



The changing role and nature of VET in Europe

6th Cedefop Brussels seminar, 13 December 2018
Jorg Markowitsch and Jens Bjornavold



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

The changing nature and role of VET in Europe

Our aims

Take a step back and analyse:

How has VET changed during the past two decades?

The VET system as such

The relationship with the rest of education and training

The relationship with the labour market and society overall

The changing nature and role of VET in Europe

Our aims

**Analyse the past to look ahead:
Which trends for VET in the coming decades?**

Key dimensions (and tensions) likely to influence VET

Main potential future development paths (scenarios)

Key policy choices that VET stakeholders will face

A photograph of five young men standing in a workshop. They are all wearing blue long-sleeved work shirts and blue caps. The man on the far left is wearing a white and blue cap. The other four are wearing blue caps with the 'tgm' logo. They are standing in front of industrial equipment, including a large metal funnel-shaped structure. A blue semi-transparent banner is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text 'European VET since 1995' and 'What changed?'.

European VET since 1995

What changed?

© Cedefop, 2018/Peter Mayr

COMPETING STORIES – OPPOSING EXPECTATIONS

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

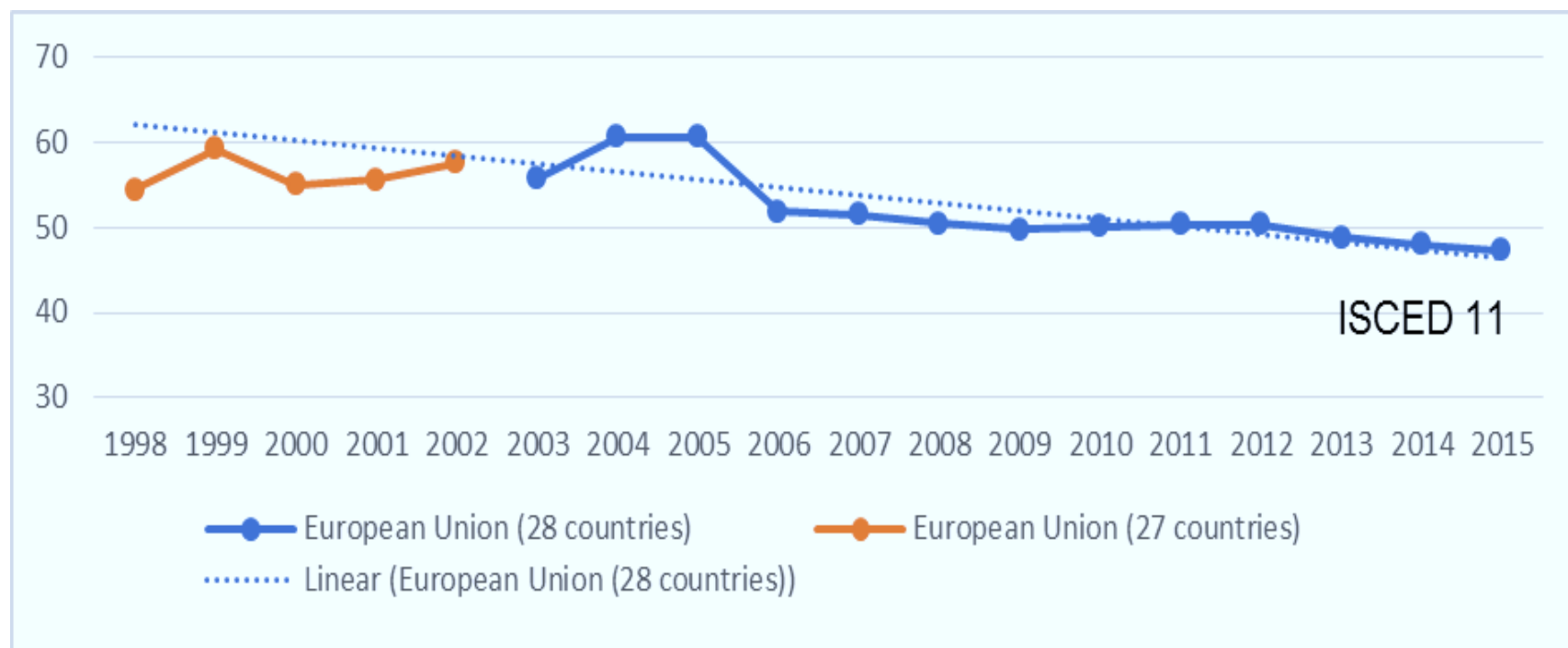
The positive story

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

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

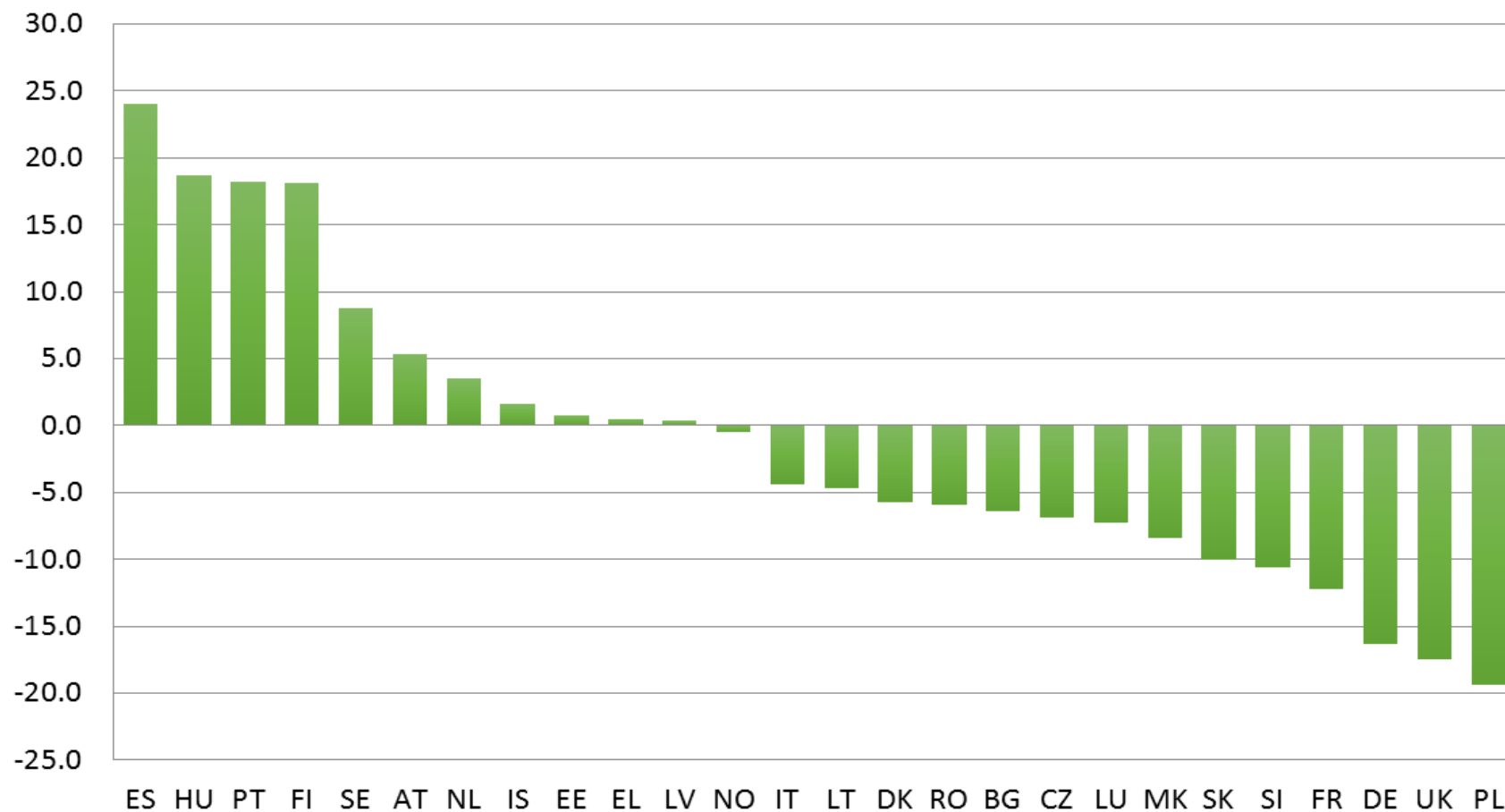
Enrolment in IVET: the European picture

Aggregate European statistics: declining trend since 2005



Share of upper secondary students in VET:
from 60,7% in 2005 (absolute top) down to 47% in 2015

Change in the share of VET (ISCED 3) between 1998-2012



Enrolment in IVET: National differences

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

Remarkable growth
in some
from a low base
(e.g. Spain)

