“Skills ecosystems” for innovation, regional development, and smart specialisation

Mapping Vocational Excellence

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Content

1) Mapping existing examples of Vocational Excellence

2) Preliminary results of the mapping exercise

3) Looking ahead
Mapping existing examples of Vocational Excellence

Objective of the mapping exercise:
- Identify existing examples of Vocational excellence

Key questions:
- What is understood by Vocational Excellence?
- How can a EU level initiative add-value to existing experiences?

Geographical coverage of the mapping:
- EU Member States, EFTA, candidate countries, and other ETF partner countries (work also conducted by ETF)
Activities clustered in three groups:

1) Teaching and learning
2) Cooperation and partnerships
3) Governance and funding

Main outputs of the mapping exercise in 2019

Overall:
- Results will feed into the ET2020 VET WG
- Provide evidence to develop concept on CoVE

Specific:
- **January** - Presentation to VET WG meeting
- **February** – PLA on innovation in VET (Timisoara)
- **March** – Summary of draft report for DGVT (Alba Iulia)
- **April** – Final report *(incorporating mapping done by ETF)*
Preliminary results of the mapping exercise

Diverse nomenclature for Centres of Vocational Excellence

- **Belgium–Wallonia** - Competence centres (Centres de compétence)
- **France** - Campuses of occupations and qualifications. Also referred to as Centres of excellence (Pôles d’excellence) and Centres of training (Pôles de formation). Sometimes referred to as clusters/networks and territorial ecosystems.
- **Spain**, Basque region, Tknika - Centre of research and innovation
- **Netherlands**, Katapult network - Community for Development, also described as an innovative learning and working community
- **Poland** - Practical Training Centres (Centra Kształcenia Praktycznego)
- **Italy** - Higher Technical Institutes (it. Istituti Tecnici Superiori - ITS)
- **Slovenia**, Nova Gorica - Partnership for excellence: Šolski center
## Two broad typologies of Centres of Vocational Excellence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CoVE’s as “purpose built” entities</strong></th>
<th><strong>Individual VET providers</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship to regional development, innovation and smart specialization strategies</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part of national/regional arrangements for VET excellence</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Likely to be closely linked to regional development, innovation and smart specialization strategies, or are explicit instruments of such strategies. May tend to neglect focus on social issues.</td>
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<td><strong>Skills anticipation</strong></td>
<td>Strong potential to link systematically into skill anticipation systems, as well as being local enough to fine tune provision within the parameters of national/regional policy.</td>
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<td><strong>Coverage</strong></td>
<td>Ensures national coverage of sectors.</td>
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<td><strong>Networking</strong></td>
<td>Networking and sharing opportunities come ‘ready made’, often facilitated by the network.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Resourcing</strong></td>
<td>Network may have core funding, providing an extra tier of capacity.</td>
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</table>

## Activities related to Teaching and learning

- **Labour market relevance** – Meeting labour market skill needs is a common underpinning key driver of CoVE’s
- **Lifelong learning (iVET and cVET)** – provision often depends on education traditions in the country where the CoVE is located
- **Innovation and project based learning** – active in developing and/or implementing innovative teaching and training methodologies
- **Key competences** – common focus on embedding key competences
- **Trans-national joint curricula** – not a frequent feature of CoVE’s
- **Higher VET** – much variation. Conditioned by national legislation
- **Teachers and trainers** – essential element of CoVE’s; training+research
- **Guidance and validation** – scarce evidence, although large diversity.
Activities related to Cooperation and partnerships

- **Exchanging people and equipment** – a common feature, that also includes cooperation on apprenticeships and internships
- **Innovation centres and incubators** – closely cooperating with universities and businesses, and developing learners entrepreneurship
- **New knowledge creation** – some good examples but knowledge creation with R&D, Universities and companies still rare. Strong diversity of approach; in some cases systematic, but others ad-hoc
- **International cooperation** – essential characteristic of CoVE’s
- **Skills competitions** - diversity in levels of participation

Activities related to Governance and Financing

- **Links to wider regional development, innovation and smart specialisation strategies** – variation in approach; sometimes implicit others explicitly embedded. Often conditioned by national level of inter-ministerial cooperation.
- **Partnerships and leadership** – private-public partnerships are common in CoVE’s. Partnerships can be formed explicitly as part of CoVE networks, or single VET providers acting as lead organisations acting as “hubs”
- **Funding** – public funding is predominant, even if in some countries private funding is significant (dual system). Some CoVE’s also have income generating activities, including profitable international operations
- **EU funding** – In some countries ESF, Erasmus+, ERDF and INTERREG play a key role
Firmly anchored into frameworks of regional development, innovation and smart specialisation - allows for the identification of synergies between policies and amongst stakeholders, avoiding ad hoc actions, which, though beneficial in themselves do not realise all the potential benefits

