



Survey report

The Status of Teachers in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Martin Henry
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October 2026



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Education International (EI)

Education International represents organisations of teachers and other education employees across the globe. It is the world's largest federation of unions and associations, representing over 33 million education employees in over 390 organisations in 180 countries and territories.

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Foreword

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has moved to the centre of policy debates around the world. Governments increasingly look to TVET systems to address skills shortages, support economic transformation, respond to technological change, and facilitate transitions to more sustainable economies. Yet this report reveals a troubling gap between the expectations placed on the sector and the conditions under which its educators work.

This first global survey of Education International member organisations representing teachers and education support personnel in TVET offers an important contribution to understanding the state of the profession. Its findings present a clear picture: while TVET is widely recognised as strategically important, too many TVET teachers continue to face low professional status, insufficient investment, worsening workloads, precarious employment, and barriers to ongoing professional development.

The report identifies several interconnected challenges. Teacher shortages are widespread, particularly in highly specialised technical fields where competition from industry makes recruitment and retention increasingly difficult. Many unions report that salaries do not provide a reasonable standard of living, and significant disparities remain between what skilled professionals can earn in industry and what they can earn in the classroom. At the same time, workloads are intensifying, opportunities for professional learning are uneven, and many systems continue to rely on precarious forms of employment.

These findings matter because the quality of TVET depends fundamentally on the people who deliver it. Workshops, laboratories, technology, curricula, and qualifications frameworks all play an important role, but none can substitute for qualified, supported, and respected teachers. When governments expand TVET provision without making comparable investments in the workforce, they risk undermining the very goals they seek to achieve.

The report also highlights a deeper policy contradiction. Across many countries, TVET is presented as essential to the future of work, yet public investment, workforce planning, and professional support frequently fail to match this ambition. This disconnect is evident in the persistence of teacher shortages, underfunded infrastructure, insufficient access to professional development, and declining working conditions. It is difficult to build quality and responsive TVET systems while neglecting the educators on whom those systems depend.

At the same time, this report demonstrates that the challenges facing TVET are neither inevitable nor poorly understood. The voices of unions from every region point toward a clear understanding and clear priorities: secure employment, competitive salaries, meaningful professional autonomy, high-quality initial preparation and continuing professional learning, adequate resourcing, and strong social dialogue. These are the foundations of quality education systems.

The survey also reminds us that TVET serves purposes that extend beyond labour market outcomes. High-quality vocational and technical education

expands opportunity, supports social mobility, strengthens communities, and enables people to participate fully in economic and civic life. Ensuring its success therefore requires more than aligning education to immediate labour market needs. It requires a sustained commitment to the public value of education at all levels and to the professionals who make it possible.

Education International hopes this report will contribute to a more informed and constructive discussion about the future of TVET. We encourage governments, employers, policymakers, and education unions to engage seriously with its findings. The challenge here is to build TVET systems that are equitable, fully funded, professionally staffed, and capable of delivering on the promises increasingly made in their name.

If TVET is to play the transformative role that policymakers envision, then investment in teachers must become a central part of the strategy. Behind every discussion about skills, productivity, competitiveness, and economic transition are educators whose knowledge, experience, and commitment make those outcomes possible.

The choice facing governments is straightforward: they can continue to ask more of TVET while investing less in the people who sustain it, or they can build the conditions that allow educators and learners to thrive together. The evidence presented here points firmly in one direction. A stronger TVET sector requires stronger public investment, stronger professional support, and a stronger commitment to the educators whose work turns policy aspirations into real opportunities for learners and communities.



Dr David Edwards
General Secretary
Education International



Introduction

TVET combines technical education with vocational training to prepare learners for employment and lifelong learning. Technical education focuses on subjects related to engineering, technology, and applied sciences, while vocational training emphasizes hands-on skills for specific occupations, such as mechanics, healthcare, construction, agriculture, and hospitality. —Staff, E. (2021, February 8)

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is the growth area in higher and further education, both in terms of societal need and course provision, with TVET pathways and courses commonly being offered to students from the age of 15. The jurisdiction of TVET is further complicated by the fact that responsibility for the sector often spans multiple ministries. The Ministries of Education, Labour and Finance each play a role, reflecting their shared interest in the alignment between skills development, the world of work and the governance over TVET policy.

Education International (EI) has been particularly interested in the quality of TVET education with a working party designed to refine work in this area that sat between 2004 and 2015 and a number of studies being undertaken between 2016 and 2019 which explored an analysis of the development of productive capabilities in seven countries: Argentina, Australia, Côte d'Ivoire, England, Ethiopia, Germany, South Africa and Taiwan (Moodie et al., 2019; Wheelahan & Moodie, 2016). Separate reports are available for Australia (Wheelahan, Moodie, Lavigne, & Samji, 2018), England (Wheelahan, Moodie, Lavigne, & Coppens, 2018), Taiwan (Wheelahan et al., 2018), and Cote d'Ivoire (Lavigne et al., 2019).

This body of work has provided a firm foundation for looking at the radical changes taking place in the TVET sector today. Previous editions of EI's Global Status of Teachers report warn that TVET teachers, along with Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers, perceived their status as the lowest (Stromquist, 2018). Distinct as a particular and identifiable sector, TVET has been the focus of considerable national rhetoric concerning the future of work and the development of skills. Significant expectations have therefore been placed upon the sector, often without the level of investment required to translate these ambitions into reality.

This report outlines the findings of the first ever survey of EI member organisations representing teachers and Education Support Personnel (ESP) working in the TVET sector. The respondents to this survey are the leaders of unions that organise TVET teachers. The answers therefore correspond to unions' understanding of how TVET teachers and the sector are faring in terms of their pay and material conditions. The report focuses primarily on the status of TVET teachers, while also giving attention to the status and working conditions of ESP, whose experiences provide a broader perspective on the conditions of the TVET workforce in its entirety.

Drawing on EI's Global Status of Teachers' reports (Arnold & Rahimi, 2025; Stromquist, 2018; Thompson, 2021), this report explores the status, rights and working conditions of TVET teachers and their impact on TVET quality.

The TVET sector is under intense pressure, as this report explores, from economic development policy not supported by material conditions. By material conditions we mean pay and conditions, the contracts teachers work under, combined with the classrooms they work in and the resources and facilities to which they have access. Governments continue explicitly naming TVET and apprenticeships as the way to improve the economic outlook without sufficiently investing in strong TVET institutions and good pay and conditions for TVET teachers.

In response to the practical challenges of delivering TVET programmes across a wide range of specialised domains, there have been increasing efforts to embrace digital technologies, and artificial intelligence in particular, as potential solutions to economic challenges. However, there is limited evidence that such approaches have meaningfully addressed the underlying challenges to the sector. The Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is beginning to investigate the 'leveraging of AI to augment teaching and learning in VET', as they say in their concept note, but information about the exact approach is scant at this point. Relatedly, this report examines the domains being reduced or deprioritised in an expanding field of TVET courses.

The comments from EI Member Organisations rounded out the questions and the thoughtful responses show a consensus emerging on the problems faced by the sector. It is important to reflect on the fact that it is the teachers who make the biggest difference to the delivery of TVET education. Without willingness in societies to acknowledge that it is the teachers who make the biggest difference to education jurisdictions (OECD, 2025), change will be slow and efforts to enhance the quality of TVET will be sporadic.

The survey's focus on pay, benefits and working conditions provides an important lens through which to understand the broader status of TVET teachers. Significant disparities between teachers' salaries and those available in their industries inevitably affect recruitment and retention. In the context of efforts to integrate digital technologies and AI into TVET, important questions remain concerning professional autonomy in a sector that is particularly sensitive to shifting economic priorities. This further complicates recruitment and retention, and while providing opportunities, also requires substantial teacher support.

These economic and structural movements happen in an environment where TVET is seen as critical to the future of work. The International Labour Organization (ILO) pointed out that for a human centred future of work, there should be a lifelong learning guarantee, supported by strong TVET institutions (ILO, 2019; Moodie et al., 2019). As the findings outlined in the following chapters of this report reflect, there is work to be done to make this a reality. The ILO, in its Recommendation 208, further emphasises the importance of qualified educators working in conjunction with quality institutions to deliver high-quality learning (Recommendation R208 - Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation, 2023 (No. 208), n.d.). This can only happen when the status of the TVET sector is supported and developed accordingly. As the recommendation points out, governments with the necessary monitoring authority are responsible for making sure this happens.



As this report explores, at the centre of the challenges identified in the TVET sector lies a widely recognised, but insufficiently acted upon reality: teachers are the critical factor in ensuring the quality of education. Without stronger societal and policy commitment to supporting and valuing the teaching profession, progress in developing high-quality and sustainable TVET is likely to remain limited and inequitable.

