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**VET and HRD research in European countries**

Subtitle

**Profile of national research: A comparative analysis**

Contents

Introduction to the resource base "VET and HRD research in European countries" and reproduction of its main section "Profile of national research": a comparison of VET and HRD research activities in 25 European countries, based on a secondary analysis of national reports published in 2006.

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# VET and HRD research in European countries

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VET & HRD

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## Introduction

This resource base sets out to present a European landscape of national research in vocational education and training (VET) and human resource development (HRD), covering 25 EU countries. It offers a profile of national research, related to selected activities, in comparison between the countries.

Go to > [Profile of national VET and HRD research in Europe](#)

This comparative profile is a secondary analysis of national reports which were prepared by members of the Cedefop ReferNet in 2006 and subsequently published by Cedefop in the European Training Village (see Reference below). The general reference to 'research and development' in those reports is replaced in this resource base by the broad term 'research' (involving combinations with consulting, development or teaching).

Applying a secondary analysis has of course its limits, since the reports concerned are self-contained sources of information. In addition, they vary considerably in approach and quality, despite using a template with common instructions. An empirically based comparison across the 25 countries, therefore, has to be confined to such issues as are sufficiently underpinned by evidence to be drawn from all the reports.

The main information provided by the national reports can be looked up in an overview of VET and HRD research, arranged by country and activity.

Go to > [Overview of VET and HRD research in EU countries](#)

Both the Profile and the Overview are structured according to seven aspects, which match each other and correspond to major sections used in the national reports. Bibliographical details of the national reports and of further studies related to this resource base are compiled in the reference section.

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Related resources:

ETV

ERO National Research Reports included in the ERO Base:

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Thematic overview of VET in European countries:

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Monitor on research in VET and HRD across Europe:

[Research Monitor](#)

This geographical pattern implies certain stages of EU enlargement and also specific socio-cultural traditions, both of which are relevant for VET/HRD research activities in the countries concerned. For the sake of brevity, the maps use country acronyms (see full names of countries in the [Overview](#)).

Based on this comparative analysis, a summary of national characteristics for each country is presented as part of the [Overview](#):

> [Outline of VET/HRD research in each European country](#)

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The Profile of national research is based on a comparative analysis of selected activities in 25 European countries (see [Overview](#)). This data has been compiled from the national reports prepared by the Cedefop ReferNet in 2006 and subsequently published by Cedefop (see [Introduction](#) and [Reference](#)). Furthermore, latest evidence from the homepages of all VET/HRD institutions referred to in these reports was included in the analysis.

Applying a secondary analysis has of course its limits, since the reports concerned are self-contained sources of information. In addition, they vary considerably in approach and quality, despite using a template with common instructions. An empirically based comparison across the 25 countries, therefore, has to be confined to such issues as are sufficiently underpinned by evidence to be drawn from all the reports.

The general reference to 'research and development' in those reports is replaced in the Profile by the broad term 'research' (involving combinations with consulting, development or teaching). All activities considered in the Profile refer to the field of VET and/or HRD (VET/HRD) in general. The composition of this field is presented in a special overview:

> [Areas of VET/HRD research in European countries](#)

The following aspects of VET/HRD research in European countries are included in the Profile:

- [1] [Links between national research activities and national policies](#)
- [2] [Links between EU sponsored research activities and national policies](#)
- [3] [Issues addressed in research projects](#)
- [4A] [Thematic orientation of institutions involved in research](#)
- [4B] [Research-related activities of institutions](#)
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- [6] [Thematic orientation of associations and networks facilitating research](#)
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ETV

Thematic overview of VET in European countries:

[eKnowVET](#)

Series of reports on vocational education and training research in Europe:

[Research Laboratory](#)

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Issues arising from an institutional analysis of HRD and VET research across Europe

[Issues](#)

Current themes addressed in European VET and HRD research: [Themes](#)

Index of VETNET Conference papers (last 10 years): [Proceedings](#)

[Download complete section "Profile of national research" in PDF](#)

Under each aspect, a specific typology is used for analysing the research activities and, subsequently, defining archetypes or levels which are suitable for transnational comparison. The outcome for each aspect is summarised in a map showing the European countries grouped according to geographical regions (see general pattern for all aspects below):



This geographical pattern implies certain stages of EU enlargement and also specific socio-cultural traditions, both of which are relevant for VET/HRD research activities in the countries concerned. For the sake of brevity, the maps use country acronyms (see full names of countries in the [Overview](#)).

Based on this comparative analysis, a summary of national characteristics for each country is presented as part of the [Overview](#):

> [Outline of VET/HRD research in each European country](#)

[AT] [BE] [BG] [CY] [CZ] [DE] [DK] [EE] [ES] [FI] [FR] [HU] [IE] [IT] [LT] [LV] [MT] [NO] [PL] [PT] [RO] [SE] [SI] [SK]  
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## Profile [0] Areas of VET and HRD research in European countries

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Starting out from an earlier attempt to describe the broad field of VET and HRD related research in Europe as a whole (see [Areas of European research in VET and HRD](#)), this page presents the focal areas of VET/HRD research in each country.

The following three areas are distinguished:

<b>HRD-LM</b>	<b>Human resource development</b> related to the <b>labour market</b> level (associated with the development of the workforce as a whole, including educational attainment, skill needs and qualification levels)
<b>HRD-O</b>	<b>Human resource development</b> related to <b>organisations</b> (corporate level; mainly concerned with personnel development in the context of human resource management)
<b>VET</b>	<b>Vocational education and training</b> , both initial and continuing; also related to the labour market and to organisations

As can be seen from these brief definitions, there is a great deal of overlap between the three areas. The choice of terms used in individual countries largely depends on the respective conceptual approach and cultural background. At the same time, the English terms reflect a diversity of national concepts which cannot be considered in this analysis. The presentation of major areas in the map below is based on the evidence provided for each country in the [Overview](#).