Integration of activities - There is great potential in CoVEs to achieve more than sum of the parts, in particular, where CoVEs build reflexive relationships between their activities and research

Active in the Knowledge triangle - Strong and enduring relationships between the VET community, businesses and the university sector in which interactions are reciprocal and mutually beneficial

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### Key success factors for Centres of Vocational Excellence

- **Firmly anchored into frameworks of regional development, innovation and smart specialisation** - allows for the identification of synergies between policies and amongst stakeholders, avoiding ad hoc actions, which, though beneficial in themselves do not realise all the potential benefits

- **Integration of activities** - There is great potential in CoVEs to achieve more than sum of the parts, in particular, where CoVEs build reflexive relationships between their activities and research

- **Active in the Knowledge triangle** - Strong and enduring relationships between the VET community, businesses and the university sector in which interactions are reciprocal and mutually beneficial

### A “maturity model” for Centres of Vocational Excellence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster of activities</th>
<th>Setting-up foundations</th>
<th>Developing added value</th>
<th>Achieving excellence - The “self-reflexive CoVE”</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improving on what VET normally does, with close linkages to the labour market</td>
<td>Engaged with regional strategic development, and collaborating with a wide range of stakeholders</td>
<td>Co-creating local skills ecosystems, and local innovation and regional development. Strong VET internationalisation dimension</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching and learning</td>
<td>✓ Curricula and programmes closely attuned to LM needs</td>
<td>✓ Playing active role in skill anticipation mechanisms</td>
<td>✓ Engaged in a synergistic relationship with skill anticipation mechanisms</td>
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<td>✓ CVET offered alongside IVET based on lifelong learning principles</td>
<td>✓ Increasing integration of IVET and CVET on LLL principles</td>
<td>✓ Lifelong learning centres integrate provision; little or no distinction between IVET and CVET</td>
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<td>✓ Improving VET quality through innovative pedagogies</td>
<td>✓ Adopting more systematic approaches to innovating in teaching and learning</td>
<td>✓ Not only innovating but conducting research into effective teaching and learning methodologies</td>
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<td>✓ Pathways to higher level VET only occasionally available</td>
<td>✓ Pathways to higher level VET being systematically developed</td>
<td>✓ Innovation includes trans-national joint curricula</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ CPD of teachers and trainers encouraged</td>
<td>✓ Innovations in teaching and learning being linked into CPD</td>
<td>✓ Pathways to higher VET: intrinsic part of the offer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperation and partnerships</td>
<td>✓ Placements in companies, some provision of equipment and expertise by companies</td>
<td>✓ Two-way, reciprocal relationship with businesses</td>
<td>✓ Feedback mechanisms between CPD practice+R&amp;D</td>
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<td>✓ New knowledge created on an ad hoc basis or as a by-product of other activities</td>
<td>✓ Participating in innovation hubs, technology diffusion centres, business incubators</td>
<td>✓ Guidance and validation services form an integral part of the VET offer to all students</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Participating in international projects (mobility + innovation)</td>
<td>✓ Creating knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance + Financing</td>
<td>✓ Many ad hoc partnerships focused</td>
<td>✓ Participating in international projects (mobility + innovation)</td>
<td>✓ Leading role in innovation hubs, technology diffusion centres, business incubators; VET learners have opportunity to engage in incubation activities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Ad hoc resource contributions from private sector</td>
<td>✓ International activities include international campuses/academies; being key player in foreign investment projects.</td>
<td>✓ New knowledge creation linked to organized research programmes/centres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Link to full document]
Platforms of Vocational Excellence
The way forward!

**2018 – Preparing the ground**
- Erasmus+ KA3 call for Joint VET qualifications
- **ET2020 WG** 2018-2020 focused on innovation and digitalisation in VET
- Mapping of existing approaches to **Vocational Excellence**

**2019 – The first (limited) pilot projects**
- Erasmus+ **KA2 Sector Skills Alliances** call for pilot projects on CoVE
- Erasmus+ **KA3** call for **Networks and partnerships of VET providers**

**2020 – Refining the concept and piloting the initiative**
- Erasmus+ **KA3** call for **Platforms of Vocational Excellence (full pilot)**

**2021-2027 – The full implementation of the initiative**
- **Erasmus**, and ERDF, ESF, InvestEU, Horizon Europe  ➔ **supporting CoVE**
Follow your passion

Vocational Education and Training is a first choice.