Survey Sample and Demographic Data

The survey instrument was developed with the support and guidance of a working group comprising EI member organisations from across regions who organise TVET teachers and ESP. As has been highlighted, this report is focused on the status of TVET teachers. At the same time, understanding teachers' status requires a recognition of the essential role played by ESP in delivering quality TVET, supporting the functioning of TVET institutions and contributing to the conditions in which teachers work. Questions relating to ESP are therefore included both to capture their own experiences and working conditions, and to help understand the wider TVET workforce context and how it shapes the status of TVET teachers.

The survey was available in English, French, and Spanish, and was open from 28th May to 31st July 2025. The survey was targeted at any EI member organisation that represents TVET teachers or ESP. This applies to secondary, further, adult, and higher education.

While there were 178 initial responses to the survey, once the data had been cleaned and all the duplications and incomplete responses removed, the sample size was set at 66. Given the percentage of member organisations who represent workers in the TVET sector, this is a robust response rate.

All participating unions represent TVET teachers and ESP. While there are unions representing the workforce in the TVET sector exclusively, most represent more than one sector. The total number of TVET members reported across EI member organisations was 2,355,616, ranging from a union with 3 members to one with 1,800,000.

While the distribution across EI regions was fairly even, the European region had the most responses with 32.81% of the sample, followed by Africa with 21.88%, Asia Pacific with 20.31%, North America and the Caribbean with 14.06%, and Latin America with 10.94%.

Responding unions represent teachers and ESP who work in both public and private institutions, with most respondents organising primarily (38.46%) or mainly (43.08%) public education workers. This is particularly important in the context of the palpable efforts to privatise TVET provision in many education systems. This detail should be considered when interpreting the findings of this report.

As shown below, the largest share of participating unions represent TVET workers who are school based (55 unions) or work in higher education institutions (42 unions). Unions also represent the workforce who work in further and adult education, as well as prison settings (32 unions), and apprenticeships (29 unions). 29 unions represent Education Support Personnel in TVET.

Q5. Which sector does your union/professional organisation represent? Please tick all that apply.

<i>Answer Choices</i>	<i>Answers</i>
Vocational Education (school based)	55 (83.3%)
Vocational Education (further, adult and prison education)	32 (50.8%)
Vocational Education (higher education)	42 (66.6%)
Vocational Education (apprenticeships)	29 (46%)
Vocational Education Support Personnel	29 (46%)
Answered	63 (100%)
Skipped	3

National Education Demographic Context

This section addresses the demographic and employment characteristics of TVET teachers and ESP represented by the unions participating in the survey. The questions were designed to get a clear understanding of how TVET teachers are contracted and remunerated and how they compare to other sectors.

Q8. How does the average salary of TVET teachers in your country compare to similar professions in terms of pay and living standards? Please select each statement that applies.

<i>Answer Choices</i>	<i>Responses</i>
Teachers' salaries are comparable to those for professions with similar qualifications	25 (39.68%)
Teachers' salaries are enough to maintain a reasonable standard of living for themselves and their families	18 (28.57%)
Teachers' pay is linked to performance as measured by student test scores	2 (3.17%)
Teachers are paid on an incremental salary scale	33 (52.38%)
None of the above	6 (9.52%)
Answered	63 (100%)
Skipped	3



We asked first how TVET teachers' salaries compare to those of similar professions. Just over half (52.38%) of surveyed unions report that TVET teachers in their country are on an incremental salary scale. About 40% state that teacher salaries are comparable to those of other professions requiring similar qualifications and less than a third (28.57%) think that teacher salaries in their countries are enough to maintain a reasonable standard of living, indicating that a large proportion of TVET teachers do not earn a livable wage.

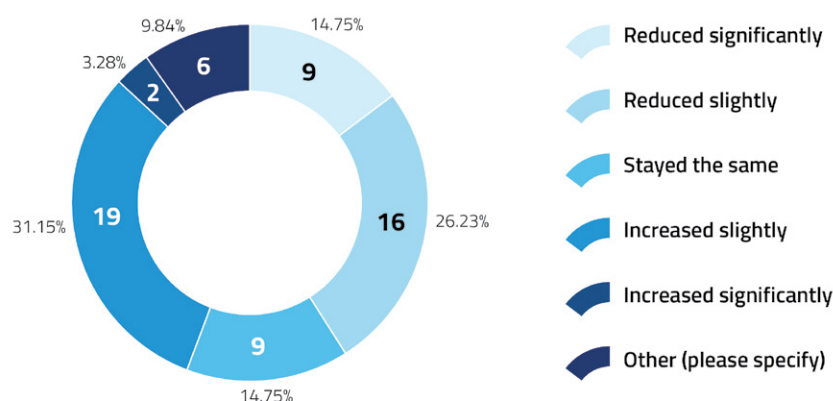
The fact that only 18 respondents said TVET teachers' salaries were enough to maintain a reasonable standard of living for themselves and their families, sets up a stark dichotomy between the need to staff a sector of growing importance, with the material reality of teachers' lives.

Unions were also asked to show on a scale what happened to TVET teachers' salaries over the last three years. With the average figure standing at 43 on a sliding scale from significant increase to significant decrease, the data suggests that TVET teachers' salaries have stagnated, or suffered a relative decrease, over the past three years. As inflation and the cost-of-living rise exponentially in many countries, it is critical that salaries increase to ensure that teachers earn decent pay. This is important to consider also in the context of the global teacher shortage, which is exacerbated by low salaries and significant challenges in retaining and recruiting teachers.

In Portugal, the professional status of TVET teachers is generally considered low. Although TVET teachers play a crucial role in equipping students with skills for the labour market, their contribution remains undervalued within the national education system. —FENPROF

While on average, the vast majority of TVET teachers are employed on permanent contracts (150,656 teachers), 51,101 teachers were reported to be on contracts of more than a year and an additional 15,992 teachers on casual contracts of less than 12 months. This is a revealing set of results, as on average, globally, according to this survey, over a quarter of teachers are employed on casual contracts (67,043 teachers). The use of temporary and short-term contracts is a concerning trend. Precarity has severe implications for teacher well-being, their ability to unionise and engage in collective bargaining, and their access to social protection and livable salaries. Some unions have been reporting rapid growth in the number of short-term contracts, but these results do not yet fully bear that out.

Q11. How has the proportion of permanently employed staff changed in your country's TVET sector over the last 10 years?



Answered: 61 (100%) - skipped: 5

Q11. How has the proportion of permanently employed staff changed in your country's TVET sector over the last 10 years?

<i>Answer Choices</i>	<i>Responses</i>
Reduced significantly	9 (14.75%)
Reduced Slightly	16 (26.23%)
Stayed the same	9 (14.75%)
Increased slightly	19 (31.15%)
Increased significantly	2 (3.28%)
Other (please specify)	6 (9.84%)
Answered	61 (100%)
Skipped	5

As illustrated in the graph, over 40% of participating unions report that the proportion of permanently employed staff has reduced over the last 10 years, indicating that employing teachers on precarious contracts has become a more established government strategy to ease the teacher shortage and/or to save money. Conversely, about a third of responding unions report that the use of permanent contracts has increased in the last 10 years. Additionally, almost 15% of respondents maintain that the proportion of permanently employed TVET teachers has remained the same. While on average, these are encouraging figures that might in part be connected to union activism and advocacy for secure contracts for TVET teachers, it shows that the approaches between countries differ greatly. Those that respond 'other' indicated that this is a result of data not being available, highlighting the importance of reliable data on the education workforce as a whole and on TVET teachers in particular.

On average, the workforce in TVET comprises of slightly more women (54.65%) than men (45.32%). While almost no unions have data on the percentage of non-binary teachers in their membership, one union reports that 3% of the workforce is in this category. Another union reports that 0.9% of the workforce identifies in another way.

In contrast, on average, the percentage of male senior managers in the TVET sector (57.43%) outweighs the proportion of managers who are female (42.57%). This is in line with data from other levels of education, where although the majority of the employees in the sector are women, it is mostly men who are given the managerial roles. This is particularly important as data shows that women are often disproportionately affected by poor teacher policies, particularly those related to workload, work-life balance and wellbeing (OECD, 2025). Participating unions are not able to provide percentages of managers who are non-binary or otherwise identifying, indicating a need for a more intersectional approach to data gathering.

There is further data on the status of particular sectors that shows that more female dominated sectors are also accorded lower status. In fact, research points out that society still expects men to earn better and this works counter to men entering teaching (Pikic Jugovic et al., 2022).