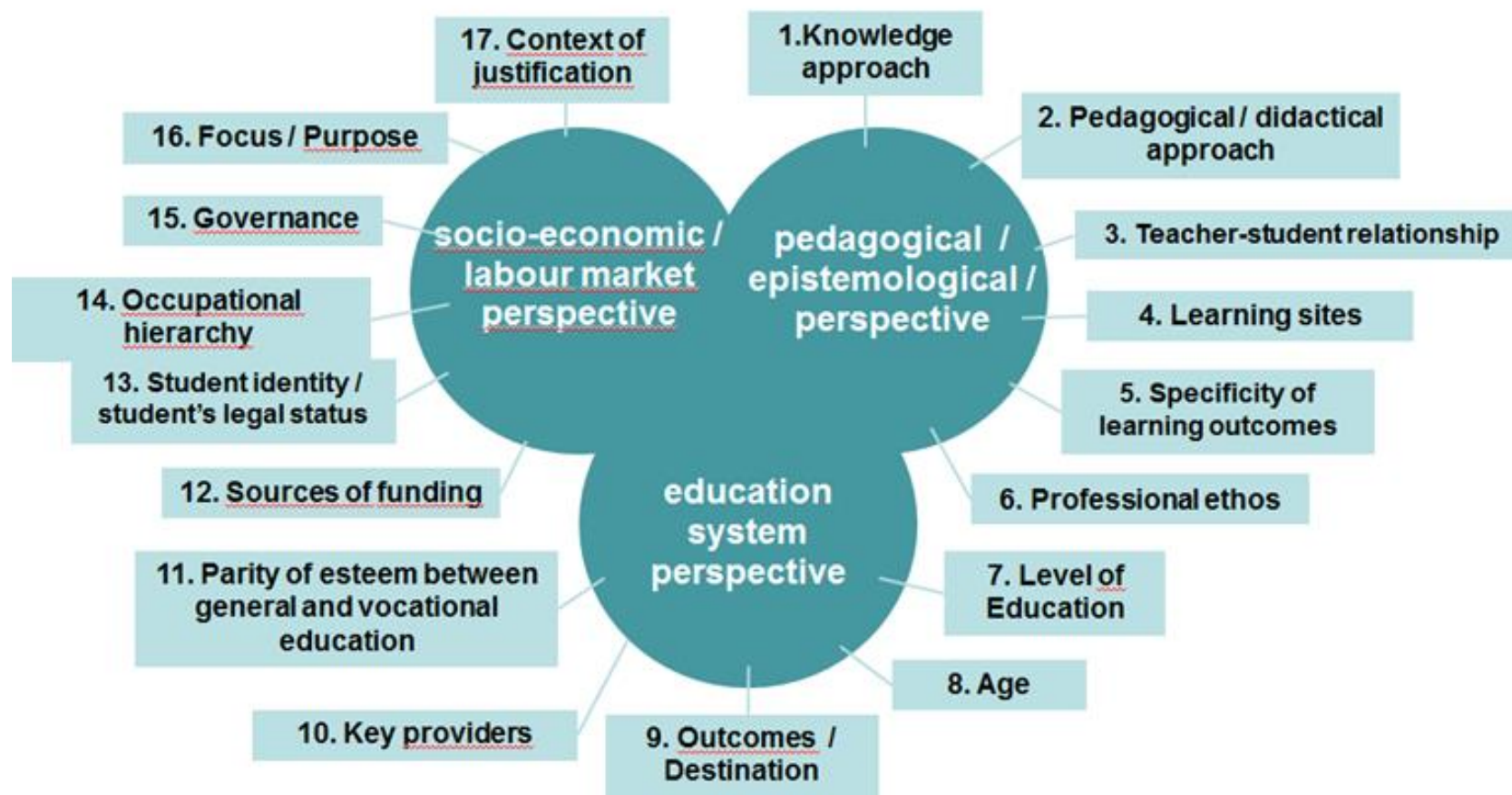
Moderate growth
in some
from a moderate base
(e.g. the Netherlands)

Significant decline in
a limited number
from a high base
(e.g. Germany)

Growth and/or stability
in the majority of European countries

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

Three perspective model of VET



Changing content and pedagogics

1995

- VET and general education conceptually distinct
- Work-based learning underdeveloped outside apprenticeship systems
- Much school based IVET 'input driven' and weakly linked to labour market
- Programmes and qualifications narrowly defined and specific

2015

- Crossing boundaries (school-workplace; general-vocational)
- Increased work-based learning in all IVET forms
- Reorientation to learning outcomes and competences
- More flexibility in time and place of learning; increased acceptance of prior learning

Changing IVET systems and institutions

1995



2015

- Provision often fragmented, strong links to industries and sectors, weaker links to overall education and training systems
- Dead-end programmes, restricted to medium levels with little progression to higher levels
- VET narrowly defined as IVET
- VET addressing a narrowly defined target group (16-20 year olds)

- More coherent VET systems integrated within the overall education and training systems
- Increased permeability and fewer dead-ends
- More centralised standards setting
- Fewer qualifications and broadened profiles
- Diversification of target groups, including adults

Changing socio-economic context

1995

- Limited goals; preparing for job entry and securing skilled labour
- Industry and sector based standard setting and anticipation of needs
- Jobs requiring medium-level skills dominate in the labour market
- Digitalisation one of several factors influencing VET

2015

- Broader goals: social as well as economic; excellence as well as integration
- Increasing role of skills intelligence systems
- Jobs requiring medium-levels skills starting to decline; future developments contested
- Digitalisation a key-driving force

