

# European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training

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The Commission presents a report on the implementation of the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for vocational education and training (EQ VET).

**General framework of EQAVET and objectives of the report:** the report recalls that vocational education and training (VET), has a crucial role to play in fostering growth.

However, the challenges are still significant:

- increasing VET's attractiveness,
- embedding stronger work based learning,
- enhancing labour market relevance,
- developing stronger career and education guidance,
- implementing teachers and trainers professional development, and
- improving recognition and transparency of VET learning outcomes between countries and across different education pathways.

Quality assurance (QA) has an important role in addressing these challenges, in particular through overcoming skills mismatches and improving employability of young people so that a shared understanding of VET excellence can finally emerge, facilitating mutual recognition of learning acquired in various countries and thus enabling more mobility and a better response to economic and societal challenges.

This paper is the first report on progress of quality assurance in VET in the European Union, following the adoption of the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET). It **summarises the experience gained and presents the Commission proposals for the way ahead.**

**What is EQ VET?** the EQAVET recommendation establishes a reference instrument to help Member States to promote and monitor continuous improvement of VET systems. The framework should contribute to quality improvement in VET and to increased transparency of, and consistency in, VET policy developments between Member States, thereby promoting mutual trust, mobility of workers and learners, and lifelong learning.

The framework comprises a cycle of four phases (planning, implementation, evaluation and review). It should be regarded as a "**toolbox**", from which the various users may choose those elements that they

consider most relevant to their specific systems. The indicators proposed for measuring VET quality improvement concern data such as investment in training of teachers and trainers, participation, completion and placement rate in VET programmes, utilisation of acquired skills at work place, unemployment rate, prevalence of vulnerable groups, mechanisms to identify training needs in the labour market and schemes used to promote access to VET.

**Evaluation conclusions:** in general, the report indicates that EQAVET **has contributed to advancing a quality culture in VET** in European countries, as well as to its practical implementation, through the development notably of quality operational measures within the EQAVET network.

However, such measures have focused on institutional, school-based provision (most of initial VET and part of continuing VET), with less visible impact on work-based learning and non-formal provision (which makes up most of continuing VET but could also play a key part in Initial VET in dual systems).

The flexible approach of EQAVET, making available tools for selection and adjustment, has facilitated its use, but at the same time has reduced its potential as a common language and conceptual framework across countries.

The report considers that **a clear need emerges therefore for enhanced cooperation with other European instruments for quality assurance and transparency.**

Accordingly, the following measures are proposed:

- give explicit attention to the quality assurance of qualification design and award, liaising to [the EQF](#), and the [Europass Certificate Supplement](#);

- improve implementation in Member States by:

- developing descriptors, indicators and related guidelines to better address the quality and the appropriate proficiency level of outcomes acquired by learners in VET;
- developing and test guidelines in cooperation with diverse stakeholders and coordination with developments related with quality in adult learning;
- test the opportunity for European arrangements to make national quality assurance measures more transparent across countries. This could include developing an information supplement to facilitate common understanding of national accreditation processes of VET providers, promoting common guidelines on how to describe quality assurance procedures compatible with EQAVET.

The report also looks at possible measures in the framework of Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020.

Lastly, the Commission stresses the need to undertake actions towards better European cooperation in [quality assurance](#), by examining how the objectives of EQAVET could be pursued through a comprehensive approach to quality assurance for lifelong learning.