DK FI NO SE

AT BE BG CZ EE  
DE FR HU LT LV  
IE UK PL RO SI SK

CY ES IT MT PT

### Focus of VET/HRD research

- I HRD-LM (broad area)
- I VET and HRD-LM (complementary areas)
- I VET (broad area) and HRD-O (minor, separate area)
- I VET (broad area)

A few observations can be made: The broad area of VET, partly extended by HRD related to organisations (as a minor, separate area), is typical of Northern and Western Europe (AT, BE, DE, DK, FI, FR, IE, NO, SE, UK), but also common among the other European regions (EE, ES, IT, PT, SI, SK). HRD related to the labour market is represented as a complementary area in several Central-Eastern European countries (BG, CZ, HU, LT, LV, PL). In two of the Southern European countries (CY, MT), the area of HRD related to the labour market plays the leading role. Altogether, the area of HRD related to the labour market is associated with development programmes introduced in the new EU countries.

NOTE: The Profile of national research is based on a comparative analysis of selected activities in 25 European countries (see [Overview](#)). This data has been compiled from the national reports prepared by the Cedefop ReferNet in 2006 and subsequently published by Cedefop (see [Introduction](#) and [Reference](#)).

## Profile [\[1\]](#) Links between national research activities and national policies

Country outlines [\[AT\]](#) [\[BE\]](#) [\[BG\]](#) [\[CY\]](#) [\[CZ\]](#) [\[DE\]](#) [\[DK\]](#) [\[EE\]](#) [\[ES\]](#) [\[FI\]](#) [\[FR\]](#) [\[HU\]](#) [\[IE\]](#) [\[IT\]](#) [\[LT\]](#) [\[LV\]](#) [\[MT\]](#) [\[NO\]](#) [\[PL\]](#) [\[PT\]](#) [\[RO\]](#) [\[SE\]](#) [\[SI\]](#) [\[SK\]](#) [\[UK\]](#)

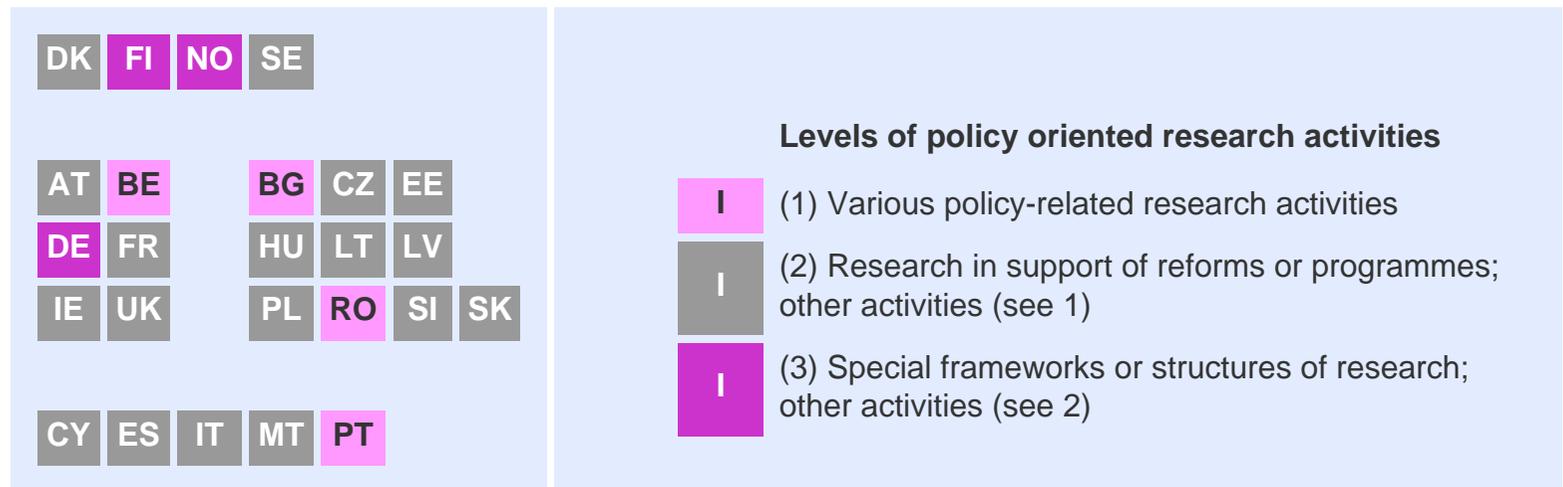
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There is a great variety of links between national research activities and national policies related to VET and HRD in European countries. The evidence displayed in the national reports (see [Overview](#) of countries, especially aspect 1) provides the basis for the comparative analysis. In order to identify a common denominator for comparison, the analysis has been focused on policy oriented research activities. These are structured according to the following typology:

- Special frameworks or structures of research (e.g. knowledge management system);
- Research in support of reforms or programmes;
- Various other policy-related research activities.

The levels of policy oriented research activities presented in the map below are based on this typology (see legend on the right).



The map provides the following outcomes: Most of the European countries, across all regions, are allocated to a medium level, characterised by research in support of reforms or programmes and various other policy related research activities (AT, CY, CZ, DK, EE, ES, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, PL, SE, SI, SK, UK). A few countries, across three regions, share a

lower level, confined to various policy related research activities (BE, BG, PT, RO). A relatively high level of policy oriented research activities has been identified in three countries (DE, FI, NO), which have developed special frameworks or structures to underpin the linkage between research and policies.