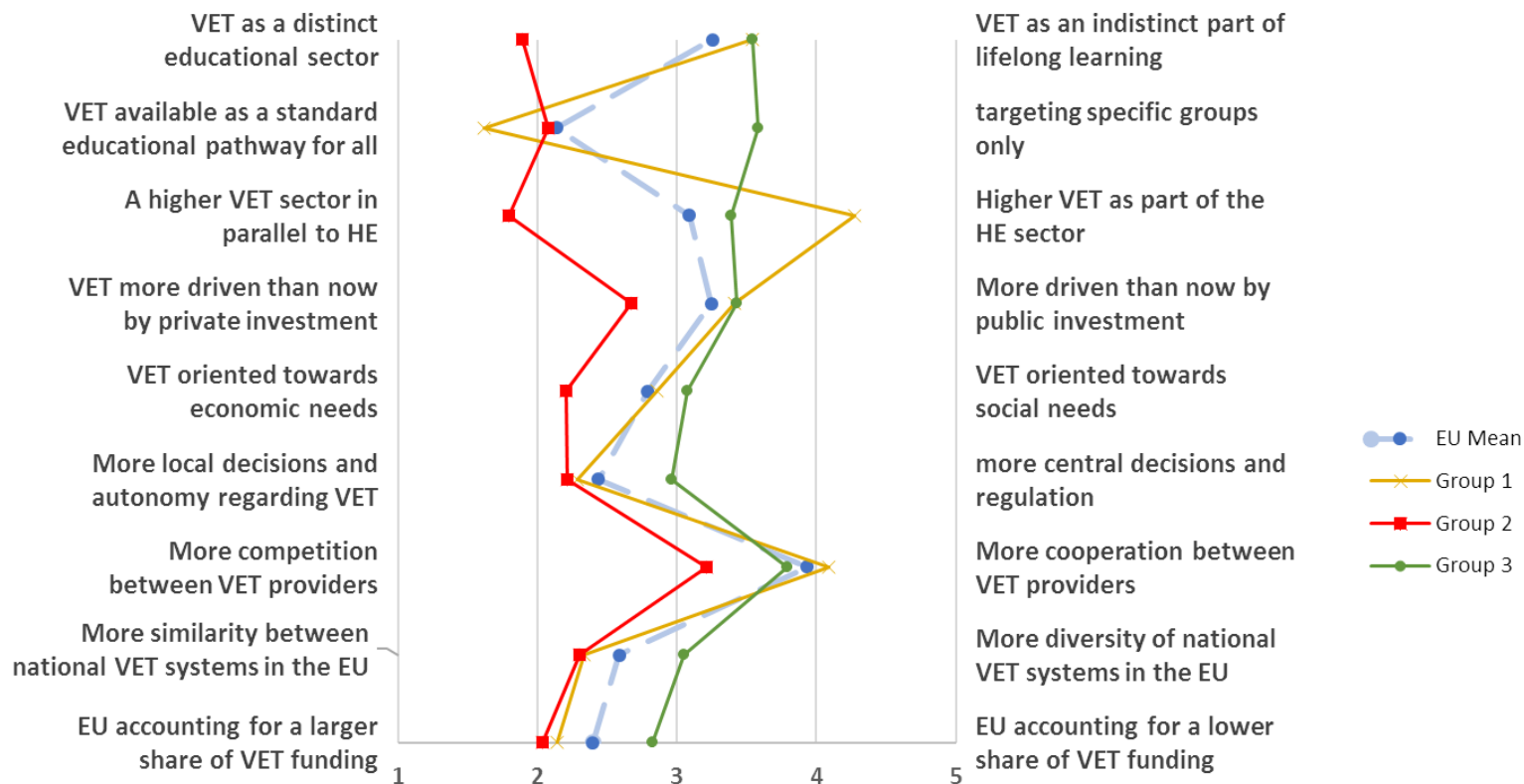
A photograph of two scientists, a woman and a man, in a laboratory setting. They are both wearing white lab coats. The woman, on the left, has her hair in a bun and is smiling. The man, on the right, is looking through a microscope and smiling. A blue semi-transparent banner is overlaid on the image, containing the title text.