The general perception of teachers' occupational status

The next section of the survey looks at the general perception that union leaders have of TVET teachers' occupational status. How is it presented by the media and what are the perceptions that members report society as having of TVET teachers from particular disciplines? It is clear from past Global Status of Teachers reports (Arnold & Rahimi, 2025; Stromquist, 2018; Thompson, 2021) that TVET teachers, along with early childhood educators, are generally perceived to have the lowest status. This survey looks in more granular detail at how different sections of the TVET workforce are perceived.

The position of TVET teachers is for the most part significantly worse than that of school teachers, particularly in general further education (FE) colleges and adult education. While the sixth form college sector is underfunded, it retains better pay and terms and conditions, meaning that the position of TVET teachers in that area is somewhat better than their peers elsewhere. —NEU

Globally, 61.4% of surveyed trade unions perceive TVET teachers to hold a low status in society.

However, the low status afforded to teachers by society does not seem to be meaningfully shaped by the image of and attitude towards TVET teachers in media, as almost 85% of respondents were of the opinion that the mass media were either neutral or positive in their depiction of TVET teachers.

The next question separates the status of TVET teachers according to their discipline. Of the 17 disciplines covered, TVET teachers working in engineering, electrotechnology and related technologies, information technology and cybersecurity, and the automotive industry, are perceived to be afforded the highest status in society. Similarly, high status disciplines also included financial services and accounting, management and commerce, business, marketing and media, as well as the health sector. Conversely, unions perceived TVET personnel teaching in education support and community services, ECE and cultural studies, and the creative arts, to have the lowest status. A more neutral balance between low and high status was reported for TVET teachers working in building, construction, painting, plumbing and mining, health and food, hospitality and tourism.

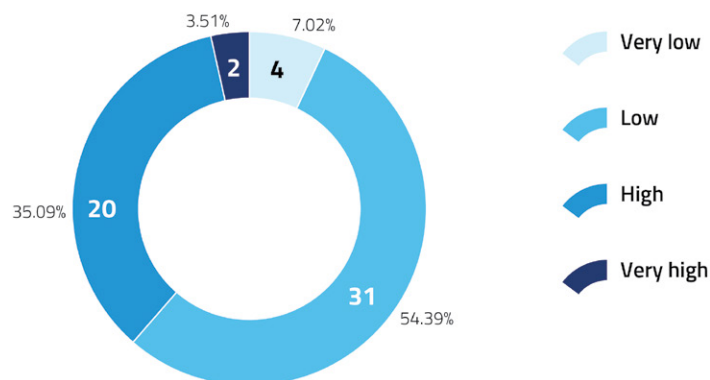
There was a noticeable difference in the perceived status afforded to TVET teachers who teach foundational skills (literacy, numeracy, and digital skills) and soft skills (personal, social, and workplace skills). Just over 46% of respondents identified the status of TVET teachers who teach foundational skills as being afforded high or very high status. However, under 30% of respondents reported that those teachers who are tasked with developing soft skills are afforded high status by society.

Looking at the disciplines with the highest status, such as engineering, IT, and cybersecurity, and those of the lowest perceived status, including education support, community services, and hair and beauty, it is clear that the disciplines

traditionally filled by women, also tend to be linked to lower pay and worse working conditions. These disciplines are also afforded lower status.

Finally, TVET personnel teaching natural and physical sciences and agricultural, conservation, environmental, and related studies, were often perceived as having low or very low status. In particular, 55% of respondents indicated that educators in agricultural studies are regarded as having low or very low status.

Q16. What, in your perception, status does society give TVET overall?

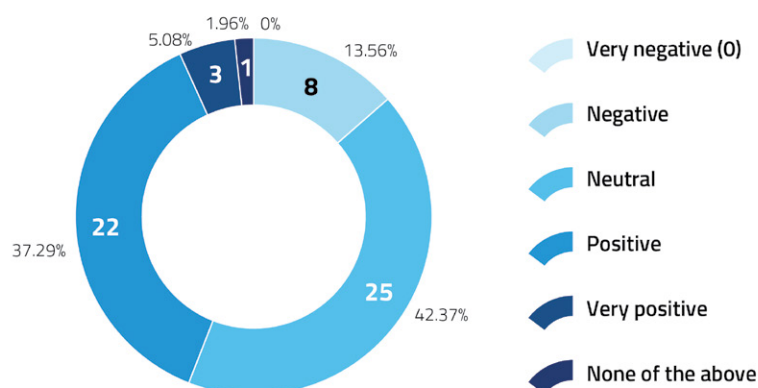


Answered: 57 (100%) - skipped: 9

Q16. What, in your perception, status does society give TVET overall?

Answer Choices	Responses
Very low	4 (7.02%)
Low	31 (54.39%)
High	20 (35.09%)
Very high	2 (3.51%)
Answered	57 (100%)
Skipped	9

Q17. The image of and attitude to TVET teachers promoted by the mass media in your country is generally:



Answered: 59 (100%) - skipped: 7



Q17. The image of and attitude to TVET teachers promoted by the mass media in your country is generally:

<i>Answer Choices</i>	<i>Responses</i>	
Very negative	0	0.0%
Negative	8	13.56%
Neutral	25	42.37%
Positive	22	37.29%
Very positive	3	5.08%
None of the above	1	1.69%
Answered	59	(100%)
Skipped	7	

Organisation of the national education system

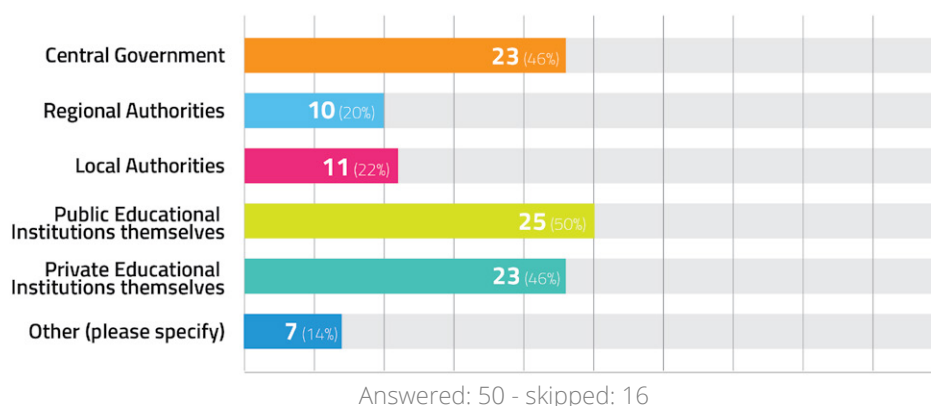
This section looks at the organisation of the education system in terms of responsibilities, funding arrangements, facilities, technology, Continuous Professional Development (CPD), and teacher shortages. This provides a good overview of the material conditions faced by teachers and how the arrangements work. By material conditions we mean pay and conditions, the contracts teachers work under, combined with the classrooms they work in, and the resources and facilities to which they have access.

All the structural educational arrangements countries make have an impact on the overall nature of the TVET system. Strong TVET institutions in good buildings that provide high levels of support to the teachers are likely to lead to better economic outcomes and a more qualified workforce (Wheelahan & Moodie, 2016).

Almost all participants (93%) report that in their country, TVET is recognised legally as the responsibility of the state. In the vast majority of countries, TVET is offered by both public and private providers. However, TVET is primarily delivered through public institutions, with private providers representing a limited share of overall provision. Non-government, not-for-profit providers also represent a significant share globally, as around 16% of respondents noted that such provision is available in their countries. Looking at the split between public, private, and not-for-profit provision on the national level, the latter has a comparatively much smaller role.

Similarly, teachers represented by the unions responding to this survey are employed by both public (50%) and private (46%) educational institutions. Where the employer is the government, the largest share of TVET teachers is employed by the central government (46%), while some are employed by regional (20%) and local authorities (22%).

Q20. Who is responsible for employing the TVET teachers that your union represents? (check all that apply)



When asked about the key challenges facing TVET in their countries, the intensification of TVET teachers' work was identified by 94.1% of respondents as a prevalent issue. This concurs with the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) results (OECD, 2025, p. 74) which suggest stress and the mental load of teaching are increasing.

Other notable challenges identified by respondents include the commercial outsourcing of goods, support, and services previously supplied by the government, with 86.28% of respondents claiming the issue is prevalent in their countries to some or a great extent. This is consistent with the findings of EI's recent report, which identifies outsourcing as a growing threat to the working conditions and social and professional status of ESP, an already vulnerable and precarious category of workers (Cone & Giudici, 2024). Relatedly, significant percentages of respondents also recognise increased privatisation in the sector (84.32%), teachers being subject to inspections from the TVET regulator (86%), and the use of casual and short-term contracts to employ TVET teachers (80%) as notable challenges facing the sector.

