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THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR VET IN EUROPE TO FACE INEQUALITIES IN AN AGE OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM

Post-pandemic Inequalities in an Age of Global Capitalism Conference

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BACKGROUND



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The COVID-19 outbreak has brought to the fore in Europe the difficulties and challenges of Education and Training (VET) systems and made possible a **marked acceleration in the adoption of innovation measures**.

Indeed, the pandemic has exposed more than 100 million Europeans, part of the education and training community, to new realities, new ways of communicating, learning and teaching. During this difficult period, education institutions and teachers demonstrated their enormous **capacity for flexibility, creativity and innovation**. At the same time, however, the crisis shone a spotlight on existing weaknesses in our education systems.



BACKGROUND



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The reactivity of the training system during the pandemic has opened up to innovations and the use of networked services and platforms and has relaunched and **implemented the lifelong learning paradigm** through various methods.

COVID-19 has further highlighted the need to introduce **the concept of complexity** into the curricula of young generations, supplying specific training, aimed at connecting knowledge in a transversal way, in particular for those learners who were already in a disadvantaged position. Socio-economic background is still the most important determinant of educational outcomes in the EU.



EQAVET FRAMEWORK



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- The **2009 Recommendation of the EU Parliament and Council** launched the European **Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training** (EQAVET) as a European wide framework to support quality assurance in vocational education and training (VET) across Europe.
- On November 2020, the European Council edits the **2020 Recommendation on vocational education and training for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness, and resilience** in order to modernize EU VET policy.



EQAVET FRAMEWORK



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The 2020 Recommendation calls on Member States to promote measures to equip youth and adults with the knowledge, skills and competencies needed in the labor market for green and digital transitions; promotes **inclusiveness and equal opportunities** and builds on a **culture of quality assurance**.

The Recommendation describes how EQAVET can be used to strengthen the quality of initial and continuing VET and underlines the **strategic role of the National Reference Points for the dissemination of self -assessment and peer review** at VET provider and system level.

VET assessment provides benefits in promoting training quality and innovation.





The **Osnabrück Declaration**, focuses on **four main areas** for the period **2021-2025**:

- ✓ Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET
- ✓ Establishment of a new culture of lifelong learning - Importance of continuous VET and digitization
- ✓ Sustainability, a green thread in VET
- ✓ European area of education and training and the international dimension of VET



EQAVET FRAMEWORK



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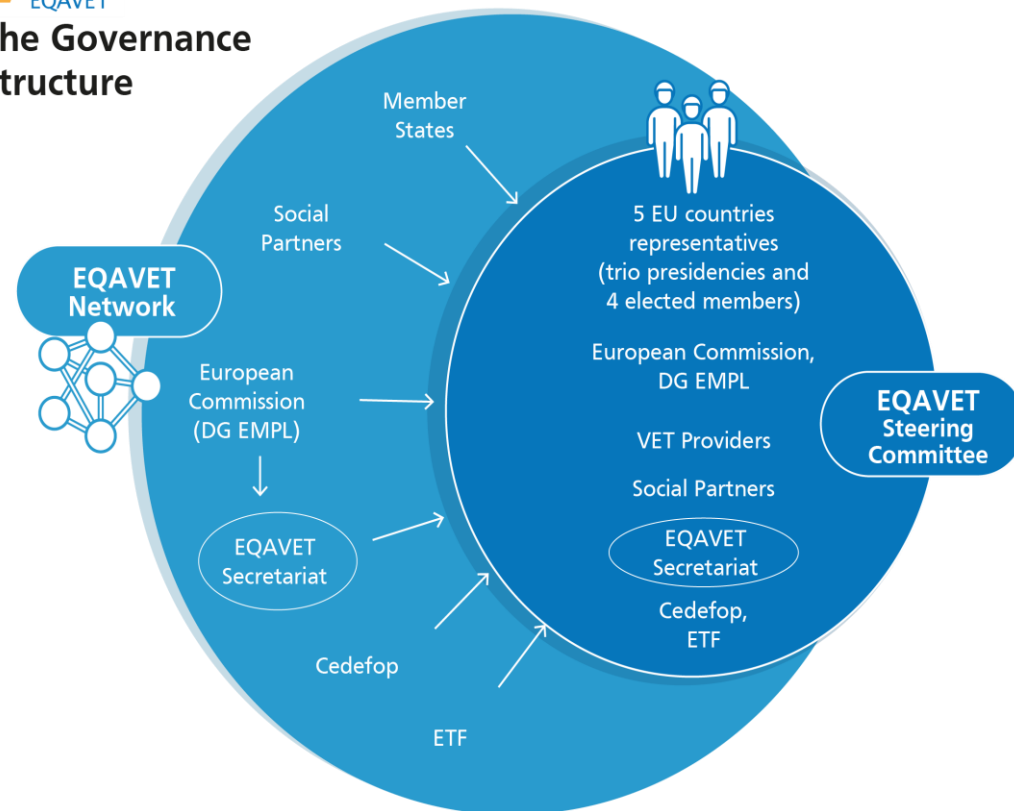


