



**CEDEFOP**

**European policies  
for information  
and guidance with  
reference to the  
international mobility  
of young IVET learners**

**POLICY BRIEF**





## **POLICY BACKGROUND**





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The [2001 Recommendation on mobility](#), the 2006 Recommendation for a [European quality charter for mobility](#) and the 2011 [Youth on the move Recommendation](#) point to the need for information and guidance on opportunities for learning mobility.

Information and guidance for the international mobility of young learners in initial vocational education and training (IVET) includes more than the provision of information about mobility programmes, funding opportunities and implementation processes. It also entails guidance: the provision of tools and actions that help learners clarify their interests and values, identify their skills, reflect on their experience, understand training and employment systems and the ensuing options available to them, formulate plans, and make career-oriented decisions, while taking on board the perspectives opened by mobility abroad. Proper guidance is, by definition, personalised (at least in part) and delivered by qualified guidance counsellors. The overall aim of mobility-related information and guidance is to prepare IVET learners to bring their mobility objectives as well as their learning and career plans into line with their self and make the most of their mobility experiences.

This policy brief takes stock of the national policies carried out in EU Member States, Iceland, and Norway, for the information and guidance of young IVET learners and apprentices in respect of their international learning mobility. The analysis is based on 2021 data from Cedefop's [IVET mobility scoreboard](#) <sup>(1)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> The [IVET mobility scoreboard](#) is an online tool that monitors the policies for the international mobility of IVET learners in EU Member States, Iceland and Norway. It was presented in Cedefop's *Briefing note* series in October 2016 and March 2020.



...2001 Recommendation **on mobility**, 2006 Recommendation **for a European quality charter for mobility**, 2011 **Youth on the move** Recommendation...



...Information and guidance for the international mobility of young learners **also entails guidance...**



...takes stock of the national policies carried out in EU, Iceland, and Norway, **for the information and guidance of young IVET learners and apprentices...**



## EVIDENCE

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# National information and guidance profiles

Mobility-related information and guidance for IVET learners has a range of objectives: preparing learners to cope with the trend towards internationalisation in education, training and the labour market; supporting learners' personal and professional development and employability; and assisting social equity through opening equal opportunities. All countries monitored within the framework of the IVET mobility scoreboard more or less pursue such objectives. However, national provision policies vary. They can be characterised in terms of three major dimensions: the topic coverage (whether there is systematic provision of not only information but also guidance); the delivery framework (provision takes place in school or not); and the qualifications of staff.

Based on these three dimensions, eight country profiles can be identified (Table 1); this typology does not express any idea of ranking. The profiles portray differences in the approaches to information and guidance, but one approach (e.g. delivering guidance in school) cannot be considered better per se than another (e.g. delivering guidance outside of school). There is no assessment study weighing the respective merits of the different approaches; countries mostly make choices under the constraint of their own institutions and means.

Table 1 shows that not only have all countries managed to set up systems for informing IVET learners about mobility opportunities, but half of them also have in place some form of IVET-mobility-related guidance counselling. For all countries to put in place sound guidance counselling mechanisms integrating the self and the mobility perspective, as well as learning and career plans, could be the next step. Estonia, Finland and Sweden have been blazing this trail. In Estonia, the network of regional youth guidance centres – *Rajaleidja* – provides young people aged up to 26, including VET students, with both information on opportunities for international mobility and related guidance counselling. In Finland, IVET learners are provided with personalised guidance services. The provision of guidance is prescribed in the Vocational Education and Training Act. According to legislation, students are entitled to the personal guidance necessary to complete their qualifications. This involves assistance in clarifying their interests and values, identifying their skills and reflecting on their experience, including in the perspective of international learning mobility. In Sweden, IVET curricula integrate the perspective of international mobility; VET providers are legally bound to provide their students with study and career guidance according to the individual's needs. This involves personalised guidance provided by a study and career counsellor, a regulated profession limited to those who have graduated from a counselling programme at teachers' college.