Reflecting on the future European VET scenarios 2035

© Cedefop, 2018/Peter Mayr

Three different Visions of VET (Stakeholder survey)

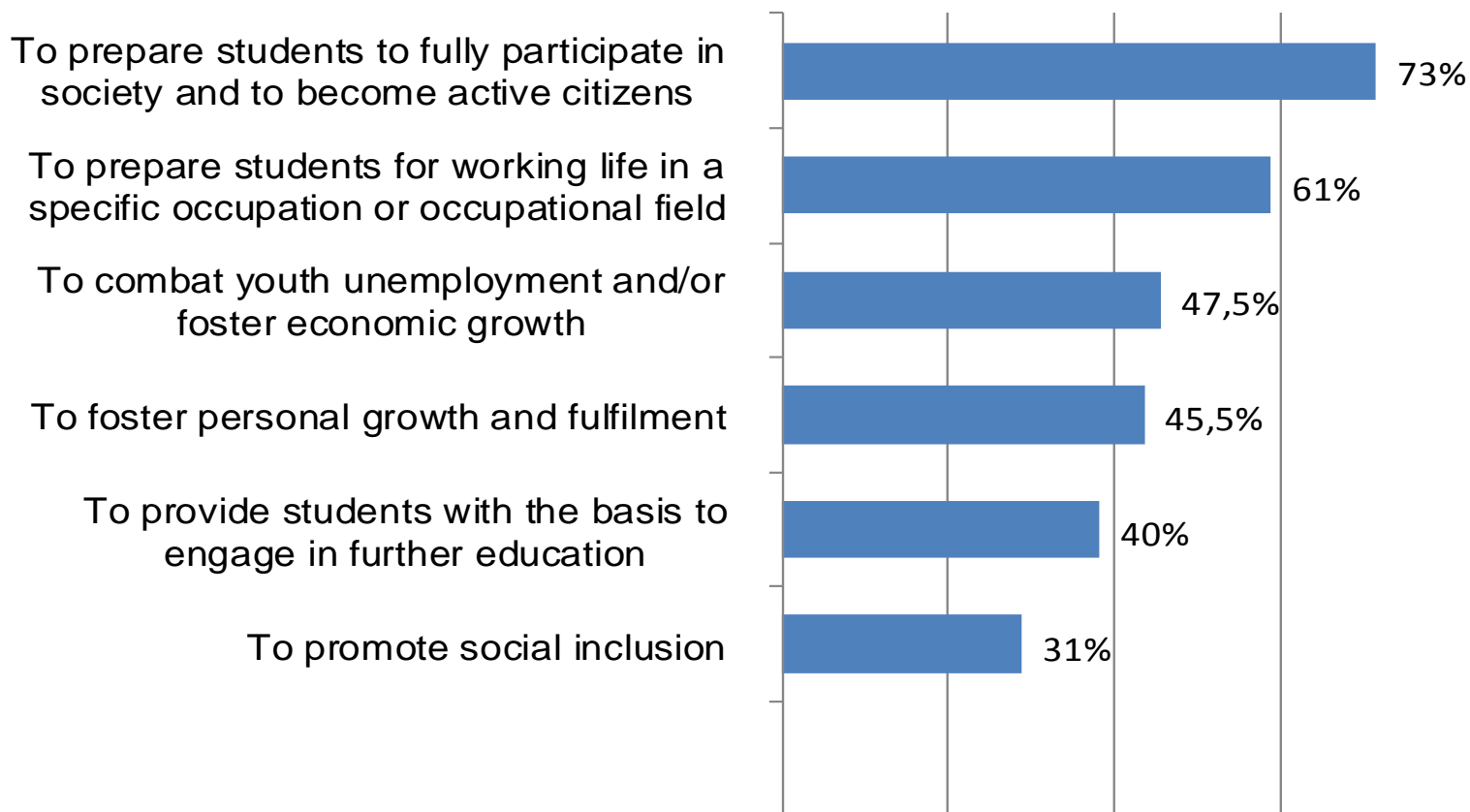
Patterns of visions of VET for 2035



1= very strong preference to an option on the left;
 2= strong preference to an option on the left;
 3= equal preference for options on the left and the right
 4= strong preference for an option on the right;
 5= very strong preference for an option on the right;