NOTE: The Profile of national research is based on a comparative analysis of selected activities in 25 European countries (see [Overview](#)). This data has been compiled from the national reports prepared by the Cedefop ReferNet in 2006 and subsequently published by Cedefop (see [Introduction](#) and [Reference](#)).

## Profile [\[2\]](#) Links between EU sponsored research activities and national policies

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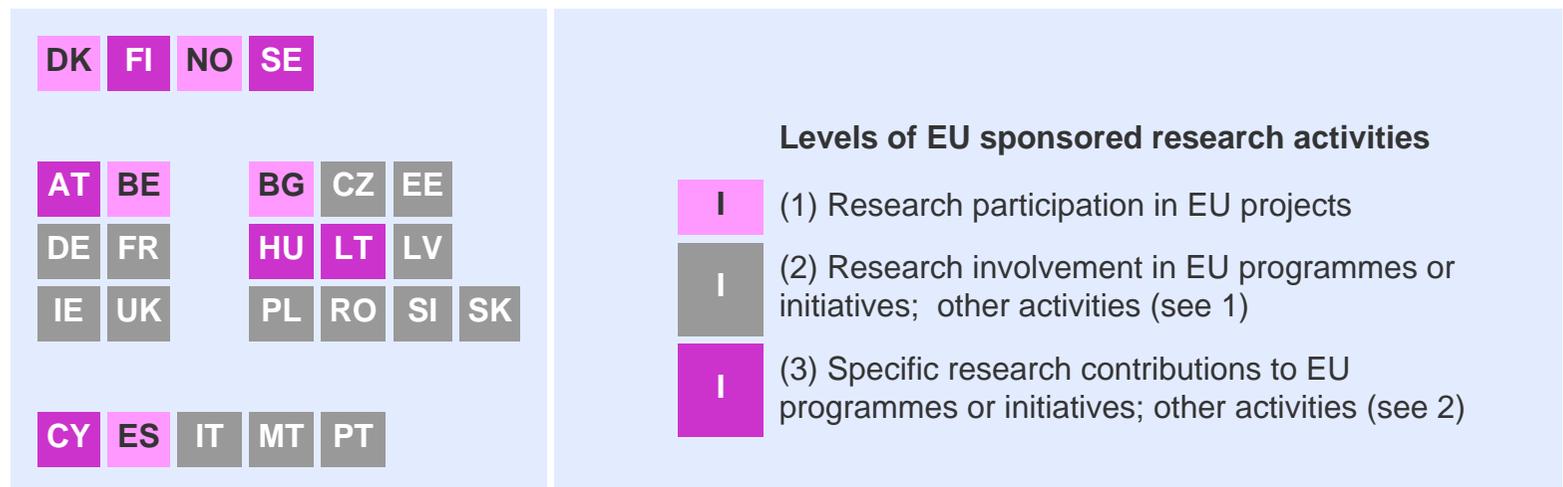
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EU sponsored research activities are oriented, from the outset, towards promoting common policy strategies in the participating countries. There are however various kinds of links with national policies, as the country reports suggest (see [Overview](#), especially aspect 2). The evidence compiled in these reports has been analysed in order to identify the degree of linkage between EU sponsored research and national policies. This degree varies according to both the objectives of the EU programmes concerned and the spectrum of EU related activities carried out in the individual countries. The comparative analysis is based on a typology which distinguishes between three kinds of EU sponsored research activity:

- Specific research contributions to EU programmes or initiatives;
- Involvement of research in EU programmes or initiatives;
- Participation in research related EU projects.

The levels of EU sponsored research activities presented in the map below are based on this typology (see legend on the right).



The outcomes presented in the map suggest, first of all, that the levels of EU sponsored research activities are fairly evenly

distributed across the four European regions: in each of these there are both high and low levels of activity. The high level, characterised by specific research contributions to EU programmes or initiatives (AT, CY, FI, HU, LT, SE), may be of a temporary nature, related to a particular time period (e.g. EU presidency) or action (e.g. assessment of an EU programme). The distribution of the low level, defined as research participation in EU projects (BE, BG, DK, ES, NO), may be due to several factors: the relationship of the country with the EU (non-member or new member) or the status of VET/HRD research in the country. Both the high level and the low level are closely linked with the medium level of EU sponsored research activities, featuring 'research involvement in EU programmes or initiatives', since this involvement may range from major to minor activities of various kinds (CZ, DE, EE, FR, IE, IT, LV, MT, PL, PT; RO, SI, SK, UK). Altogether, the levels of EU sponsored research activities in individual countries are subject to constant changes of external and internal factors.

NOTE: The Profile of national research is based on a comparative analysis of selected activities in 25 European countries (see [Overview](#)). This data has been compiled from the national reports prepared by the Cedefop ReferNet in 2006 and subsequently published by Cedefop (see [Introduction](#) and [Reference](#)).

