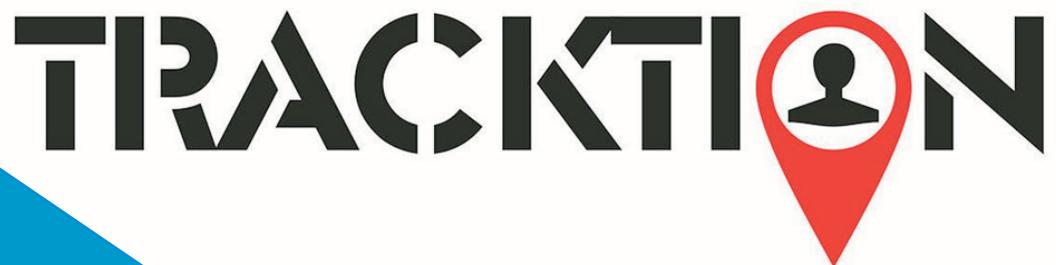


2018



Advancing Graduate
Tracking and Alumni
Relations in VET Schools

Summary

Baseline Study

Intellectual Output 2:
HOW-TO-GUIDE. Building and sustaining successful alumni relations programs in VET Schools.



Introduction



Why graduate tracking?

Since the Council Recommendation on Tracking Graduates (EC, Nov 2017)¹, tracking procedures have become a key policy priority. The Recommendation is part of the New Skills Agenda for Europe and aims at improving the availability of qualitative and quantitative data on graduates from Vocational Education and Training (VET) and higher education programmes. It invites Member States to establish, by 2020, graduate tracking systems that include the collection of relevant administrative data from education, tax and social security databases; the development of longitudinal graduate surveys; and the possibility to link, on an anonym basis, data from different sources to build a composite picture of graduate outcomes.

Tracktion Survey analysis

The present report provides a concise summary of the tracking and alumni initiatives in nine VET schools in four European countries (Estonia, Italy, Netherlands and Spain). The baseline survey was created within the project Tracktion², The results underline similarities, differences, strengths and weaknesses of the analysed tracking procedures.

TRACKTION

Title	Scope	Link to summary report
VET Graduate Tracking protocol - FCT	Regional (Asturias)	http://www.magma-store.com/consejo/ficheros/documentos/1519200019.1935_Memoria_2016_CAFP_.pdf
Labour insertion of graduates in professional training - LANBIDE	Regional (Basque Country)	http://www.lanbide.euskadi.eus/estadistica/insercion-laboral-de-los-titulados-en-formacion-profesional-en-2016/y94-estadist/es/
Graduate Tracking Protocol for VET Schools	National	https://www.haridussilm.ee/
National Graduate Survey	National	https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/uuringud/lopparuanne_0.pdf
COMETA graduate tracking protocol	School	internal use only
X-monitor	School	internal use only
ROA School Leavers Survey	National	http://roa.sbe.maastrichtuniversity.nl/roanew/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/ROA_F_2017_2E.pdf

Table 1. Protocols identified in the nine VET Schools

1 Council Recommendation of 20 November 2017 on Tracking Graduates. (2017) Official Journal of the European Union, C423, 1-4. [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32017H1209\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32017H1209(01)&from=EN)

2 Advancing Graduate Tracking and Alumni Relations in VET Schools- TRACTION” <https://tracktionerasmus.eu/>



Where?

Graduate Tracking protocols depend on specific national context and legal requirements. For instance, VET schools might have a legal obligation to gather graduate destination data in a regular way which is submitted to regional or national educational authorities in order to respond to quality assurance and statistical purposes. Other VET schools, are currently formalizing their own approaches.

Who?

In some cases, regional or national governments define the roles and responsibilities of actors involved, the type of data collected, the frequency and timing of data collection. Whereas without legal requirement, VET schools may decide on either survey VET graduates or not. It is then the school that decides which actors to involve, the timing of tracking and the data collected. One of the result of the baseline study is that informal teacher-student relationships should decrease in order to improve the quality of tracking procedures. On the other hand, surveys undertaken by external organisations gather more in-depth information on leavers destinations.

What?

Looking at the different range and type of questions, protocols include questions on individual background, completed studies and graduates' destination. 8 out of 9 protocols do not include questions on qualitative aspects regarding graduates' expectations and satisfaction. Future tracking procedures should ensure the coverage of these aspects. Furthermore, in order to avoid misinterpretation of results, it is fundamental to incorporate a wider range of context variables like unemployment rate, economic structure and economic cycle, employment and skills forecasts, individual motivations in the investigation.

How?

IVET schools involved in the baseline study use a variety of communication tools, but the analysis shows that the most effective tool to reach graduates is by phone. Regardless of the communication tool, VET schools use different instruments for collecting data: Survey Monkey, Excel file, online platform (Web-FCT).

When?

As regards timing and frequency, most VET schools contact graduates just once after graduation, most at 6 or 18 months. This single measurement point results in a static and maybe premature picture of graduates transition into the labour market or further studies. As a result of the analysis, schools should increase the number of measurement points and include at least one before graduation in order to collect information on students' expectations.



What for?

The results of the baseline study also show that data of Graduate Tracking protocols is mainly used for statistical and administrative purpose. But moreover VET schools should go beyond the mere description of data, inform key stakeholders of existing data, publish short reports for graduates, teachers, schools and stakeholders in order to make it available for further usage.

Alumni relations

What regards alumni relations, the results of the baseline survey show that alumni need to be motivated to keep the connection with their school, therefore VET institutions should develop a precise strategy and create an alumni database. The most effective channels to keep in touch with alumni seem to be by phone or email. Some schools also make use of WhatsApp groups or social networks.

There is a wide range of activities VET providers could carry out for alumni, such as job-matching platforms, alumni website, business start-up support or informal activities (company visits, expert talks, events).

Next Steps

The baseline survey was surely a first step towards reaching the Tracktion project's specific goals:

- To establish a more coordinated and appropriate set of VET Graduate Tracking protocols at VET-provider level.
- To increase institutional capacity to act on and use results for a variety of purposes, such as enhancing study programmes and alumni services.
- To strengthen Alumni Culture in VET Schools.

While the coverage area of the baseline survey is constrained to the countries represented in the consortium, lessons learned will inform the design of a new graduate tracking protocol that will be tested in 2018-2020. The protocol is expected to improve graduate tracking processes and as a result, positively impact quality assurance systems in participant schools, particularly in connection with EQAVET indicators 5 and 6.