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Key findings of FINEEC's evaluations of vocational education and training

2021–2022

Presentation themes

Individual study pathways and special needs support

Students' competence and education providers' pedagogical work

Students' togetherness, inclusion and opportunities for participation

Work-based learning and cooperation with workplaces

Responding to the challenges of continuous learning in sudden structural changes

Quality management



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Individual study paths and special needs support

Personalisation as well as identification and recognition of competence

- **The role of personalisation as part of career planning and continuous professional growth should be strengthened.**
- **Students' active participation in personalisation should be developed.**
- **The concepts, instructions and policies related to identification and recognition of prior learning should be clarified and the identification of non-formal learning should be improved.**



Addressing needs for guidance and support, monitoring and evaluation of personalisation

- **The way students' various needs for guidance and support are addressed and the availability of guidance should be improved.**
 - Identification of special needs support needs should be developed for students admitted through the continuous application process and in further and specialist qualifications.
 - Availability of demanding special needs support and adequacy of VET places in different regions should be ensured. Possibilities of moving from one form of support to another as necessary should be developed.
- **Workplace representatives' participation in personalisation should be strengthened.**
 - Availability of workplaces suitable for special needs students, induction of workplace instructors and support for students while pursuing work-based learning should be improved.
- **Effectiveness of personalisation and impact of guidance and support measures should be monitored, evaluated and developed more systematically.**
 - VET providers and the Ministry of Education and Culture should monitor the impacts of extending compulsory education on the need for special needs support.

Personnel's division of labour and resources

- **Division of labour, roles and responsibilities related to personalisation should be clarified, and cooperation between personnel members should be promoted.**
 - It is also important to evaluate and develop the organisation and division of labour related to special needs support at different levels of education and locations and in various qualification forms. Field-specific special needs support teachers are a good way to improve the delivery of support.
- **Sufficient resources for personalisation should be ensured.**
 - At education provider level, the allocation of increased central government transfers for special needs support to the activities should be made more visible and the monitoring of the allocation should be developed. Sufficient special needs support teacher resources should be reserved for the different task areas of special needs support.





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Students' competence and education providers' pedagogical work

The quality of demonstrations is mainly good but there are differences in their organisation

- **Criteria-based assessment and student self-assessment are managed well in demonstrations**
- **Students and workplaces are mainly satisfied with the demonstration activities**
- **There are differences in the organisation of demonstrations between fields and qualifications**
 - Share of demonstrations organised as part of work-based learning
 - Share of workplace demonstrations in all demonstrations
 - Demonstrations for further and specialist qualifications are mostly organised in workplaces. A high share of demonstrations for initial vocational qualifications are still organised in educational institutions.
- **Workplace representatives rarely participate in assessing demonstrations, especially those organised at educational institutions → their participation should be promoted**

Students' competence is good on average

Strengths in competence

- Good grades are awarded for demonstrations: e.g. in initial vocational qualifications in logistics (86%), health care and social services (92%) and electrical and automation engineering (86%), the majority of students received at least the grade good in demonstrations
- Basic vocational competence; skills in using key working methods and tools needed in the work and occupational safety competence.
- Young students' strengths in competence include digital skills, whereas adult students' strengths lie in working life skills.

Development areas in competence

- Mastering the underpinning theoretical knowledge of the work and applying it to practical tasks.
- Major differences between individuals and polarisation, for example in team work and interaction skills.



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Workplace instructors' competence should be developed further, and the competence of teaching and guidance personnel should also be ensured

Needs to develop workplace instructors' competence were highlighted in all evaluations.

- Guidance and assessment competence
- Knowledge of the qualification requirements
- Opportunities for updating competence

Teaching and guidance personnel's competence development needs:

- Working life and field-specific competence
- Competence related to personalisation
- Competence related to special needs support



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Students' togetherness and inclusion and development of their capabilities for participation

Students' experiences of togetherness

- **Most VET students feel they belong to the educational institution's community and, while in work-based learning, to the work community.**
 - The continuous application process, individual study paths and work-based learning pose challenges to experiencing and creating togetherness.
- **Most students find that the atmosphere at the educational institution is good and the personnel are easy to approach.**
 - Students who had experiences of bullying and who felt that they did not belong to the educational institution's community gave clearly more negative assessments of issues related to togetherness and inclusion than others.
- **Various events are considered important for creating and maintaining togetherness.**
 - The educational institution's management plays an important role in supporting togetherness and inclusion. The entire community of the educational institution must be involved in building togetherness, making it a natural part of everyday activities.

Student body activities in VET

- **Student body activities only concern a small proportion of VET students.**
- **Student diversity should increasingly be addressed in the composition of student bodies' boards, and the participation of students from different backgrounds in student body activities should be supported.**
 - In addition, versatile ways of participating should be offered in the activities, including those independent of time and place.
 - Students' participation in joint advocacy activities should be a natural part of the studies.