Over a third of respondents (76%) consider TVET educational staff experiencing verbal and physical abuse a prevalent issue. This is consistent with the OECD's findings in the latest TALIS report (OECD, 2025): 62% of teachers in TVET report verbal and physical abuse happens to some extent and 14% say it happens to a great extent. TALIS shows that being verbally abused might be more closely associated with job dissatisfaction than workload, accountability, or keeping up with reforms (OECD, 2025, p. 123). EI's own data suggests that in some countries, on average, almost every 1 in 3 teachers has been a victim of workplace violence (ESN & FESP, 2023, p. 13) and 1 in 2 has witnessed violence in the workplace in the past year (ESN & FESP, 2023, p. 15).

Respondents also recognise the competition for funding between TVET institutions as a prevalent issue (76%), 74% feel that the decline in support for students with special needs is a notable issue, and 72% of respondents identified TVET teachers being pressured to pass students who have not reached the appropriate level of competency as a prevalent issue in their contexts. This competition for funding also leads to 78.43% of respondents reporting that competition for enrolments between TVET institutions and Higher Education institutions is a prevalent issue to some or to a great extent in their contexts.

Q21. To what extent is each of the following issues prevalent in your country?

Answer Choices	Not at all	To some extent	To a great extent	Answered
Increase in the number of private TVET providers	15.69% (8)	68.63% (35)	15.69% (8)	51
The intensification of TVET teachers' work	5.88% (3)	52.64% (27)	41.48% (21)	51
The commercial outsourcing of goods, supports and services previously supplied by government education or skills authorities	13.73% (7)	72.55% (37)	13.73% (7)	51
TVET Teachers being pressured to pass students who have not reached the appropriate level of competency	28% (14)	52% (26)	20% (10)	50
Teachers being subject to inspections from the TVET regulator	14% (7)	62% (31)	24% (12)	50
The use of casual and short-term contracts to employ TVET teachers	19.61% (10)	54.9% (28)	25.49% (13)	51
The decline in support for students with special needs	26% (13)	52% (26)	22% (11)	50
Competition for funding between TVET institutions	24% (12)	54% (27)	22% (11)	50
Competition for enrolments between TVET institutions and Higher Education institutions	21.57% (11)	50.98% (26)	27.45% (14)	51
TVET educational staff experiencing verbal and physical abuse	24% (12)	62% (31)	14% (7)	50

In this section, unions were also asked about the material environment of TVET teachers. This includes the schools they work in, the facilities and resources provided, and the materials to which students have access.

Encouragingly, almost 95% of respondents believe the facilities available are appropriate for teaching and learning to some or to a great extent. Three quarters of respondents feel that the buildings and grounds were well maintained. When asked about teaching equipment, just less than a quarter of respondents indicate that there is insufficient teaching equipment in their education institutions. Similarly, about 20% of respondents warn that in their contexts, essential student materials are not available to all students for free. This reported lack of teaching and learning materials is particularly concerning given the important role TVET often serves in providing education and skills for learners from lower socio-economic backgrounds, raising concerns that inadequate resources may reinforce or compound existing inequalities in access to quality education.

Q22. To what extent are the following issues regarding TVET educational facilities applicable to your country?

Answer Choices	Not at all	To some extent	To a great extent	Answered
Are the facilities in educational institutions appropriate for teaching and learning?	5.77% (3)	75% (39)	19.23% (10)	52
Are building and school grounds maintained to a high standard?	25% (13)	61.54% (32)	13.46% (7)	52
Is there sufficient teaching equipment?	23.08% (12)	71.15% (37)	5.77% (3)	52
Do teachers have a staff room at school?	3.77% (2)	60.38% (32)	35.85% (19)	53
Are the essential student materials available to all students for free?	19.23% (10)	67.31% (35)	13.46% (7)	52

Technology was covered as part of the material environment. It is clear that TVET is adjusting to the digital era, but that the systems are not yet fully developed. Teachers generally have access to digital technology in their classrooms, although there is a worrying 15% who have no access at all. Teachers are also generally trusted to make pedagogical decisions regarding technology in their classrooms to some extent (66.67%), or to a great extent (22%), but a notable 11% are not trusted to make pedagogical decisions at all. On average, teachers report having some autonomy to make decisions about technology use in their schools (67%). A minority (11%) is able to participate in decision making on this issue to a great extent and almost 1 in 4 has no ability to make decisions on the incorporation of technology in their schools. Having the time to make decisions about what technology to use, and for what purpose, also appears to be under pressure, with almost a third (28.30%) receiving no time at all, and about 72% receiving the time needed to some extent.

Support for upskilling appears to be unevenly distributed, with 22% of respondents reporting no support at all, 74% receiving some support, and only 3.7% indicating that they receive substantial support. These findings suggest a significant need for more consistent and comprehensive investment in professional development and upskilling opportunities.

Students' access to technology free of charge appears to be uneven across contexts, with 20% of respondents indicating that students are unable to access technology for free, 67% reporting that students have access to some extent, and only 13% stating that students receive free access to a great extent. These disparities appear closely linked to broader funding challenges. Indeed, 39% of respondents report that funding for technology is not adequate at all in their contexts, while 54% indicate that it is adequate only to some extent, and just 7% report that funding is adequate to a great extent. If TVET systems are to keep pace with rapid technological advancements while safeguarding equitable access and professional autonomy, significantly greater public investment will be required to ensure both learners and the workforce are adequately prepared for the future.

Q23. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding TVET educational technology in your country?

Answer Choices	Not at all	To some extent	To a great extent	Answered
Teachers have access to digital technology in their classrooms	14.81% (8)	74.07% (40)	11.11% (6)	54
Teachers are trusted to make pedagogical decisions with technology in their classrooms	11.11% (6)	66.67% (36)	22.22% (12)	54
Systems offer adequate support to upskill teachers in using digital technology in their classrooms	22.22% (12)	74.07% (40)	3.70% (2)	54
Teachers are given the autonomy to make decisions about the incorporation of technology in their schools	22.22% (12)	66.67% (36)	11.11% (6)	54
Teachers have the time needed to make decisions about what technology to use for which purpose	28.30% (15)	66.04% (35)	5.66% (3)	53
Students are able to access appropriate digital technology at school provided free by the government	20.37% (11)	66.67% (36)	12.96% (7)	54
There is appropriate funding to purchase, maintain and replace technology infrastructure	38.89% (21)	53.70% (29)	7.41% (4)	54

These findings echo earlier research conducted by EI (Colclough, 2020). Drawing on evidence gathered during the COVID-19 pandemic, the report found that only 44% of respondents in post-secondary education indicated that digital



competences were included in initial teacher education, compared to 79% in secondary teacher education. Taken together, these findings suggest that TVET teachers continue to receive insufficient preparation and support to keep pace with the rapid technological transformations reshaping education and work in the sector.

Qualifications, Training and Continuous Professional Development

Unions were also asked about the minimum qualification required to teach TVET. The majority of jurisdictions appear to require a teacher certificate/diploma (55.56%), a bachelor's degree (57.41%), or industry qualifications (55.56%). Less than a third of jurisdictions (27.87%) require a master's degree and, almost 13% require a doctoral degree. For 9.26% of jurisdictions, primary education is sufficient and for 28% of jurisdictions, an upper secondary certification will give access to a TVET teaching job. This may be in combination with a teaching diploma. Jurisdictions diverge on this minimum qualification and in federal jurisdictions this can differ from state to state or from county to county.

Closely related to the question of qualifications is the initial education and continuous professional development (CPD) of TVET teachers. This should be seen as the continuum of a TVET teachers' career. While some respondents report that in their countries, initial teacher education is provided free of charge most of the time (26.42%), or some of the time (32%), it is never free of charge in 42% of jurisdictions. Moreover, while CPD is provided to some extent in 68% of cases, and to a great extent for 23%, alarmingly, almost 10% of respondents report that CPD is not provided at all. As respondents highlighted above, sustained access to high-quality CPD is essential for enabling TVET teachers to keep pace with rapidly evolving technologies, industry practices, and emerging occupational fields, particularly in high-demand technical sectors facing acute staffing shortages. In the cases where CPD is available, access to free CPD was confirmed to some extent in almost 70% of cases and to a great extent in almost 19% of cases. In about 11% of cases respondents report that in their countries, there is no access to free CPD for TVET teachers.