The EQAVET Framework can be used to support the quality assurance of:

- **all public and private** sectors;
- awards and qualifications at **all levels of EQF**;
- **all learning environments** (school-based provision, work-based learning, apprenticeships, formal, informal and non-formal provision);
- **all types of learning contexts** (digital, face-to-face and blended).



The Governance Structure



EQAVET FRAMEWORK



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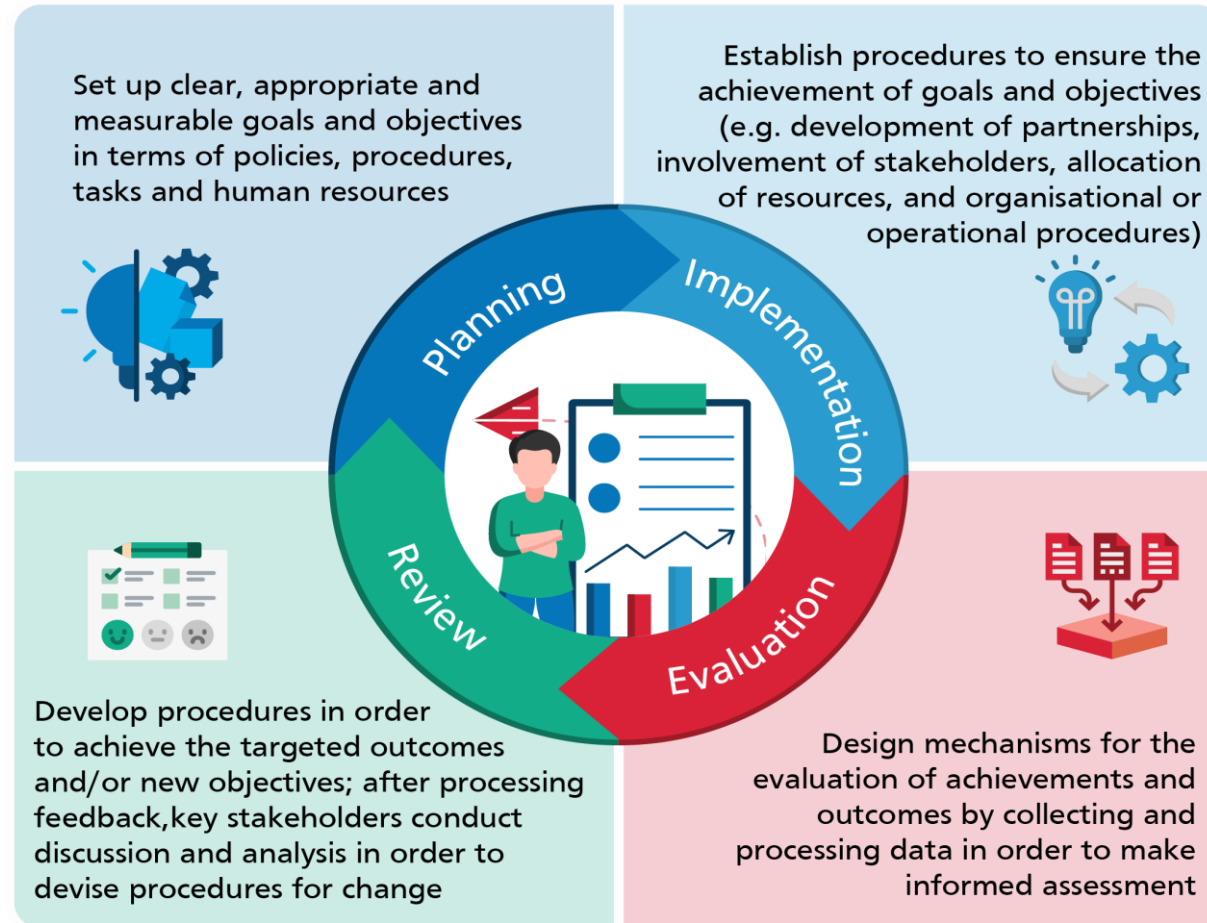