Development of capabilities for participation in VET

- **Capabilities for participation are mostly acquired during lessons and in the students' close circles.**
 - Students felt that they had learned to take responsibility for their studies well.
 - Students found that they had received less support for maintaining their study motivation and making other life choices during their studies.
 - In addition to the lessons, the students felt that they had learned capabilities for participation through their close circles, including guardians and friends.
- **VET students found that they had learned capabilities for participation in working life, in particular.**
- **Voting and purchasing decisions are key ways in which students can exert influence now and in the future.**



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Work-based learning and cooperation with workplaces

Implementation of work-based learning

- **New methods should be developed to find more workplaces suitable for work-based learning.**
- **Procedures for agreeing on guidance and responsibilities as well as the planning of demonstrations should be developed.**
 - Educational institutions' and workplaces' expectations and roles related to producing competence need to be clarified.
 - The practices of and responsibilities for guidance and monitoring competence development should be agreed with educational institutions and workplaces.
 - The planning of demonstrations together with the teacher, student and workplace instructor should be improved.
- **Workplaces' awareness of training agreements and, in particular, apprenticeship agreements should be increased.**

Forms of cooperation between education providers and workplaces as well as monitoring, evaluation and development

- **Forms of cooperation between education providers and workplaces**
 - Education providers need to continue developing the provision of services as well as education and training programmes based on working life needs.
 - Education providers should step up their cooperation and harmonise their offer of services and education and training.
- **Monitoring, evaluation and development of work-based learning and cooperation with workplaces**
 - Monitoring, evaluation and development of work-based learning and cooperation with workplaces should be continued, and the personnel's role in this should be clarified.
 - Besides cooperation concerning work-based learning, other collaboration should be developed to meet the needs of working life better, using feedback received in the course of the development work.



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Responding to the challenges of continuous learning in sudden structural changes

Educational organisations' preparedness for rapid changes in working life – from separate activities to incorporating preparedness in basic work

- **Anticipation of working life changes in the education provider's activities**
 - It is important for education providers to determine the special features of their organisation and operating environment and to specify what kind of preparedness and development measures are required to respond to sudden structural changes.
 - With their various partners, education providers need to ensure that they have in place effective internal structures and processes that are needed to respond to rapid changes in working life.
- **Operating models for rapid changes in working life**
 - It is important that those VET providers that have delivered education and training services as a response to sudden changes in working life share with other education organisations their proven operating models for planning, delivering and developing education and training and securing the availability of sufficient teaching personnel.

Preparing for rapid changes in working life when planning education is important

- **Planning of education**
 - In the processes of and guidelines for curriculum work and education planning, it is important to take into account the scalability of education and training programmes in sudden situations of structural change.
- **Units and other micro-credentials**
 - In situations involving rapid changes in working life, an ability to increase the intake of students in individual qualification units and other micro-credentials as needed would be important.
- **Scalability of study contents and implementation methods**
 - The possibility of scaling study contents and implementation methods for continuous learning services targeted at working-age people should be addressed in education policies and planning.



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Quality management

State of play of quality management and quality strategy implementation

- **The status of VET providers' quality management is good as a whole.**
- **Differences persist in the standard of quality management between education providers.**
- **Education providers have worked on quality strategy implementation.**
 - Progress has been made in linking the implementation plan for competence assessment to the quality management system, ensuring information security and data protection in compliance with the regulations when processing data as well as in education and training offer and services that meet customers' changing needs and enable individual solutions.
 - There is room for improvement in engaging workplaces, stakeholders and guardians as well as in communicating about results describing the productivity, impact and quality of the activities to different target groups.

Quality management, operative management and engaging different parties

- **Education providers need to link quality management more closely to their management systems.**
- **Cooperation between education providers should be stepped up in order to close the gaps in quality management.**
- **Improving participation in planning, development and quality assurance:**
 - The opportunities of personnel, students, workplaces and stakeholders to exert influence and participate in developing the educational institution's activities must be ensured.
 - The participation of workplaces, students, partners and stakeholders in the joint planning of education offered and services as well as in quality assurance of services must be increased.
 - Objectives and indicators for the activities need to be defined together with key parties, and different target groups need to be informed of the results, in particular regarding the objectives, indicators and results of social responsibility.

Quality management and its effectiveness in training provided in workplaces and other learning environments

- **There is room for improvement in the quality management of training provided in workplaces and other learning environments.**
 - Accessibility of learning and demonstration environments should be ensured.
 - Availability of the support as well as special and demanding needs support needed by students in different learning environments should be ensured.
- **The effectiveness and efficiency of quality management systems should be assessed systematically.**



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