## Profile [\[3\]](#) Issues addressed in research projects

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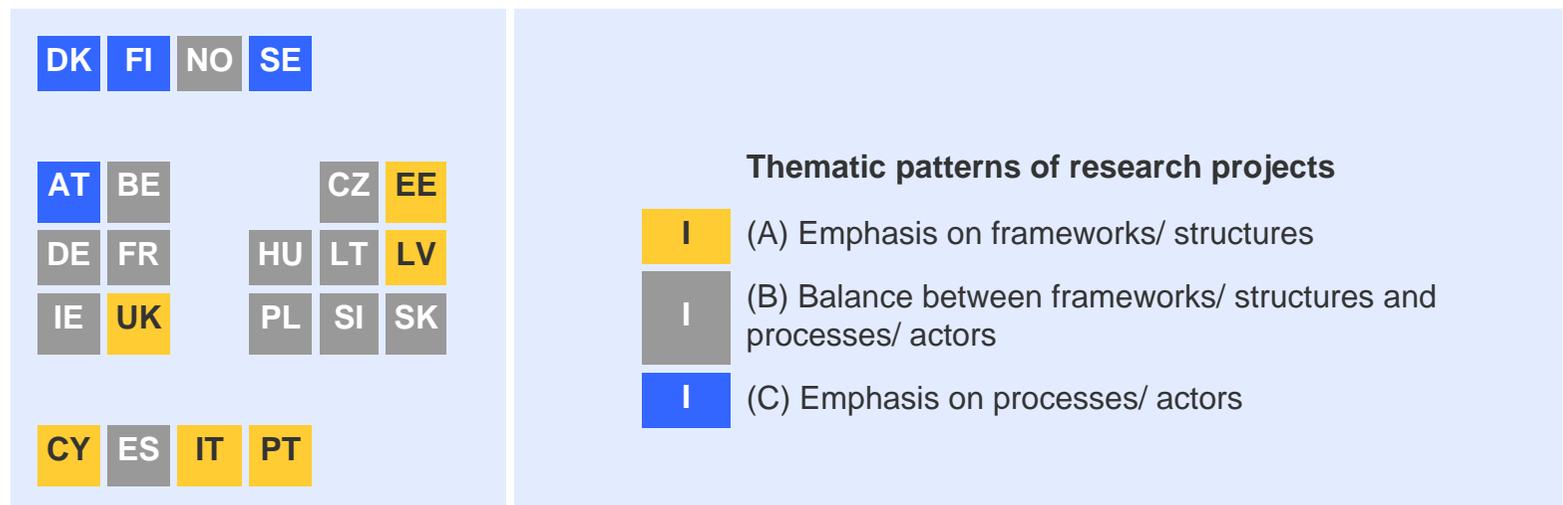
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Research projects are particularly suitable for analysing current issues of VET and HRD in the European countries. A selection of the 'most important projects' provided by national experts (see [Overview](#), aspect 3, annex) has been chosen as a sample (208 projects from 22 countries). The issues addressed in these projects have been analysed by applying thematic descriptors (25), grouped into major categories (see [Descriptors of VET and HRD research](#)). An earlier study using the same sample showed details of the thematic patterns across all the countries involved (see [Thematic patterns derived from a project analysis](#)). The following analysis provides basic patterns in comparison between the countries. Two types of issues are distinguished:

- Issues related to frameworks (socio-economic context) and structures (system level) of VET/HRD;
- Issues related to processes (learning etc) and actors (students, trainers etc) in VET/HRD.

The proportions between projects of these two types, established for each country, are presented in the map below (see definition of groups in the legend on the right).



The map illustrates certain regional patterns with regard to issues addressed in research projects: The emphasis on frameworks/ structures (group A) can be found in individual countries of three regions excluding the Northern one (CY, EE, IT, LV, PT, UK). A lot of these projects are concerned with issues such as skills for the labour market and qualification structures. The emphasis on processes/ actors (group C) is predominant in the Northern region and also present in the Western one (AT, DK, FI, SE). The favoured themes in this group focus on work related learning. There is, however, common ground in the distribution of projects which are characterised by a balance between frameworks/ structures and processes/ actors (group B): these are represented in all the European regions (BE, CZ, DE, ES, FR, HU, IE, LT, NO, PL, SI, SK).

NOTE: The Profile of national research is based on a comparative analysis of selected activities in 25 European countries (see [Overview](#)). This data has been compiled from the national reports prepared by the Cedefop ReferNet in 2006 and subsequently published by Cedefop (see [Introduction](#) and [Reference](#)).

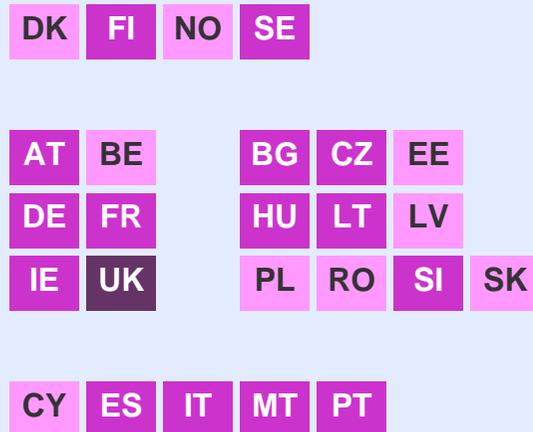
**Profile [4A] Thematic orientation of institutions involved in research**Country outlines [\[AT\]](#) [\[BE\]](#) [\[BG\]](#) [\[CY\]](#) [\[CZ\]](#) [\[DE\]](#) [\[DK\]](#) [\[EE\]](#) [\[ES\]](#) [\[FI\]](#) [\[FR\]](#) [\[HU\]](#) [\[IE\]](#) [\[IT\]](#) [\[LT\]](#) [\[LV\]](#) [\[MT\]](#) [\[NO\]](#) [\[PL\]](#) [\[PT\]](#) [\[RO\]](#) [\[SE\]](#) [\[SI\]](#) [\[SK\]](#) [\[UK\]](#)[WIFO Home](#)[Back to Profile](#)

Institutions are essential for shaping the profile of VET and HRD research in individual countries. The following analysis draws on an initial collection of 'main research centres, including bodies, departments and units within universities' (see [Overview](#), aspect 4), with the exception of institutions undertaking only minor research (e.g. ministries). The resulting sample (274 institutions of 25 countries) was analysed, on the basis of the institutions' home pages, with regard to one aspect: the thematic field of the institution concerned. This analysis is a follow-up of an earlier study covering European countries as a whole (see [Issues arising from an institutional analysis of HRD/VET research](#)).