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**Table 1. Country profiles with respect to mobility-related information and guidance in IVET in EU Member States, Iceland, and Norway, 2021**

PROFILES	TYPE OF PROVISION (*)		COUNTRIES
P1	Information only		BE, DE, ES, HR, HU, IS, LT, LV**, MT, PL, PT, RO, SK
P2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information</li> <li>Guidance counselling taking on board the mobility perspective for IVET learners, and delivered by qualified guidance counsellors only</li> </ul>	2A Delivered in training institutions only/mainly	CY, CZ, IE, NL, SE
		2B Delivered both inside and outside the training institutions	FI, NO, SI
		2C Delivered outside the training institutions only/mainly	EE
P3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information</li> <li>Guidance counselling taking on board the mobility perspective for IVET learners, and delivered also by staff other than qualified guidance counsellors</li> </ul>	3A Delivered in training institutions only/mainly	LU
		3B Delivered both inside and outside the training institutions	AT, DK, EL, IT
P4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information</li> </ul>	4A Guidance counselling without any particular focus on/specialisation in the mobility perspective, and available within training institutions only/mainly	BG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Untargeted guidance counselling, delivered also by staff other than qualified guidance counsellors</li> </ul>	4B Guidance counselling, addressing all learners including those from IVET, but without any learning-background-based differentiation in design or approach. Counsellors' knowledge of the specifics of IVET learners and their needs is not guaranteed. Guidance counselling is available both inside and outside the training institutions.	FR

(\*) Data reorganised from the Cedefop [IVET mobility scoreboard country fiches](#) (Section 1.1.1. of the country fiches: Mechanism(s) to provide IVET learners with information and guidance on international learning mobility).

(\*\*) By 2018, Latvia seemed to be providing IVET learners with career education rather than guidance counselling.

Source: Cedefop [IVET Mobility scoreboard country fiches](#) and [Euroguidance](#).



## Criteria for the Table 1 typology of policy profiles

The typology is based on three dimensions. In the table, only guidance approaches confirmed to be in line with the concepts used were considered.

The first dimension includes whether there is systematic provision of information about mobility opportunities; and either guidance counselling specifically taking on board the mobility perspective for IVET learners, or at least untargeted guidance counselling, addressing all learners in the same undifferentiated way, and taking into account (or not) the mobility perspective. All countries provide at least information about mobility opportunities, through their Erasmus+ national agencies. This information is usually delivered to the training institutions, which convey it to their learners. The focus for guidance is on personalised counselling (whether taking IVET mobility in consideration or not), while other guidance activities with no particular relation to IVET mobility (such as career education courses or self-directed use of assessment tests) are left out. Non-systematic (one-off, occasional, sporadic) provision, or provision for a small segment of users only, are also not taken on board here.

Dimension 2 refers to the framework for the delivery of the guidance provision (where applicable) to learners. Guidance services for young IVET learners and apprentices may be delivered within the framework of training institutions: by standing counsellors located in schools and reachable at any time; or visiting counsellors touring schools for presentations and individual appointments on given dates. Guidance can also be delivered, alternatively or complementarily, outside the framework of training institutions (for example in youth guidance centres).

Dimension 3 is about whether guidance staff are required to hold guidance qualifications or not: so-called guidance counselling may also be provided by VET teachers and trainers.



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## Policy governance

Country clusters based on governance features can also be identified (Table 2). Three criteria were used here. First, the country may have set up targets for its actions in IVET-mobility-related information and guidance; or it may be planning for doing so, or not. Second, policy coordination (whether complete or incomplete) may be in place, or not. Third, the actions taken may be (at least partly) evaluated, or not.

On average, countries have a good record in policy coordination since two thirds already have in place complete coordination mechanisms. Of more concern, however, are the matters of target setting and evaluation. Only four countries (Bulgaria, Spain, Lithuania and Sweden) have targets for their actions in information and guidance, and only three others (Greece, Latvia and Luxembourg) are planning to set up some. Only 11 countries evaluate (at least in part) their information and guidance provision, eight of them without envisaging the setting-up of targets.



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...Second, **policy coordination** (whether complete or incomplete) **may be in place, or not..**



...Third, **the actions taken may be** (at least partly) **evaluated, or not..**

**Table 2. Country clusters based on governance features: target setting, policy coordination and evaluation in mobility-related information and guidance in IVET in EU Member States, Iceland and Norway, 2021**