Quality assurance and improvement cycle

- planning
- implementation
- evaluation/ assessment
- review/revision



The Quality Assurance Cycle





The EQAVET Framework includes **ten reference indicators** that are designed to support the strengthening of a culture of quality assurance within VET systems.

The same indicators can be used to **measure the quality** of provision **at system and provider level**.

Taken in conjunction with the indicative descriptors which are annexed to the EQAVET Recommendation, they will play an important role in enabling policymakers and other stakeholders to develop their approaches to the effective implementation of the Recommendation.





1. Relevance of Quality Assurance systems for VET providers
2. Investment in training of teachers and trainers
3. Participation rate in VET programmes
4. Completion rate in VET programmes
5. Placement rate in VET programmes
6. Utilization of acquired skills at the workplace
7. Unemployment rate
8. Prevalence of vulnerable groups
9. Mechanisms to identify training needs in the labor market
10. Schemes used to improve access to VET





The EQAVET indicative descriptors:

System level

The descriptors help Member States to analyze their quality assurance system and gauge how much progress has been made. The indicative descriptors can be applied to both initial and continuing.

Provider level

The descriptors help VET providers to analyze their approach to quality assurance and gauge how much progress has been made in improving the quality of provision.



NATIONAL REFERENCE POINTS



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The **EQAVET network** deals with the training and education quality assurance in order to promote **social inclusion** for those with fewer opportunities, including people with disabilities and with migrant backgrounds, as well as living in rural and isolated areas and people facing socioeconomic difficulties.

The EQAVET network includes the **National Reference Points** of the EU member states and candidate countries, European Social Partner organizations, and the European Commission, jointly cooperating in the development and improvement of VET systems, in order to implement the Recommendations (2009, 2020) and European VET quality guidelines.



NATIONAL REFERENCE POINTS



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In particular, the EQAVET network:

- promotes the use and development of the EQAVET criteria, indicative descriptors and indicators;
- supports the improvement of quality assurance systems at the national level; develops a culture of quality, supporting evaluation and self-assessment;
- promotes a European dimension of quality assurance.

In accordance with each national legislation, the National Reference Points are aimed to:

- support and disseminate the implementation of the network's activities;
- take concrete steps to promote the further development of the framework at the national level;
- implement self-evaluation as an effective tool of quality assurance.



NATIONAL REFERENCE POINTS



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The **Italian EQAVET National Reference Point (NRP)** was established in 2006. The Italian NRP is set in the Training Systems Structure, in **Inapp**, in Rome.

The Italian NRP promotes a Steering Committee (**National Board**) which includes delegates from the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education, the Regions and the Autonomous Provinces, the Social Partners, as well as training experts and representatives of Italian VET providers.





The **European Peer Review** is an evaluation methodology as a **voluntary mutual learning activity**. It involves a combination of internal and external evaluation: quality control and continuous improvement, as a flexible tool to be adopted in different contexts.

- Peer Review at **VET providers level** is based on the combination of the self-evaluation of VET institutions or centers and the peers external evaluation.
- Peer Review at **system level** gives the countries involved an opportunity to analyze and recalibrate their system and ensure the quality of vocational education and training.



PEER REVIEW METHODOLOGY



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A Peer review is carried out by **Peers** (in total 4), colleagues working in similar institutions or environments. Peers will act as “**critical friends**” by encouraging a process of mutual trust, confidence and learning among the participants, institutions and systems involved.

Before the Peer Review visit, the evaluated organization sends a **Self-Assessment Report** to the Peers, as a fundamental document for the evaluation, and appoints a "facilitator" as an internal contact person for the Peer Review.