Teacher choice is an important aspect of effective CPD and while almost 74% of respondents report that TVET teachers in their countries can decide on the form of CPD they receive, over a quarter (26.42%) report that teachers do not have that choice. Access to CPD opportunities has to be further supported with appropriate time allocations for teachers to participate in CPD.

When asked if there is working time allocated for teachers to participate in CPD, over a quarter of respondents warn that teachers in their countries receive no working time allocated for participating in CPD every year. Time to undertake CPD has been an ongoing struggle for teachers, with some jurisdictions making it more difficult than others.

The link between CPD, the recognition of advanced skills and career progression is observable in 64% of cases some of the time, and most of the time for almost 10% of respondents. However, for over a quarter (26.42%), it is not observable at all. The quality and relevance of the CPD is seen as great only to 11% of respondents, sometimes good to 72% of respondents, but never good to 17% of respondents.

Q27. Please indicate whether the following issues regarding the professional development of TVET teachers apply in your country:

Answer Choices	Not at all	To some extent	To a great extent	Answered
Is initial teacher education provided free of charge?	41.51% (22)	32.08% (17)	26.42% (14)	53
Is Continuous Professional Development (CPD) provided in your country?	9.43% (5)	67.92% (36)	22.64% (12)	53
Do teachers have the opportunity to access CPD free of charge?	11.32% (6)	69.81% (37)	18.87% (10)	53
Can teachers decide what form of CPD they receive?	26.42% (14)	60.38% (32)	13.21% (7)	53
Is there working time allocated for teachers to participate in CPD per year?	26.42% (14)	64.15% (34)	9.43% (5)	53
Does CPD lead to career progression and recognition of advanced skills?	26.42% (14)	64.15% (34)	9.43% (5)	53
Is the CPD offered of sufficient quality and relevance for teaching?	16.98% (9)	71.70% (38)	11.32% (6)	53

When considering the quality of CPD, the delivery method is also significant. The survey was therefore looking to establish the proportion of CPD delivered in person, online, or through blended courses. While almost all CPD used to be in person, it is clear there has been a shift towards online options. On average, respondents indicate that approximately 64% of CPD courses in their countries are delivered in person, while fully online and blended approaches are less common, identified in approximately 26% of cases.

The survey also explored the impact of new forms of online and blended CPD. Across contexts, respondents report differing views on the impact of online and blended CPD modalities, suggesting that teachers are affected differently. Over a third of respondents (38%) indicate that online and blended CPD adds to teachers' workload, while almost half (47.62%) consider it beneficial. Similarly, half of respondents indicate that online and blended CPD has a detrimental effect on teachers' workload intensity, while a third consider the impact beneficial. The opposite pattern is reported in relation to the ability to support student engagement. It is striking that a significant share of respondents (36%) consider online and blended CPD detrimental in this respect. This may speak to the quality of the CPD, or to the difficulties that hybrid or online training presents for TVET, where much classroom-based work is hands-on. It would be worth exploring what the 36% who consider it detrimental to student engagement mean by this.

Regarding the ability to provide pastoral care for students and provide students with sufficient time to learn and practice skills, respondents are quite evenly split, with slightly more identifying the beneficial impact of online and blended CPD (43.91% and 41.47%) compared to a detrimental impact (34.15% and 39.02% respectively). In both cases, around a fifth of respondents feel that the mode of CPD delivery has no impact on these elements.

Almost 40% of respondents feel that the modality of CPD delivery has no impact on the burden of marking for teachers. Similarly, about a quarter of



respondents feel that the mode of CPD delivery does not have an impact on the administrative burden of teachers. However, almost half of the respondents report a detrimental effect.

Q29. If your answer to 27 included online or blended what impact has online delivery had in the following areas?

Answer Choices	no impact	very detrimental	somewhat detrimental	somewhat beneficial	very beneficial	Answered
Working hours	14.29% (6)	9.51% (4)	28.57% (12)	42.86% (18)	4.76% (2)	42
Workload intensity	16.67% (7)	14.29% (6)	35.71% (15)	26.19% (11)	7.14% (3)	42
Marking burden	35.71% (15)	11.90% (5)	23.81% (10)	19.05% (8)	9.52% (4)	42
Admin burden	22.50% (9)	17.50% (7)	30% (12)	20% (8)	10% (4)	40
Ability to support student engagement	14.29% (6)	4.8% (2)	30.95% (13)	40.48% (17)	9.52% (4)	42
Ability to provide pastoral care to students	21.95% (9)	12.19% (5)	21.95% (9)	34.15% (14)	9.76% (4)	41
Providing students sufficient time to learn and practice skills	19.51% (8)	17.07% (7)	21.95% (9)	29.27% (12)	12.19% (5)	41

Professional consultation on important TVET and Resourcing Issues

Professional consultation is at the centre of union work. The findings of EI's Global Status of Teachers' report stresses that while formal mechanisms for professional consultation through institutionalised social dialogue are reported to be relatively robust in areas concerning teacher pay, compensation, employment protection, and working time, these mechanisms are weaker in other areas, including professional issues and professional learning (Arnold and Rahimi, 2025). Consultation on professional matters is just as critical as negotiations on remuneration. When TVET institutions are under resourced, quality teacher-centred continuous professional development is not provided, and learning equipment is not up to specification, the sector's ability to meet its learning and skills objectives is significantly constrained. Addressing these challenges requires sustained, structured, and meaningful social dialogue with teacher unions across all dimensions of policy and resourcing.

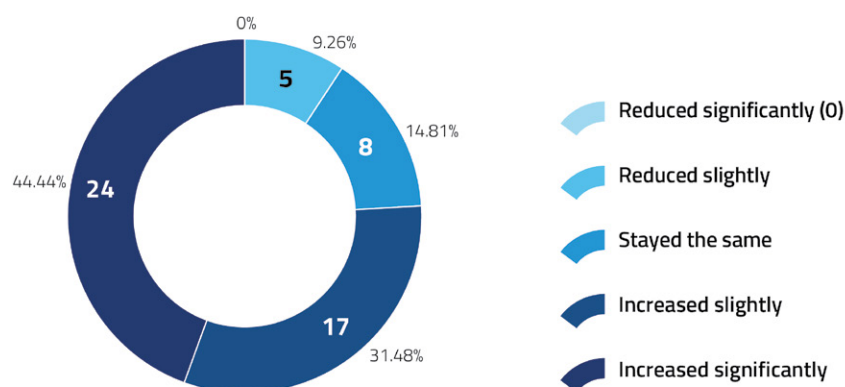
On the question of how much influence unions have on policy development and reform in relation to TVET, the picture is varied but not discouraging. Over 85% of unions feel that they are slightly or moderately influential, about 11% noted that they are highly influential in their national contexts and only 3.7% report that they had no influence. Encouragingly, the majority feel they are slightly or moderately influential.

Workload, course provision, and investment

The next section provides a picture of how workload, course provision and investment are working across particular areas.

The first question in this section looks at the pace and intensity of TVET teachers' work. Almost 76% of respondents feel the pace and intensity of TVET teachers' work has increased over the last 2 years. In fact, almost half of respondents (44.44%) report that it has increased significantly. This is in keeping with the wider picture of increases in teachers' workloads across levels of education.

Q31. Over the last two years has the pace and intensity of TVET teachers' work increased, stayed the same or reduced?



Answered: 54 (100%) - skipped: 12

The survey also examined time use for teachers. One of the biggest challenges teachers face in fulfilling their duties, particularly at a time where administrative tasks have grown significantly, is finding the time to teach. The evidence shows that teachers do not have sufficient time to keep their professional practice up to date. There are also jurisdictions that give teachers no time at all for upskilling. In about a third of cases (28.30), respondents report that teachers are not provided with adequate time to maintain industry relevance. In over a quarter of cases (25.93%), respondents warn that teachers are not provided with adequate time for continuous professional development. A significant share of respondents also report that teachers do not have enough time for curriculum development (22.22%) and for supporting students to practice skills (16.67%).



Q32. Are TVET teachers in your country provided with adequate time to maintain the following?