The research fields of institutions, identified for the profile analysis, are broken down into three types:

- Focus on VET/HRD (single or combined);
- Close context of VET/HRD (e.g. education, labour market, human resources, work life);
- Broad context of VET/HRD (e.g. economics, sociology, statistics).

The proportions between institutions belonging to these types, established for every country, form the basis for defining three thematic patterns of institutional research, as presented in the map below (see definition of patterns in the legend on the right).



### Thematic patterns of institutional research

- I** (A) Mainly focus on VET/HRD
- I** (B) Mainly close context of VET/HRD
- I** (C) Mainly broad context of VET/HRD

Three patterns are used in this map to describe the research profile of institutions in individual countries. In pattern A, the majority of institutions of a given country is focused on VET/HRD; in pattern B, either the majority of institutions undertake research in the close context of VET/HRD or there is a balance between all types of institutions; in pattern C, the majority of institutions carry out research in the broad context of VET/HRD.

In view of the interdisciplinary nature of both VET and HRD research, it may be argued, that pattern B stands for a fairly appropriate institutional environment. In contrast, pattern A may indicate a more narrow research profile, while pattern C may be understood as a more dispersed research landscape. In each case, however, the institutional pattern of research is strongly influenced by various factors including the national system of education, the socio-economic framework and research traditions.

As the map shows, nearly all countries undertake institutional research mainly in the context of VET/HRD; the countries associated with the close context of VET/HRD (AT, BG, CZ, DE, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, MT, PT, SE, SI) and those related to the broad context of VET/HRD (BE, CY, DK, EE, LV, NO, PL, RO, SK) are fairly evenly distributed across all regions; only in one country (UK) institutional research is mainly focused on VET/HRD.

NOTE: The Profile of national research is based on a comparative analysis of selected activities in 25 European countries (see [Overview](#)). This data has been compiled from the national reports prepared by the Cedefop ReferNet in 2006 and subsequently published by Cedefop (see [Introduction](#) and [Reference](#)).

## Profile [\[4B\]](#) Research-related activities of institutions

Country outlines [\[AT\]](#) [\[BE\]](#) [\[BG\]](#) [\[CY\]](#) [\[CZ\]](#) [\[DE\]](#) [\[DK\]](#) [\[EE\]](#) [\[ES\]](#) [\[FI\]](#) [\[FR\]](#) [\[HU\]](#) [\[IE\]](#) [\[IT\]](#) [\[LT\]](#) [\[LV\]](#) [\[MT\]](#) [\[NO\]](#) [\[PL\]](#) [\[PT\]](#) [\[RO\]](#) [\[SE\]](#) [\[SI\]](#) [\[SK\]](#) [\[UK\]](#)

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Research carried out in institutions related to VET and HRD forms part of several activities. These can be directed towards policy and practice, in particular administration, information, consulting/ services and development, or focus on academic and scientific activities, above all advanced-level teaching. The following analysis draws on an initial collection of 'main research centres, including bodies, departments and units within universities' (see [Overview](#), aspect 4). Research activities within these institutions vary a great deal in terms of objectives and proportion. The resulting sample (333 institutions of 25 countries) was analysed, on the basis of the institutions' home pages, with regard to the major activities carried out in the institution concerned. This analysis is a follow-up of an earlier study covering European countries as a whole (see [Issues arising from an institutional analysis of HRD/VET research](#)).

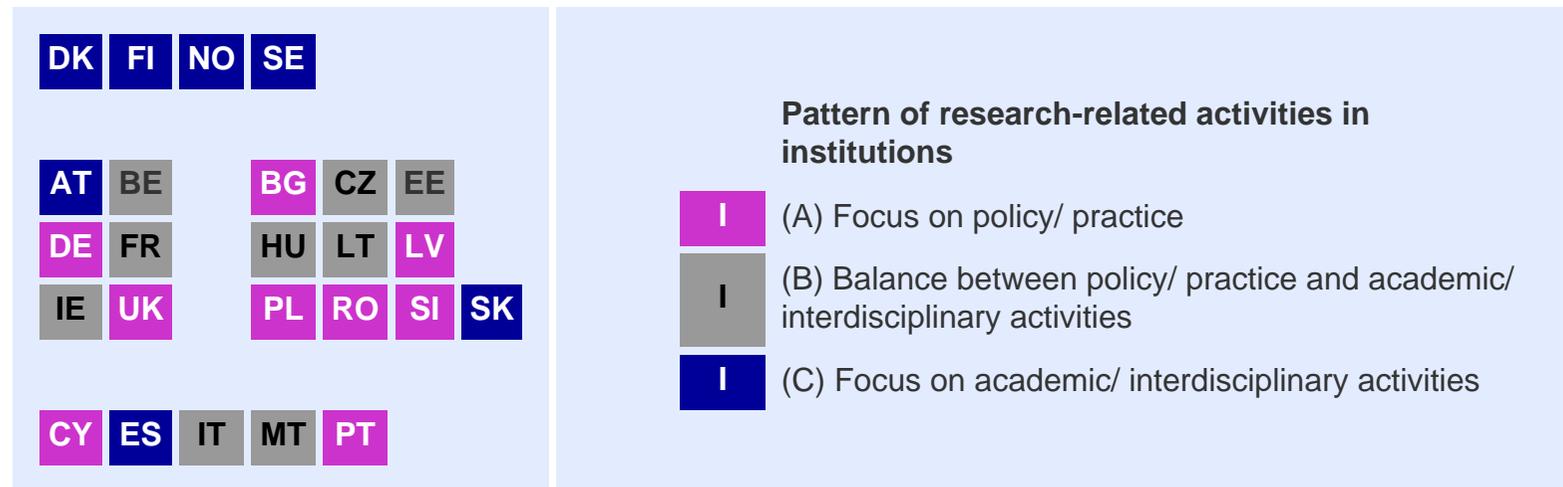
The **diagram** below presents an overview of the research-related activities across the 333 institutions. The proportion for each activity is derived from the sum total of activities (n=402) in these institutions. In these relationships, the activity concerned may dominate or complement research or be of equal standing. In a lot of cases, two or more activities are combined within individual institutions, although this is not reflected in the diagram. Nevertheless, even the simplified overall structure shows the extent to which VET/HRD research is interlinked with other activities. The evidence as a whole suggests a highly **interactive** character of European VET/HRD research.