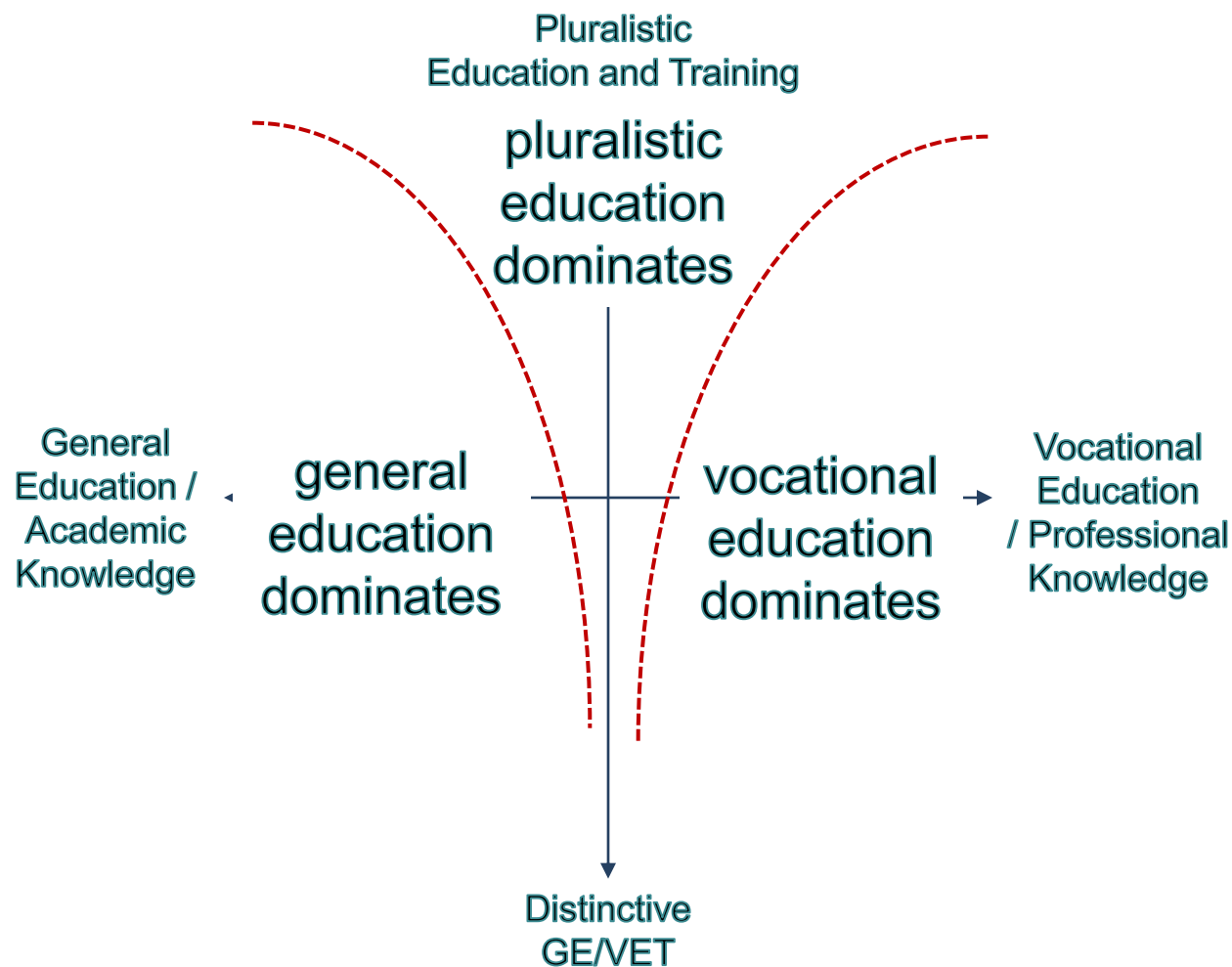
Desired VET profile – stakeholder views

Views of more than 1300 VET experts

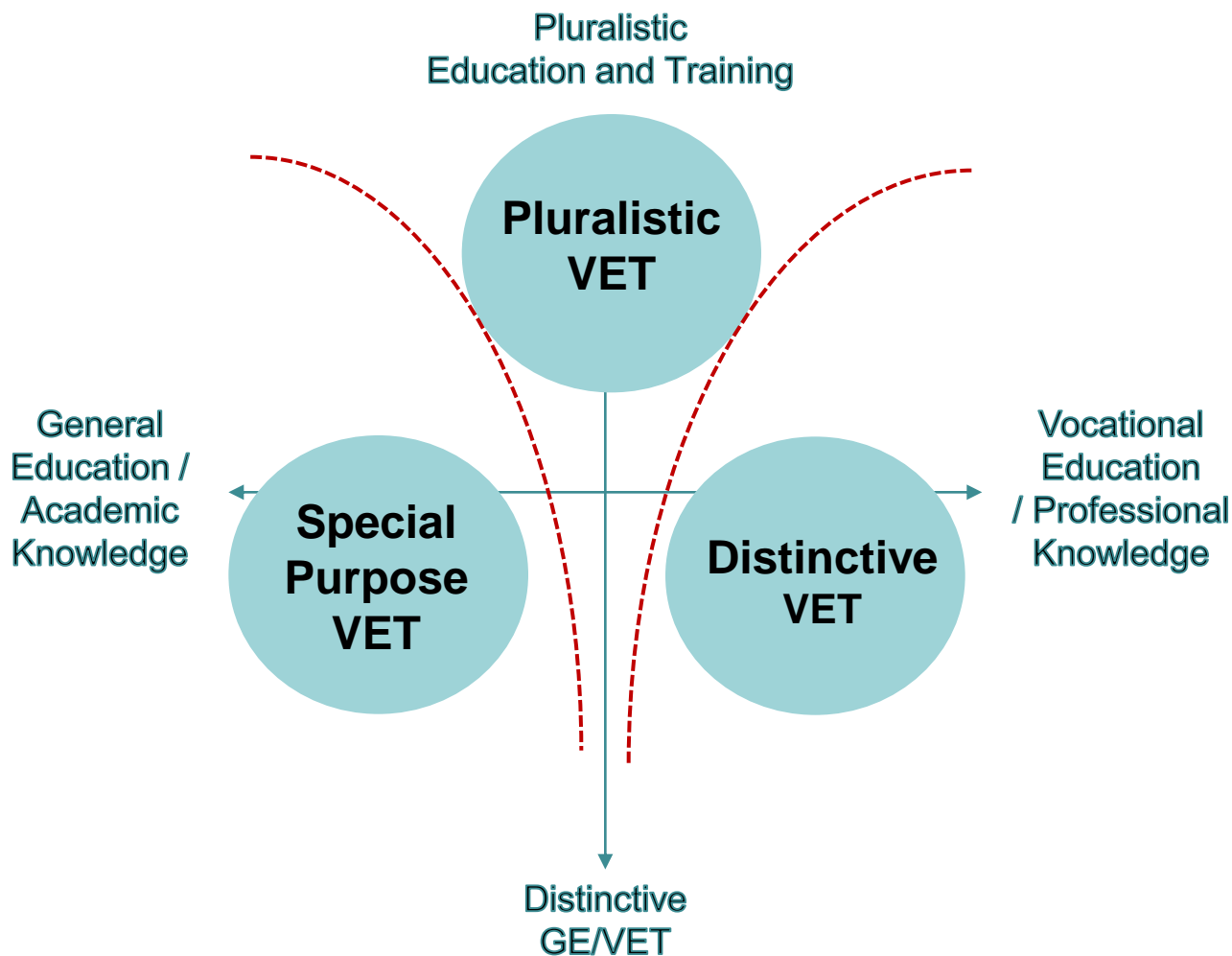


Source: Cedefop survey, Changing VET 2035 (2018), n= 1308 Multiple answer question

VET scenarios 2035 – Underpinning dimensions



Basic VET Scenarios



Pluralistic VET

How is VET understood?

VET is understood as ‘vocationally oriented learning’ in various contexts

What is VET’s position in the wider education and training system?

VET takes place in various settings within the wider education and training system and is regarded