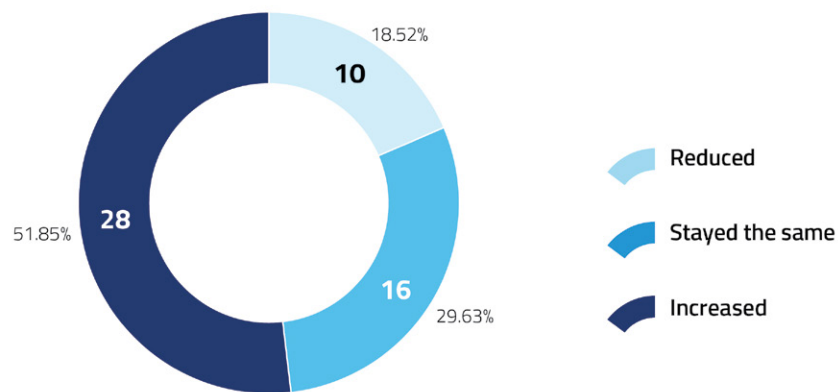
Answer Choices	Not at all	To some extent	To a great extent	Answered
Continuous Professional Learning and Developemnt	25.93% (14)	66.67% (36)	7.41% (4)	54
Industry Relevance	28.30% (15)	62.26% (33)	9.43% (5)	53
Developemnt of Curriculum	22.22% (12)	72.22% (39)	5.56% (3)	54
Sufficient time for students to practice skills	16.67% (9)	68.52% (37)	14.81% (8)	54

The survey also examines course provision. While 18.52% of respondents report that the number of courses provided have reduced in their contexts and 30% report it has stayed the same, a significant 52% report that course provision has increased.

This expansion must be understood within the broader TVET ecosystem, including levels of resourcing, workload pressures, and the availability of institutional and industry support.

Overall, the findings point to a sector that is expanding in scope and strategic importance. As the world of work continues to evolve amid increasing uncertainty, the core role of TVET in equipping learners with relevant skills remains indispensable. In this context, it is essential to assess whether policy responses are adequately aligned with these demands and responsive to the needs of teachers and institutions delivering this provision.

Q33. Has TVET course provision in your country reduced or increased in recent years?



Answered: 54 (100%) - skipped: 12

This section also looks at the courses/qualifications that have been discontinued. While all the highlighted areas have undergone changes, courses on management and commerce, financial services and accounting, and the creative arts stood out as the most frequently discontinued. Least often discontinued were courses on hair and beauty; food, hospitality, tourism and personal services; foundation skills including literacy, numeracy and digital skills; and mixed programmes soft skills. It is possible that the latter categories face the slightest reduction because they were either relatively new courses, less often offered, or they serve a stable market share. This would require further investigation to understand fully.

The survey also tackles the capacity of TVET providers to meet the needs of the community. Critically, 80% of respondents reply negatively. This suggests that despite the growing need for TVET provision, TVET institutions are not being fully supported to meet the needs of the community.

The survey continues by exploring this question in more depth. While it is important to note the next two questions have a significant drop-off in response rates, the answers are still revealing.

Most often, respondents identify IT equipment in schools, libraries and learning centres, workshops, and material support for online or blended learning modalities, as needing most significant investment to bring up to standard.

Q34. In which areas have courses/qualifications been discontinued? (select all that apply)?

Answer Choices	Answered
Natural and physical sciences	25.0% (2)
Information Technology/ Cybersecurity	37.5% (3)
Engineering, Electrotechnology and related technologies	25.0% (2)
Automotive	37.5% (3)
Building, Construction, Painting, Plumbing and Mining	37.5% (3)
Agriculture, Conservation, Environmental and related studies	37.5% (3)
Health (Nursing, Individual Support Aged/Disability, Dental)	25.0% (2)
Education (Education Support)	37.5% (3)
Management and Commerce	50.0% (4)
Business, Marketing and Media	37.5% (3)
Financial Services/ Accounting	50.0% (4)
Community Services, Early Childhood and Cultural Studies	25.0% (2)
Creative Arts	50.0% (4)
Hair and Beauty	12.5% (1)
Food, Hospitality, Tourism and Personal Services	12.5% (1)
Foundation Skills including Language, Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Skills	12.5% (1)
Mixed Programmes Soft Skills (Personal, Social and Workplace Skills)	12.5% (1)
Other (please specify)	(4)

Answered: 8 (100%) - skipped: 58

Additionally, trade and teaching equipment, internal and external building structures, the classrooms themselves and studio equipment are also identified as requiring significant investment.



Q36. Please indicate the extent to which each of the following require additional investment in TVET:

Answer Choices	Does not require upgrading and investment	Requires some upgrading and investment	Requires significant additional investment to bring up to standard	Answered
Classrooms	0%	50% (4)	50% (4)	8
Trade/ Teaching Equipment	0%	37.5% (3)	62.5% (5)	8
Library/ Learning Centre	0%	25% (2)	75% (6)	8
IT equipment	0%	12.5% (1)	87.5% (7)	8
Studio equipment	12.5% (1)	37.5% (3)	50% (4)	8
Workshops	0%	25% (2)	75% (6)	8
Material support for online/ blended delivery	0%	25% (2)	75% (6)	8
Technical and administrative equipment	0%	62.5% (5)	37.5% (3)	8
Internal and external building structures	0%	37.5% (3)	62.5% (5)	8

Answered: 8 (100%) - skipped: 58

Teacher shortages, recruitment and retention

This section examines the scale of TVET teacher shortages and the factors shaping the ability of TVET systems to recruit and retain qualified teachers. It considers the fields most affected by shortages, the factors that unions identify as contributing to them, and union's perceptions about the extent to which pay, employment conditions, workload and professional autonomy affect employers' capacity to recruit and retain teachers from industry. It also examines wider conditions within TVET systems that can influence the attractiveness and sustainability of the profession, including institutional funding, access to professional learning and development, recognition of teachers' professionalism, and the alignment of pay and working conditions with the value of teachers' work. Finally, by looking at how teachers' working conditions have changed over the past three years, the section provides a broader view of the direction in which the TVET workforce is evolving and the conditions in which teachers are expected to work.

When asked about the extent of the teacher shortage in their countries and the particular field most affected by it, respondents identified a range of disciplines where TVET teachers are in short supply. Responses suggest that teacher shortages in TVET are both widespread and highly uneven, with shortages concentrated geographically in rural, remote, and socioeconomically disadvantaged regions. At the same time, some respondents note acute shortages in major urban and industrial centres, where competition with higher-paying private sector employment is especially pronounced. This is particularly visible in IT and computer engineering, often causing difficulties in recruiting and retaining TVET teachers whose salaries are much lower than those offered by the industry.

Relatedly, across subject areas, the shortages are most consistently concentrated in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and highly specialised technical fields. Respondents repeatedly identify shortages in mathematics, physics, chemistry, computer science, information technology, cybersecurity, robotics, artificial intelligence, engineering, electronics, construction trades, plumbing, Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC), and advanced manufacturing. Health-related and care sectors, including nursing, disability services, aged care, and early childhood education, are also identified as areas experiencing staffing pressures in several contexts. These findings suggest that shortages are most acute in sectors where workers with technical expertise are in high demand across the wider economy.

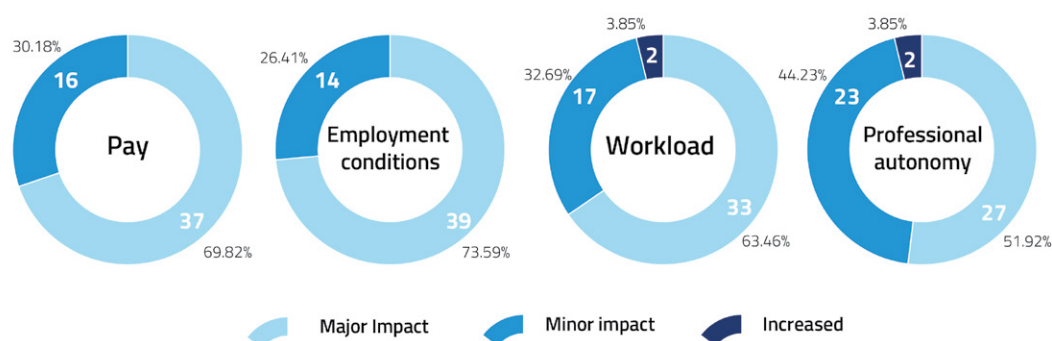
Respondents also highlight challenges associated with rapidly changing technologies, noting that teachers are often expected to continually update their technical knowledge without sufficient institutional support, training, or access to modern equipment.

Several responses further point to structural and policy-related factors contributing to shortages. These include difficulties obtaining teaching certification for professionals transitioning from industry into education, inadequate workforce planning, the introduction of new technical programmes without corresponding teacher preparation, weak administrative policies, and limited opportunities for professional development and career progression. In some cases, respondents note that teachers from related disciplines are required to self-train in order to teach newly introduced technical subjects, reflecting broader concerns regarding system capacity and preparedness.

As a solution for teacher shortages, governments often turn to hiring unqualified personnel to fill teaching positions. When asked if this was commonplace in their countries, 19% of participants said this practice is very common. An additional 41% said it is somewhat common. This means nearly 60% of jurisdictions regularly employ unqualified personnel. In an area such as TVET, where safety issues are paramount, and a good education is critical to the health of trades, this should be of serious concern to governments.