<b>Administration</b> + research (13%)	<b>Information</b> + research (7%)	<b>Consulting</b> + research (16%)	<b>Development</b> + research (19%)	<b>Teaching</b> + research (28%)	<b>Research</b> on its own (17%)
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In the following analysis, the research-related activities of institutions are broken down into two types:

- Research involved in (or linked with) activities directed towards **policy and practice**, including administration, information, consulting/ services and development;
- Research as part of **academic/ interdisciplinary** activity, including both advanced-level teaching and research on its own.

In the **map** below, the balance between these two types is presented in three patterns, which characterise the institutional activities in each country (see definition of patterns in the legend on the right).



As the map shows, three patterns of institutional activity related to VET/HRD research are found across European countries: In pattern A, the research-related activities are focused on policy and/or practice (including administration, information, consulting/ services and development), in pattern C, on the other hand, research is mostly carried out as part of academic and/or interdisciplinary activities (including both advanced-level teaching and research on its own). In pattern B, there is an overall balance between research-related institutions of type A (orientation towards policy and/or practice) and type C (academic and/or interdisciplinary activities).

The total number of countries is fairly evenly distributed according to the three patterns. In terms of regions, however, there is an obvious concentration among the Northern countries (DK, FI, NO, SE) on pattern C, focusing on academic and/or interdisciplinary activities, while the other regions include this pattern in only a few cases (AT, ES, SK). The focus on pattern C in Northern Europe may be due to the strong involvement in these countries of VET/HRD research in lifelong learning and other holistic concepts which are pursued in institutions of higher education and research.

The opposite pattern (A), referring to a focus on policy or practice, could be associated with a predominant involvement of institutions in promoting VET/HRD provision in the country concerned. Examples of this pattern can be found particularly in Central-Eastern Europe, where countries are in a transition stage (BG, LV, PL, RO, SI), partly in Southern Europe (CY, PT) but also in Western Europe (DE, UK).

NOTE: The Profile of national research is based on a comparative analysis of selected activities in 25 European countries (see [Overview](#)). This data has been compiled from the national reports prepared by the Cedefop ReferNet in 2006 and subsequently published by Cedefop (see [Introduction](#) and [Reference](#)).

## Profile [\[5\]](#) Funding frameworks and support structures for research

Country outlines [\[AT\]](#) [\[BE\]](#) [\[BG\]](#) [\[CY\]](#) [\[CZ\]](#) [\[DE\]](#) [\[DK\]](#) [\[EE\]](#) [\[ES\]](#) [\[FI\]](#) [\[FR\]](#) [\[HU\]](#) [\[IE\]](#) [\[IT\]](#) [\[LT\]](#) [\[LV\]](#) [\[MT\]](#) [\[NO\]](#) [\[PL\]](#) [\[PT\]](#) [\[RO\]](#) [\[SE\]](#) [\[SI\]](#) [\[SK\]](#) [\[UK\]](#)

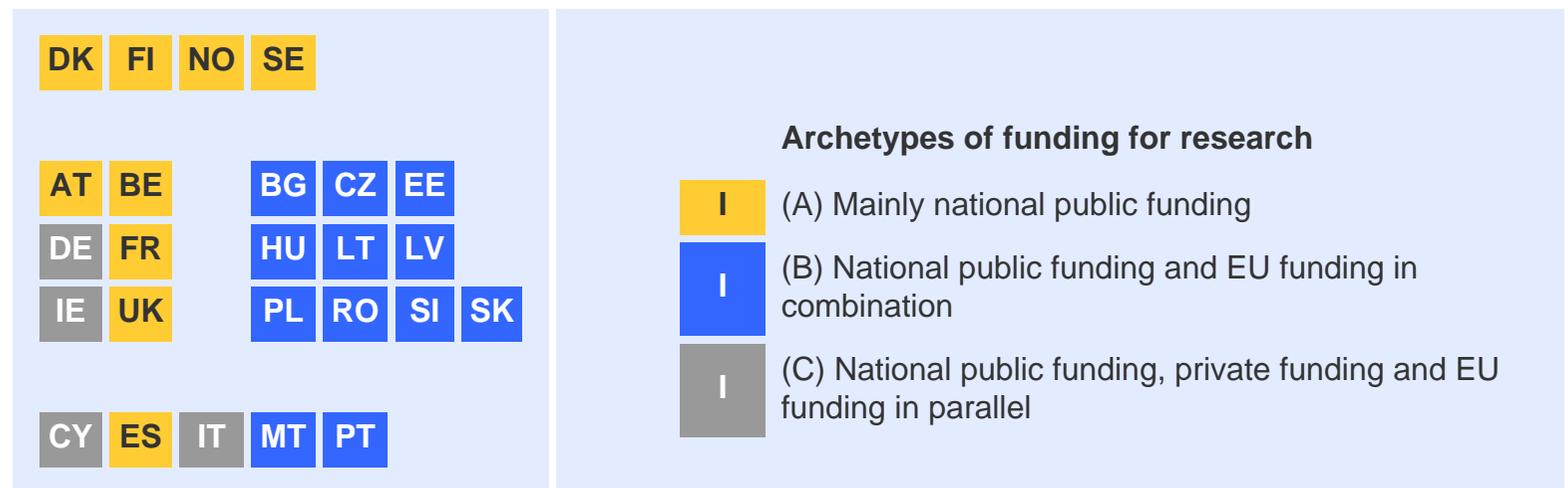
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There is a great variety of funding sources and arrangements related to VET and HRD research in European countries. The following analysis is based on the evidence provided in the national reports (see [Overview](#), aspect 5). It starts out from selecting a few major indicators of funding: national and/or EU funding; public or private funding. These are combined to represent three archetypes of funding, which have been identified across countries:

- Mainly national public funding;
- National public funding and EU funding in combination (e.g. ESF);
- National public funding, private funding and EU funding in parallel.

The distribution of these archetypes of funding for research are presented in the map below.



The regional differences with regard to funding patterns are obvious: While national public funding (A) is typical of Northern and Western Europe (AT, BE, DK, ES, FI, FR, NO, SE, UK), the combination of national and EU funding (B) is a characteristic of Central-Eastern and partly Southern Europe (BG, CZ, EE, HU, LT, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK). A mixture of national, private and EU funding (C) can be found in a few Western and Southern countries (CY, DE, ES, FR, IE, IT).

Patterns of funding for VET/HRD research are partly determined by socio-economic frameworks, such as the operation of EU supported developmental programmes in the new member states. Furthermore, they are influenced by the allocation of funds for education and training as a whole. Finally, the patterns are dependent on general arrangements for supporting research (e.g. the role of public and private foundations).

NOTE: The Profile of national research is based on a comparative analysis of selected activities in 25 European countries (see [Overview](#)). This data has been compiled from the national reports prepared by the Cedefop ReferNet in 2006 and subsequently published by Cedefop (see [Introduction](#) and [Reference](#)).

## Profile [\[6\]](#) Thematic orientation of associations and networks facilitating research

Country outlines [\[AT\]](#) [\[BE\]](#) [\[BG\]](#) [\[CY\]](#) [\[CZ\]](#) [\[DE\]](#) [\[DK\]](#) [\[EE\]](#) [\[ES\]](#) [\[FI\]](#) [\[FR\]](#) [\[HU\]](#) [\[IE\]](#) [\[IT\]](#) [\[LT\]](#) [\[LV\]](#) [\[MT\]](#) [\[NO\]](#) [\[PL\]](#) [\[PT\]](#) [\[RO\]](#) [\[SE\]](#) [\[SI\]](#) [\[SK\]](#) [\[UK\]](#)

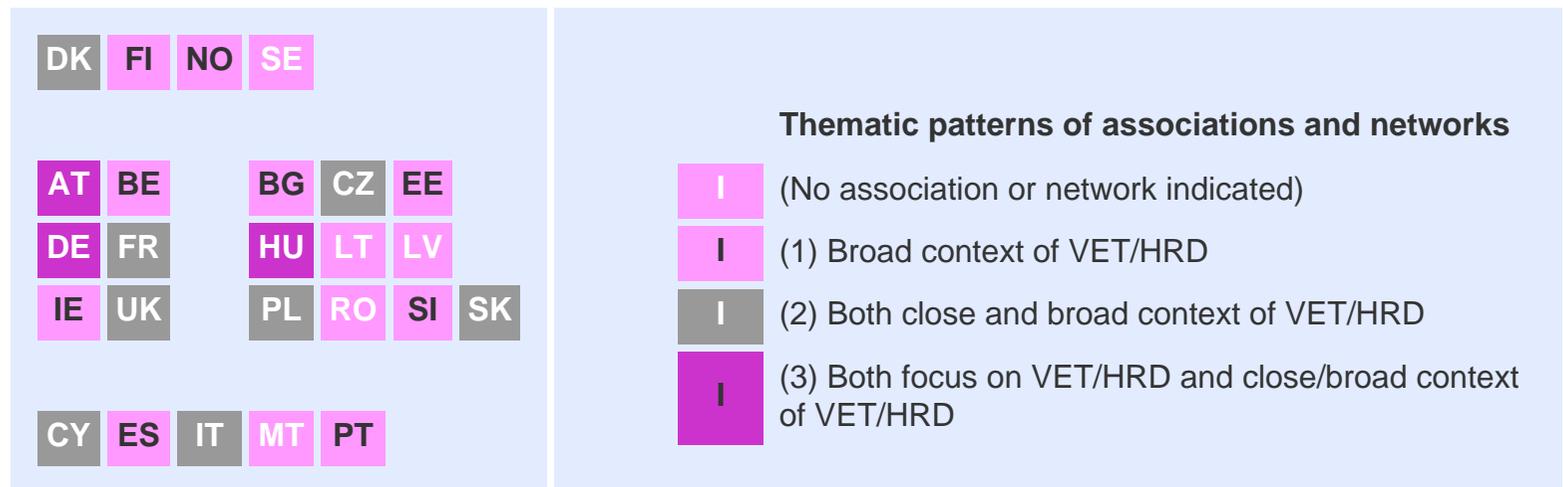
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Research in VET and HRD is supported by a range of national associations and networks. As the reports show (see [Overview](#), aspect 6), there are substantial differences between European countries in the extent to which associations and networks are existing. Also, there are great variations in the thematic field represented by these associations and networks. This content aspect is taken up in the following analysis, drawing on the information provided in the reports. As in the case of institutions (see [Profile 4](#)), the thematic orientation of the associations and networks is broken down into three types:

- Focus on VET/HRD (single or combined);
- Close context of VET/HRD (e.g. education, labour market, human resources, work life);
- Broad context of VET/HRD (e.g. economics, sociology, statistics).