as a particular feature of education (having closer links to the labour market) rather than a sector of its own.

What is VET’s key organising principle?

Key concept: (certified) ‘core ‘competence’; VET is organised around qualifications.

Who is it for?

Increasing diversity of target groups; covering lower levels as well as medium and higher levels

What type of pathways?

Numerous VET pathways operate side by side; school and work-based pathways have the same status and are mixed pragmatically; strongly individualised.

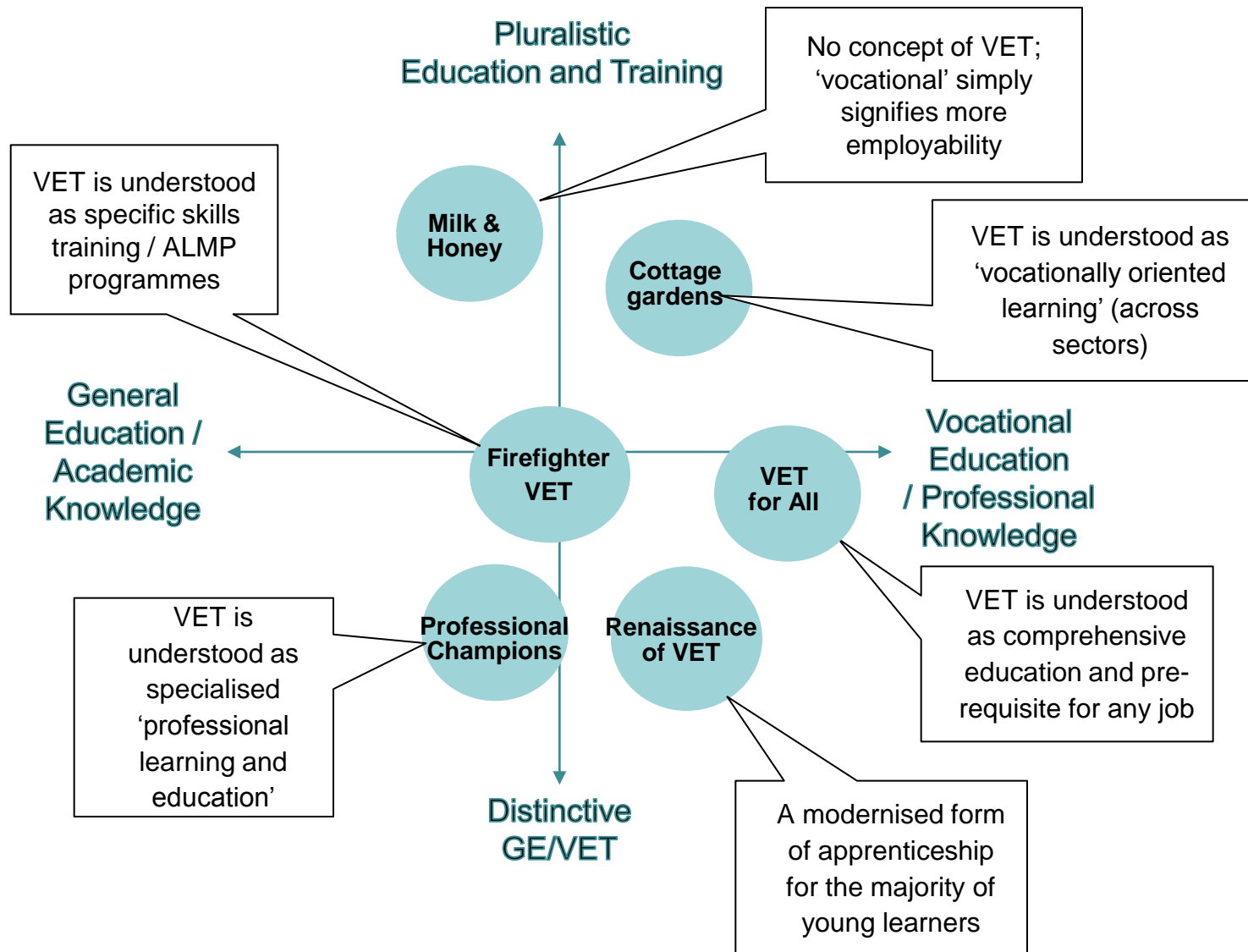
What type of provision?