When asked to assess the impact of several factors on recruitment and retention of qualified teachers in the sector, most identify pay and employment conditions as having the biggest impact. About 70% of respondents think pay has a major impact on teacher recruitment and retention and about 74% identify employment conditions as having a major impact. Almost two thirds (63.5%) of respondents think workload has a major impact on teacher recruitment and retention and over half (51.9%) think the same about professional autonomy.

Q38. In your opinion, what is the impact of the following on the capacity of TVET employers to recruit and retain people from industry to teaching.





The survey included a set of statements designed to capture respondents' assessments of the current state of the TVET system. The first looks at the funding for TVET institutions, which is thought by 84.6% of respondents to influence the quality of education provided. The next statement suggests that unmet student demand for places is a significant problem in their country. Over 60% of respondents agree with this statement. Almost three quarters of respondents (73.1%) agree that the inability to recruit and retain qualified TVET teachers is a significant issue in their country.

When asked whether TVET teachers were supported to undertake sufficient and appropriate professional learning and development, only 2% strongly agree, about a third (32.7%) agree, and almost half of the responding unions (48.1%) disagree, reaffirming the strong need for additional and meaningful support for teachers to participate in CPD activities. Concerningly, over a third of respondents disagree with the statement that TVET teachers are recognised for their professionalism in their countries. Finally, consistent with previous answers, over half of the responding unions (55.77%,) feel that the pay and working conditions they face do not reflect the professional values and the work that TVET teachers do in their countries.

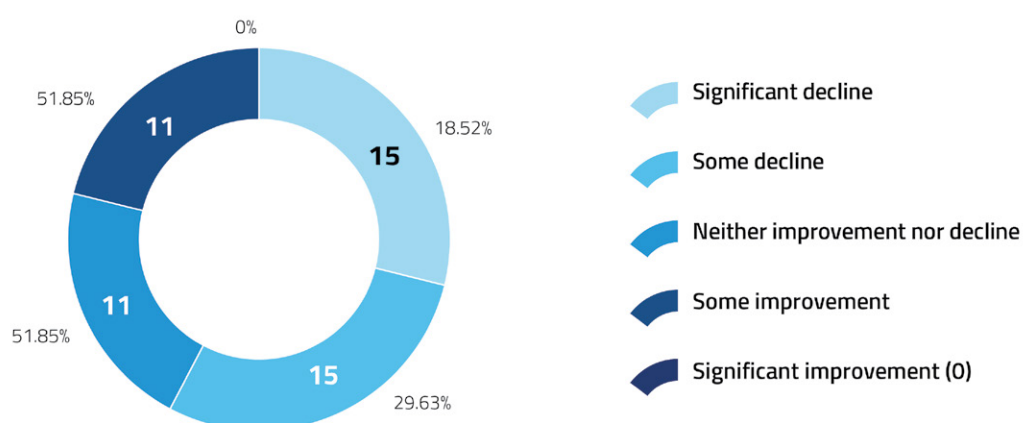
The responses in this section point to a set of interrelated systemic challenges. Where TVET teachers report insufficient support for professional learning and development, limited recognition of their professionalism, and a lack of alignment between pay, working conditions, and the value of their work, these factors collectively undermine the attractiveness and sustainability of the profession. This has implications for the capacity of systems to recruit and retain experienced and qualified teachers, as well as for the overall resourcing and strength of TVET institutions. In some contexts, respondents also indicate a potential movement of professionals out of TVET teaching and back into industry or other sectors, further compounding existing staffing pressures.

Q39. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Answer Choices	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Answered
The quality of education that TVET institutes in my country deliver is being affected by a lack of funding	5.77% (3)	3.85% (2)	5.77% (3)	42.31% (22)	42.31% (22)	52
Unmet student demand for places is a significant problem in my country	(0)	15.69% (8)	21.57% (11)	49.02% (25)	13.73% (7)	51
Inability to recruit and retain qualified TVET teachers is a significant issue in my country	1.92% (1)	3.85% (2)	21.15% (11)	32.69% (17)	40.38% (21)	52
TVET teachers in my country are supported to undertake sufficient and appropriate professional learning and development	3.85% (2)	44.23% (23)	17.31% (9)	32.69% (17)	1.92% (1)	52
TVET teachers are recognised for their professionalism in my country	1.92% (1)	32.69% (17)	30.77% (16)	30.77% (16)	3.85% (2)	52
Pay and working conditions reflect the professional value and the work that TVET teachers do	23.08% (12)	32.69% (17)	13.46% (7)	17.31% (9)	13.46% (7)	52

The survey also considers how these broader workforce pressures are reflected in the trajectory of TVET teachers' working conditions. Respondents were asked to assess how working conditions have changed in their country over the past three years. Over half of the participating unions find that working conditions for TVET teachers in their countries have declined. About a fifth suggest that there is no progress nor decline in working conditions. While it is positive to see that 20% report some improvement, no unions report a significant improvement in teachers' working conditions. Taken together with the previous findings related to the teacher shortage in the sector, these trends point to the continuing challenges faced by TVET systems in creating and sustaining working conditions that support the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers.

Q40. Generally speaking, what has happened to teachers' working conditions over the past 3 years in your country?



Answered: 52 (100%) - skipped: 14

Overall comments on the status of teachers

The last section of the survey provides a space for members to speak directly about the status of TVET teachers in their country and what could be done to improve it.

Across the responses, the status of TVET teachers emerges as generally lower than that of basic education teachers in most contexts, although the degree of relative status varies significantly depending on national policy frameworks, labour market structures, and levels of public investment.

The comments made by members have been organised under themes and attributed where appropriate.

Professional recognition and social prestige

A dominant theme is the persistently lower status of TVET teaching relative to academic secondary education, reflecting broader societal hierarchies between vocational and academic pathways. In multiple



contexts, TVET is still framed as a “second-tier” option, despite formal policy efforts to elevate its status.

In Portugal, for example, respondents highlight enduring stigma despite policy evolution:

“TVET teachers play a crucial role... [but] their contribution remains undervalued within the national education system” (FENPROF).

Similarly, in Taiwan, vocational education is described as structurally subordinated within an exam-oriented system:

“TVET is relatively undervalued in the society where studying for higher degrees has been highly recognized and promising” (NTA).

In Côte d'Ivoire, the situation is summarised even more starkly:

“Globalement, le statut des enseignants de l'enseignement technique et de la formation est peu enviable dans mon pays” (SYNAFETPCI).

These accounts collectively indicate that TVET teaching remains socially and symbolically positioned below academic pathways in many education systems, which directly affects teacher recruitment and retention.

Precarity, wage penalties and deteriorating working conditions

Related to the lower perceived status of the sector, another cross-cutting theme concerns precarious employment, wage disparities, and declining working conditions, particularly in comparison to general education teachers and, in some cases, industry professionals.

In England, the disparity within the post-secondary system is explicit:

“The position of TVET teachers is for the most part significantly worse than that of school teachers, particularly in general further education colleges and adult education” (NEU).

In Hungary, respondents emphasise a strong labour market disincentive:

“It is not worth it to come and teach when you have work in industry for much higher wages and in much better working conditions” (PDSZ).

In Québec, TVET teachers are formally recognised as teachers but experience employment insecurity:

“Ils sont considérés comme des enseignant.e.s à part entière... Cependant, la majorité est à statut précaire” (CSQ).

In New Zealand, structural reform has intensified precarity:

“Staff are experiencing job insecurity, increased workloads, and diminished professional autonomy” (TEU).

These cases collectively point to a pattern in which formal recognition does not necessarily translate into secure, well-resourced, or attractive employment conditions.

Underfunding and policy volatility

Respondents also repeatedly identified systemic underinvestment and policy instability, which often shape both the material conditions of TVET provision and the status of its workforce.

In Portugal, respondents point to fragmented funding and uneven provision, resulting in geographic inequalities in quality and access. Similarly, in Argentina, a once-strong legal and financial framework for TVET is described as being undermined by recent austerity and restructuring. While the 2005 legal framework established a dedicated funding floor for TVET, respondents report that:

“La subejecución de las partidas presupuestarias... y la discontinuidad en las obras de infraestructura... son una marca constante” (CTERA).

They further highlight that current allocations fall dramatically short of legal requirements, with severe cuts relative to previous years.

In Lithuania, by contrast, respondents describe partial improvement through increased investment:

“Recent salary increases, improved working conditions, and investment in TVET infrastructure show growing recognition of their importance” (LESTU).