COUNTRIES	CLUSTERS	POLICY TARGET SETTING			POLICY COORDINATION			POLICY EVALUATION		
		IN PLACE	PLANNED	NOT FORESEEN	COMPLETE	INCOMPLETE	NOT FORESEEN	COMPLETE	INCOMPLETE	NOT FORESEEN
LT	C1	x			x			x		
SE		x			x			x		
BG	C2	x			x					x
ES	C3	x				x			x	
LU	C4		x		x				x	
EL	C5		x		x					x
LV			x		x					x
FI	C6			x	x			x		
NO				x	x			x		
RO					x	x			x	
DE	C7			x	x				x	
AT	C8			x	x					x
BE-DE				x	x					x
CY				x	x					x
EE				x	x					x
FR				x	x					x
HR				x	x					x
IE				x	x					x
MT				x	x					x
NL				x	x				x	
HU	C9			x		x			x	
BE-FR	C10			x		x				x
CZ				x		x				x
PL				x		x				x
SI				x		x				x
IT	C11			x			x	x		
IS	C12			x			x		x	
BE-FL	C13			x			x			x
DK				x			x			x
PT				x			x			x
SK				x			x			x

Source: Cedefop IVET mobility scoreboard, [country scoreboard](#).

# Policy development

Taking on board both content-wise actions and policy governance aspects, five groups of countries can be identified as regards the completeness of their mobility-related information and guidance initiatives (Table 3). Table 3 shows that most countries (16 Member States and Norway) have reached at least a ‘good’ level of development.

**Table 3. Countries by level of development of their mobility-related information and guidance initiatives**

DEGREE OF CLOSENESS TO FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2011 <i>YOUTH ON THE MOVE</i> RECOMMENDATION IN INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE	COUNTRIES
Excellent performance (full closeness)	Sweden, Lithuania
Very good performance	Bulgaria, Finland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway
Good performance	Austria, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Spain
Some progress has been made	Belgium-DE, Belgium-FR, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Hungary, Iceland, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia
Little progress has been made	Belgium-FL, Portugal, Slovakia

Source: Cedefop IVET mobility scoreboard database, indicators.

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**...five groups of countries** identified as regards the completeness of their **mobility-related information and guidance initiatives...**



**...Table 3 - countries by level of development of their mobility-related information and guidance initiatives...**



**...16 Member States and Norway** have reached at least a **‘good’ level of development...**



# CONCLUSIONS





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2021 marked the 10th anniversary of the [Youth on the move](#) Recommendation. In comparison to 2011, information and guidance policies for the international mobility of young learners in initial VET appear as having been substantially reinforced and structured. Countries' efforts in the period were supported by EU-level initiatives, foremostly the Erasmus+ programme since 2014. Several challenges remain to be addressed: making sure that policies in the area fully embrace the objective of supporting internationalisation, personal and professional development, and equity; further expanding personalised mobility-related guidance counselling across countries; and focusing support on countries where progress needs a boost.

It also remains to measure the exact impact of the actions taken, the extent to which they affect participation in mobility activities, whether and how the policy objectives are met, and getting users' feedback. Yet, countries' progress in developing policy targets for, and policy evaluation of, their mobility policies are slow. EU institutions themselves are still in the course of designing systematic and comparable statistics in this area. In the coming years, the outcomes of the [survey on the availability of VET mobility statistics](#), undertaken by the European Commission since 2019, could open way to further policy evaluation of countries' information and guidance policies.



...the **10th anniversary of the Youth on the move Recommendation**...



...**information and guidance policies for the international mobility of young learners in initial VET** substantially reinforced and structured...



...the **exact impact of the actions taken**, the extent to which they **affect participation** in mobility activities, whether and how the policy objectives are met, and **getting users' feedback**...

## POLICY BRIEF

# European policies for information and guidance with reference to the international mobility of young IVET learners

The 'Youth on the move' Recommendation of 28 June 2011 prompted Member States to boost the international mobility of IVET learners by upgrading their information and guidance systems. This brief takes stock of progress achieved to date. Information mechanisms on international mobility seem to be in place in all Member States, while related policies are typically coordinated countrywide. Still, there is room for progress, as clear policy targets and action evaluation differ across countries, with comprehensive guidance provision often being a weak point.

### Project info:

[IVET Mobility scoreboard](#)

### Project contacts:

[Cedefop expert, H el ene Hamers](#)



**CEDEFOP**

European Centre for the Development  
of Vocational Training

Europe 123, Thessaloniki (Pylea), GREECE

Postal address: Cedefop service post, 57001 Thermi, GREECE

Tel. +30 2310490111, Fax +30 2310490020, Email: [info@cedefop.europa.eu](mailto:info@cedefop.europa.eu)

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