Wide variety of provisions at diverse institutions, with some emphasis on project- and problem-based as well as self-directed learning.

	Distinctive VET
How is VET understood?	VET is understood as a modernised version of ‘vocational education and training’
What is VET’s position in the wider education and training system?	VET is a clearly defined sub-sector of the education and training system consisting of clearly defined institutions. The workplace is regarded as integral element of most VET programmes.
What is VET’s key organising principle?	Key concept: ‘professional competence’; VET is organised around occupations/ professions.
Who is it for?	Focus is on professional entry, associated with medium to high-skilled professions
What type of pathways?	Work based learning and apprenticeships have high status, stand out as the ‘gold standard’ and are offered up to level 8.
What type of provision?	Combination of school-based and work-based learning, partly seconded by learning in employer led VET centres.

	Special-purpose VET
How is VET understood?	VET is understood as 'skills training' for labour market inclusion
What is VET's position in the wider education and training system?	Most VET takes place outside the education and training system in re- and up-skilling measures of ALMP; some in second chance programme within the education system
What is VET's key organising principle?	Key concepts: 'skills, competencies and employability'; VET is organised around jobs.
Who is it for?	Mainly for adults with low qualifications and early school leavers
What type of pathways?	No particular pathways; emphasis on (re-)entry into the labour market; frequent back and forth between jobs and (re-)skilling.
What type of provision?	Short training courses mainly in classrooms and workshops, with some on-the-job-training

Six detailed scenarios...



Scenario approach: Strengths and limitations

01

We are not predicting the future, but seek to illustrate the implications of different choices

03

Scenarios will never materialise in the pure or ideal form, but can become dominant and influence developments

02

Scenarios help to alert policy-makers to different trends and the implications of these

04

Scenarios acknowledge that VET systems are path dependent and will to varying extent reflect the past

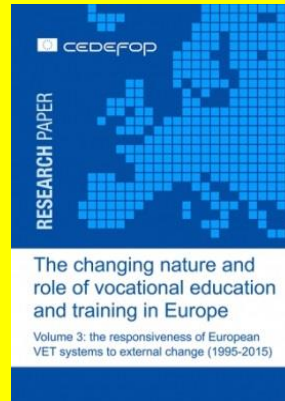
Research outcomes and publications

www.cedefop.europa.eu



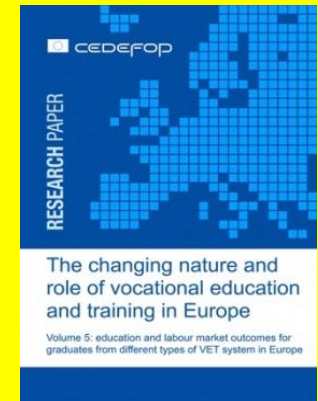
**Volume 1:
Definitions and
conceptions of VET**

**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**

Forthcoming

Volume 6: **Higher VET** (2018)

Volume 7: **VET and lifelong learning** (2019)

Final scenario report (2019)



Thank you

www.cedefop.europa.eu

Jens.Bjornavold@cedefop.europa.eu
Markowitsch@3S.co.at

Follow us on social media:

