



Cedefop feasibility study for surveying principals, teachers, learners and in-company trainers in initial vocational education and training

1. What is the project about?

Cedefop's feasibility study for surveying principals, teachers, learners and in-company trainers in initial vocational education and training (IVET) settings aims to fill important knowledge gaps and develop a robust evidence base in this field. As the skills requirements for jobs change, the labour force for these jobs must be able to adapt and upskill in new and innovative ways. IVET is Europe's tool in responding to the challenges of globalisation, technological developments, digitalisation, artificial intelligence, new business models and climate change. To ensure that IVET rises to these challenges – and maintains and cultivates sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience, as set out in the new [Council recommendation](#) – more needs to be known about IVET settings and the experiences of those who teach and learn in them. This study will lay the groundwork for a robust evidence base, which can be further developed.

2. What does the study aim to achieve?

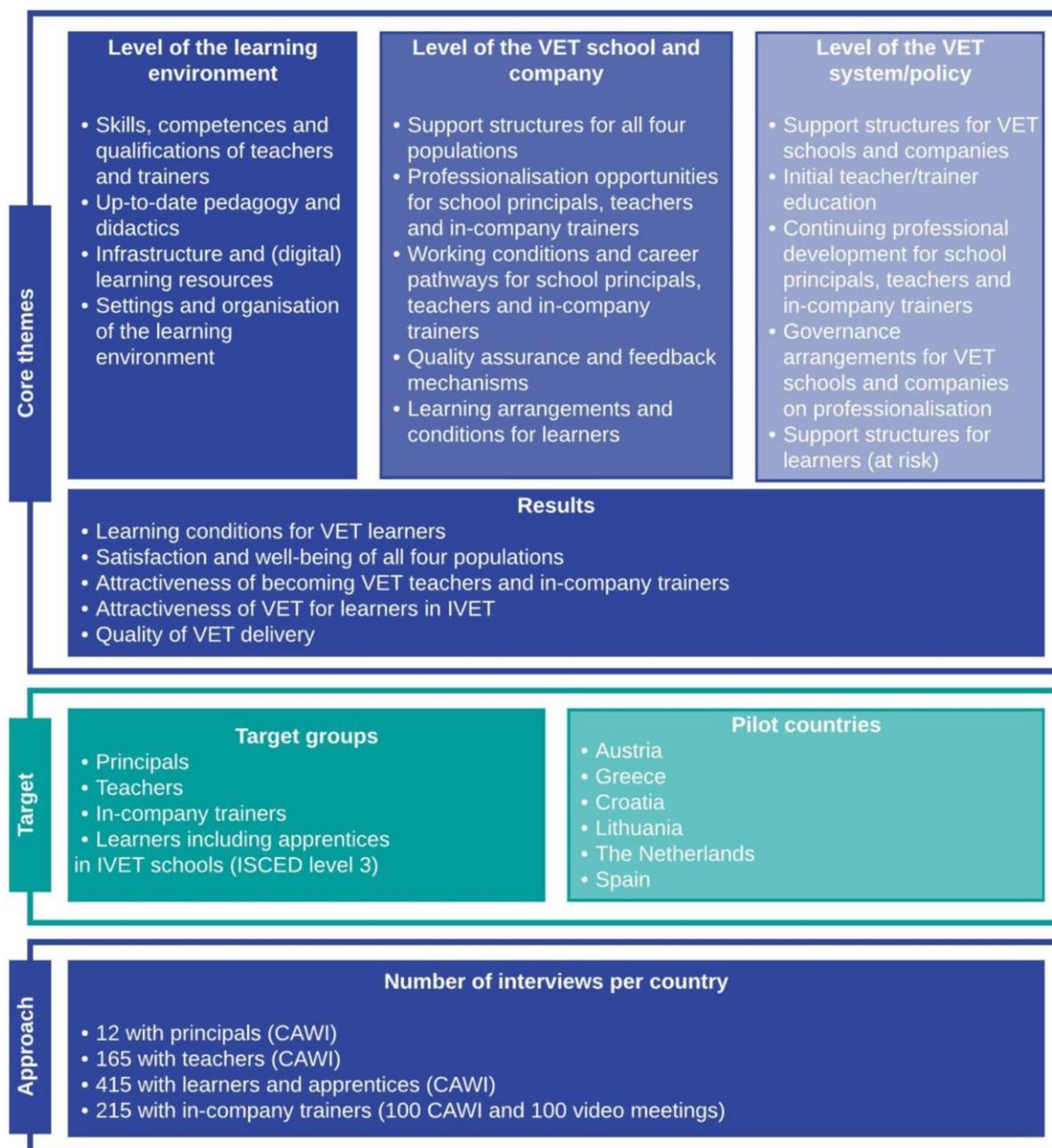
The study's main objective is to provide evidence around five core themes related to IVET settings. The themes have been chosen to assist in collecting evidence to shape, inform and add value to IVET policy-making and programmes:

- (a) the evolving role and challenges of school principals, teachers and in-company trainers in IVET settings;
- (b) skill needs and qualifications of school principals, teachers and in-company trainers, and access to quality continuous professional development (CPD);
- (c) career progression, wellbeing and job satisfaction of school principals, teachers and in-company trainers;
- (d) pedagogies and learning environments in school- and work-based initial VET to support excellence and inclusiveness;
- (e) learners' wellbeing, sense of belonging and engagement with learning.

The theme selection is linked to the most recent developments of EU policy in the field of VET. This focus will provide evidence to help realise the vision for VET foreseen in the Council recommendation on vocational education and training (VET) for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience, and to achieve the objectives set in the [Osnabrück declaration](#) on vocational education and training as an enabler of recovery and just transitions to digital and green economies. Targeting [teachers and in-company trainers](#) will support the reflection and follow-up on the Council conclusions on European teachers and trainers for the future.

The feasibility study will develop survey tools to collect data from principals, learners, teachers and in-company trainers in IVET schools (ISCED level 3). A pilot in six countries (see Box 1) will assess the feasibility and practicability of a survey for data collection, evaluate its potential to close information gaps, and consider the feasibility of extending the pilot to cover the EU, Iceland and Norway.

Box 1. Study scope and method



3. What are we going to do? How are we going to do it?

The pilot study will develop and implement the survey in six countries: Austria, Greece, Croatia, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Spain. These countries were chosen as representative of the diversity of IVET systems in the European Union.

The feasibility study is under the joint responsibility of Cedefop experts, Irene Psifidou (team coordinator) and Daniel Scheuregger, in Cedefop's Department for learning and employability headed by Antonio Ranieri. On Cedefop's behalf, Ipsos (responsible for the design and execution of the survey), the PPMI (who will coordinate the work on thematic aspects of the project) and Ockham (who will provide the role of senior VET experts) will carry out the study.

The research team will engage with a network of local VET experts in the six countries. The network will act as gatekeepers of the IVET settings, facilitating the recruitment and access to schools and in-company trainers by drawing on their local networks and understanding of the local education systems. A national contact point (NCP) has been selected to coordinate and deliver fieldwork in each country. The survey will be undertaken in two phases, registration and survey:

(a) The registration stage

The PPMI and the national VET expert will arrange for permission to be granted and support given from the relevant national authorities; contact details will also be sought from these bodies, as well as a letter of support for the study to encourage response rates.

Pre-survey communications are crucial in achieving a high response rate; therefore, personalised communication will be sent to IVET settings to invite schools to engage in the study. This will be followed by phone calls to explain the survey further, allowing schools to register online or by phone. This phase will establish school and participant eligibility by identifying eligible teachers, students and in-company trainers and enabling random selection where necessary.

The recruitment of in-company trainers will take place both through schools and via other means and organisations, reflecting the national context.

(b) The survey stage

Invitations and online survey links for each of the surveys will be provided for distribution by the school for completion of principal, teacher and learner interviews. Survey invitations will include information about the survey objectives and purpose, the expected length of the interview, the information collected, and a deadline for completion.

The survey will be administered to learners by the school coordinator or the teachers of the selected classes, who will receive instructions on how to do so in a lesson, with the whole class completing the survey at the same time. A briefing pack will be provided for schools containing an introduction to the survey, tools to explain the survey to learners, information on confidentiality and anonymity, as well as parent information packs. The procedure will follow EU regulations on data protection throughout.

The in-company trainer survey component will include a randomly assigned mode test – contrasting online data collection with video meetings – to determine the most suitable approach for this audience.

4. What are the key tasks and time-frames for the feasibility study?

The study will consist of the following stages:

- literature review and expert interviews to identify research gaps, scoping and specification of study parameters (January to April 2021);
- questionnaire development and translations including cognitive testing in all survey languages, finalisation of survey approach and tools (May to October 2021);
- small-scale pre-test with two schools in each of the six countries, and adaptations for the next phase (November 2021 to January 2022);
- full-scale pilot in 10 schools in each of the six countries with approximately 760 interviews per country across the four target groups (February to June 2022);
- final analysis, reporting and recommendations for its upscale to a pan-European survey (July to September 2022).