This typology is used, in a first step, to characterise individual associations and networks across countries. In a second step, the typology serves to identify national patterns, defined by the specific types of associations and networks involved in each case. The outcomes of the transnational comparison are presented in the map below.



The first pattern refers to associations and networks whose thematic field is situated in the *broad* context of VET/HRD (e.g.

economics, sociology, statistics). These are likely to include VET or HRD only at the fringe of their own field, which suggests a low thematic relevance for VET/HRD research. As the map shows, this type of association or network is fairly common across all European regions (BE, BG, EE, ES, FI, IE, NO, PT, SI). Since associations and networks in the broad context of VET/HRD can be assumed to exist in all countries, this first pattern also includes those which are reported to have no VET/HRD related associations or networks at all (LT, LV, MT, RO, SE).

The second pattern covers associations and networks of two types: while some of them carry out professional activities in the *broad* context of VET/HRD (see first pattern), others pursue their activities in the *close* context of VET/HRD (e.g. education, labour market, human resources, work life). Included in this pattern are also those associations and networks which are related to a minor part of the VET/HRD field in the country concerned. Furthermore, national consortia of European VET/HRD networks, reported for several countries, have been added to this group. Altogether, the second pattern is fairly varied in its thematic relevance for VET/HRD research. It can be found in several countries from all European regions (CY, CZ, DK, FR, IT, PL, SK, UK).

A particular component of the third pattern are those associations and networks that *focus* on the thematic field of VET/HRD or on a major area within this field. The third pattern provides a rich environment, by including associations and networks of all three types, and is therefore regarded to be of high thematic relevance for VET/HRD research. Only three countries can be allocated to this pattern (AT, DE, HU).

NOTE: The Profile of national research is based on a comparative analysis of selected activities in 25 European countries (see [Overview](#)). This data has been compiled from the national reports prepared by the Cedefop ReferNet in 2006 and subsequently published by Cedefop (see [Introduction](#) and [Reference](#)).

**Profile [7] Effectiveness of research activities**Country outlines [\[AT\]](#) [\[BE\]](#) [\[BG\]](#) [\[CY\]](#) [\[CZ\]](#) [\[DE\]](#) [\[DK\]](#) [\[EE\]](#) [\[ES\]](#) [\[FI\]](#) [\[FR\]](#) [\[HU\]](#) [\[IE\]](#) [\[IT\]](#) [\[LT\]](#) [\[LV\]](#) [\[MT\]](#) [\[NO\]](#) [\[PL\]](#) [\[PT\]](#) [\[RO\]](#) [\[SE\]](#) [\[SI\]](#) [\[SK\]](#) [\[UK\]](#)[WIFO Home](#)[Back to Profile](#)

Special reviews were provided by national experts to assess each country's research activities in VET/HRD (see [Overview](#), aspect 7). The following analysis draws attention to one of the key concerns addressed in these reviews: the effectiveness of research activities. For this purpose, the review texts have been analysed to identify issues related to the effectiveness of VET/HRD research. These may refer to either problems encountered or solutions pursued, or to both. Three major types of issues can be distinguished across the country reviews:

- Infrastructure of research (incl. coordination within the research field; role of university research; continuity of research);
- Resources for research (incl. funding for research from national sources/ EU sources; evaluation of research funding/ output);
- Interrelation between research and policies (incl. linkage with national policies/ EU policies).

In the following analysis, the most prominent type of issue (from among these three types) has been selected for each country (see map below, legend on the right). It should be noted though that nearly half of the reviews address more than one type of issue, partly with only marginal difference in emphasis between them. The map therefore is intended to highlight country examples for the issues addressed rather than to identify exclusive cases of prominence,



### Prominent issues related to the effectiveness of research

- I (A) Mainly infrastructure of research
- I (B) Mainly resources for research
- I (C) Mainly interrelation between research and policies

Issues with regard to the interrelation between research and policies (C) appear to be most prominent in the majority of reviews across all regions (BE, BG, CY, DE, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, LV, UK). Linkages both with national policies and with EU policies are commonly addressed, for instance, how to evaluate the effects of VET/HRD research on political decision making in education (FI); the role of evaluation research for programme reviews and national development plans (IE).

Also frequent is the prominence found in relation to issues concerned with the infrastructure of research (A), again across all regions (AT, DK, EE, LT, MT, NO, SE, SI). A favourite theme in this group is the coordination of research within the VET/HRD field, for instance on the following lines: Cooperation of the players could bring more communication and more strength of research; the establishment of a yearly VET research conference, and more inclusion in European and international activities could be steps in that direction (AT).

Issues related to the resources for research (B) seem to be most prominent in a number of country reviews from Central-Eastern and Southern Europe (CZ, IT, PL, PT, RO, SK). Points raised in this context include the evaluation of research activities, for instance: In relation to increased research funding more emphasis is being placed on the evaluation of project quality – as part of both ex ante and ex post evaluation (CZ); the following criteria are applied for the evaluation of research: productivity and quality of the work, internationalisation, impact, use of external resources, management of the resources (IT).

NOTE: The Profile of national research is based on a comparative analysis of selected activities in 25 European countries (see [Overview](#)). This data has been compiled from the national reports prepared by the Cedefop ReferNet in 2006 and subsequently published by Cedefop (see [Introduction](#) and [Reference](#)).

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