangements)	2 policies
4. Vague and abstract objectives in relation to embed specific key competences in IVET (identified in at least 1 policy).	1 policy
5. Lack clearly operationalised implementation plans in relation to the objective to embed specific key competences in IVET making it difficult to monitor on results and impact	3 policies
6. Lack human resources and support for the implementation at VET school level	4 policies
7. Lack effective coordination between stakeholders in the implementation of policies	2 policies
8. insufficiently take into account contextual factors in the design of policies e.g. <i>uneven development in rural and urban areas in countries</i>	3 policies

The following examples present illustrations of the challenges encountered!

Broader scope of policies e.g. going beyond IVET

- **Policies covered not only IVET, or only have the promotion of key competences as one (minor) objective among others.**
- Results in terms of KC may be marginal or non-existent.
- The Irish Languages Connect strategy (2017), covers secondary and higher education. The strategy pays only limited attention to the promotion of foreign language competencies in initial vocational education and training (IVET)
- The Flemish Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) (2013) covered the entire secondary education sector, not only IVET.



Objectives are not clearly operationalised

- In **the Netherlands**, the support measure ‘quality arrangements VET’ faced some challenges related to language training: The policy did not define clear objectives (in terms of results and impact on the language proficiency) for the language theme. This hampers identifying clear results and/or progress that is (partly) caused by the policy.
- Furthermore, due to the independence of the VET providers and the bilateral approach of the quality arrangements, no specific objectives and activities were defined for literacy in general. Related to this, due to the voluntary nature of how improvements targeting literacy competence are improved, no enforcement mechanism exists.
- in **Bulgaria**, the indicators identified for the national lifelong learning strategy do not provide information concerning the impact of the strategy and its action plans on the promotion of key competences in initial VET.



Lack of human resources and support for policy implementation at VET school level

- In the **Flemish speaking community in Belgium**, the uptake of the CLIL policy by schools is voluntary, but explicitly also includes IVET. The uptake is low among schools offering vocational education (BSO) and technical education (TSO).
- Reasons for the limited involvement of vocational education schools is that it is more challenging for them to offer CLIL.
- The underlying barrier for VET is that the requirements are more attuned to general education and for that reason CLIL might be less attractive for VET.



Where challenges can be situated?

Area of challenge	Context	Stakeholder engagement, commitment and ownership	Coordination, management and political priority	Resources
Policy cycle				
Policy preparation and development	BE-FL, DE, RO		IE, RO, HU	HU
Policy implementation (planning and conducting activities)		LV		LV
	DE		NL	
Policy monitoring and follow-up	DE			

Source: Authors based on McConnell (McConnell, 2014) and Lane & Hamann (Lane & Hamann, 2003).



CEDEFOP | WORKSHOP

Key competences in initial VET:
digital, literacy and multilingual

Thessaloniki, 19-20 September 2019

What remedies are applied?

Area of challenge	Context	Stakeholder engagement, commitment and ownership	Coordination, management and political priority	Resources
Policy cycle				
Policy preparation and development	Stakeholders on different levels agree on a common direction of impact		Clarification of tasks	Realistic planning of resources
Policy implementation (planning and conducting activities)	Regional disparities are to be taken into consideration	Increased involvement of relevant stakeholders	Identification of critical points; increased coordination between stakeholders	Sharing of resources e.g. transform largest IVET schools to IVET competence centres
Policy monitoring and follow-up	Autonomies of regions in implementing educational policies should be accounted for			

Source: Authors based on McConnell (McConnell, 2014) and Lane & Hamann (Lane & Hamann, 2003).



Conclusions

- Measuring effectiveness is challenging in this area due to diversity of policies, heterogeneity of IVET inclusion and exact determination of impact
- Policies generally are implemented as planned in line with their objectives.
- Challenges can occur at different stages of the policy cycle: policy preparation and development; policy implementation (planning and conducting activities); and, policy monitoring and follow-up.
- Looking at the policy cycle, the challenges as identified refer mainly to the policy preparation and development and policy implementation (planning and conducting activities).
- The challenges as identified refer less to the policy monitoring and follow-up (although some refer to vague objectives and lack of monitoring).
- Looking at the possible areas of policy challenges, the policies cover all four identified areas (context; stakeholder engagement, commitment and ownership; coordination, management and political priority; and resources) and go beyond the four areas. For instance, the dependency on funding regulations and the lack of human resources and commitment for implementing policies.