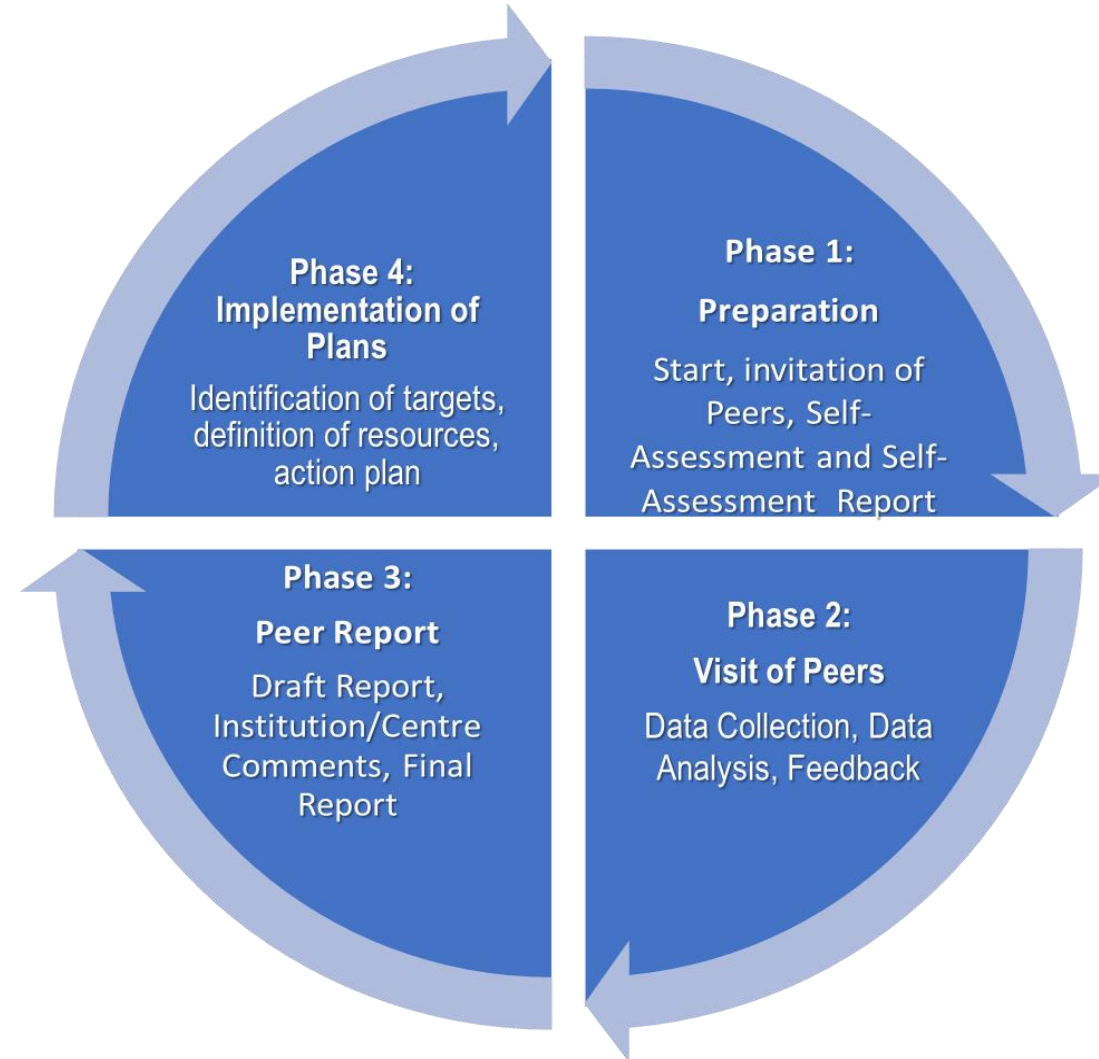
A Peer Review lasts an average of 2.5 days and at the end of the visit Peers draw up a final report, as a result of their reflections on the organization weaknesses and strengths.



PEER REVIEW METHODOLOGY



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CONCLUSIONS



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- The importance of quality assurance in VET is remarkable, as **training** is one of the most useful **tool** to promote excellence in skills development and **to face inequalities**.
- Flexibility has an increasing role in this field as there has been a shift to ensure a more personalized and learner centered approach to VET.
- The **EQAVET framework** is an exquisite opportunity **to face the needs of the European labor market**.





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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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