However, even in this relatively positive case, structural issues persist, including resource constraints and teacher shortages.

Taken together, these accounts suggest that TVET status is highly sensitive to macro-fiscal policy and institutional stability, with reforms and austerity cycles having immediate effects on professional standing. This is often despite grand claims being made about TVET's importance to the economy.

Alignment struggles

Another important theme concerns the relationship between TVET systems, labour markets, and ongoing institutional reform, which both elevates and destabilises the role of teachers.

In the United States context, TVET is increasingly integrated into a more flexible skills ecosystem:

“Career and tech education... has multiple on-ramps and off-ramps and stackable credentials” (NEA).

This reflects a broader shift toward lifelong learning models, though respondents still note underfunding and uneven implementation.



In Lithuania, TVET teachers are described as essential to workforce development:

“TVET teachers play a critical role in preparing skilled workers for the labor market” (LESTU).

Yet shortages and ageing workforces indicate structural fragility.

In contrast, Taiwan illustrates how weak labour-market regulation can distort TVET provision, with reports of exploitative apprenticeship arrangements:

“They live like migrant workers” (NTA).

These examples demonstrate that while TVET is increasingly framed as economically strategic, the alignment between education systems and labour markets can either enhance professional relevance or exacerbate exploitation and instability. It further throws into relief the complexity of shifts in the skills market and failures to take due care to ensure students are developing the full range of productive capabilities. TVET systems that are either too narrow or too atomised are not able to meet the need of rapidly changing skills demands.

The responses reveal a strong convergence around the need for systemic public investment, professional recognition, equitable employment conditions, and strengthened professionalism. Across national contexts, respondents consistently frame the improvement of TVET teacher status not as an isolated workforce issue, but as inseparable from broader struggles over public education policy, labour rights, industrial strategy, and the social value attributed to vocational education.

Pay parity

Respondents repeatedly identify unequal remuneration and precarious work as central drivers of the profession’s diminished status. When asked about how systems can address the problems in the TVET sector, respondents most often raised the need for fairer salaries, stable employment, and parity with other teachers.

In Portugal, respondents call for:

“remuneration and career progression opportunities for TVET teachers [to align] with those available in general education” (FENPROF).

Similarly, respondents in the United Kingdom stress the need for sector-wide collective bargaining and pay restoration:

“pay restoration for teachers, with the introduction of common terms and conditions” (NEU).

The demand for parity is stated even more directly by another respondent:

“Pay parity with schoolteachers” (UCU).

Across contexts, improving status is therefore understood as fundamentally linked to recognising TVET teachers as equal professionals within education systems rather than a secondary or lower-status workforce.

Several responses also emphasise the importance of reducing workload pressures and employment insecurity. In Germany, respondents identify:

“better working time regulation (reduction of work load)” and “solving the teacher labour shortage” as essential reforms (GEW).

In New Zealand, respondents similarly stress:

“fair pay, secure work, and meaningful involvement in shaping the future of vocational education” (TEU).

These perspectives collectively frame professional status as inseparable from broader labour conditions and industrial relations frameworks.

Fairer funding

Linked to the demand for decent pay, respondents also emphasised the need for long-term, sustainable public investment in TVET systems, including infrastructure, equipment, staffing, and institutional capacity.

In Portugal, respondents argue that improving status requires:

“sustainable funding for TVET institutions to improve infrastructure, provide modern equipment, and support adequate staffing and pedagogical resources” (FENPROF).

Likewise, respondents in the United Kingdom call for:

“a significant injection of funding” and “a long-term commitment to funding levels” (NEU).

In Argentina, the issue is situated within a broader defence of public education against austerity and privatisation. Respondents advocate for:

“la reafirmación de la educación pública como derecho social y humano” and “la regulación normativa para limitar el avance de la privatización y mercantilización en educación” (CTERA).

The Argentinian response also links TVET investment to national industrial development, arguing for:

“políticas que protejan e impulsen a la industria nacional” (CTERA),

thus situating vocational education within a wider developmental and economic framework.

Similarly, in Belgium, respondents call for vocational education to be treated as an integral part of compulsory education:



“Considérer la formation professionnelle comme faisant partie intégrante de l'enseignement obligatoire. Accorder plus de moyen” (CGSP).

Across responses, underinvestment is consistently identified not only as a material problem but also as a symbolic indicator of the lower value attributed to vocational education and its teachers.

TVET professionalism

Another theme is the need to strengthen the professional identity, qualifications, and pedagogical expertise of TVET teachers through continuous professional development (CPD), professional autonomy, and stronger teacher education systems.

In Portugal, respondents stress the importance of:

“high-quality, specialised CPD tailored to the technical and pedagogical realities of TVET” (FENPROF),

alongside greater teacher participation in curriculum and institutional decision-making.

In Argentina, respondents similarly advocate:

“la institucionalización de un programa de formación permanente para docentes” (CTERA),

with publicly funded professional development adapted to the evolving needs of technical education.

The issue of maintaining pedagogical professionalism in the face of labour shortages is particularly emphasised in Taiwan. Respondents strongly reject policies that substitute qualified teachers with industry personnel lacking educational training:

“This is obvious deprofessionalization” (NTA).

This concern reflects a broader tension within TVET systems internationally: while industry experience is highly valued, respondents insist that teaching expertise and pedagogical preparation remain essential components of professional status.

Several responses also stress the need for training systems that keep pace with technological and industrial change. In Taiwan, respondents emphasise the need for professional development that:

“keep[s] up to date with new trends and skills in industries” (NTA).

Collectively, these responses frame professionalisation as central both to educational quality and to raising the social standing of TVET teaching.

Perceptions of TVET

A final cross-cutting theme concerns the need to strengthen the social legitimacy and public recognition of technical and vocational education itself.

Several respondents argue that improving teacher status requires transforming how technical and vocational education is perceived socially and politically. In Portugal, respondents propose:

“national awareness campaigns... to highlight the essential role of TVET teachers in workforce development, innovation, and social inclusion” (FENPROF).

In Belgium, respondents advocate for integrating technical, manual, and technological learning into a common curriculum for all students:

“Établir un tronc commun... et y intégrer des cours de formation manuelle, technique, technologique et numérique” (CGSP).

This reflects an effort to challenge entrenched academic-vocational hierarchies by positioning vocational learning as a universal and valued educational component rather than a marginalised track.

Similarly, in New Zealand, respondents emphasise community responsiveness, local participation, and partnership with Māori grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi, highlighting the importance of culturally responsive and democratically governed vocational systems.

Systemic change

Overall, the responses suggest that improving the status of TVET teachers requires comprehensive systemic reform rather than isolated technical interventions. Professional status is understood as the product of interconnected factors including remuneration, working conditions, institutional investment, professional autonomy, industrial policy, and societal attitudes toward technical and vocational education.

Establishing parity and security through fair salaries, stable employment, collective bargaining, and manageable workloads, reinvesting in public TVET systems through sustained funding, infrastructure development, and resistance to privatisation and austerity is critical. As is strengthening professionalisation and social recognition through high-quality teacher education, continuous professional learning and development, pedagogical autonomy, and public acknowledgement of TVET's contribution to economic and social development. These points all emerge consistently and across contexts.

Importantly, many respondents frame the struggle for improved TVET teacher status as inseparable from broader debates about the future of public education, labour rights, and equitable economic development. In this sense, raising the status of TVET teachers is not presented merely as a workforce challenge, but as part of a wider political and social project aimed at reaffirming the public value of technical and vocational education itself.



Conclusion

This report, the first in-depth global analysis conducted by Education International into status, pay, working and employment conditions of TVET teachers and ESP, reveals a growing disconnect between the strategic importance increasingly attributed to TVET systems and the material conditions experienced by the workforce responsible for delivering them. Across diverse national contexts, governments continue to position TVET as central to economic growth, technological transformation, labour market adaptation, and skills development. Yet these ambitions are too often undermined by persistent underinvestment, declining working conditions, workforce shortages, precarious employment, and insufficient professional recognition for TVET teachers.

The report further highlights a growing contradiction within the sector. Expectations placed on TVET systems continue to expand as governments seek to respond to digitalisation, artificial intelligence, changing labour markets, sustainability and a just transition, and skills shortages. At the same time, many TVET institutions remain under-resourced, with insufficient investment in infrastructure, workshops, equipment, technology, and continuous professional development. In numerous contexts, teachers are expected to continually update their technical expertise and adapt to rapidly changing industries without adequate time, funding, or institutional support.

Although this survey did not examine artificial intelligence (AI) in depth, AI and related digital transformations are likely to become increasingly significant for TVET systems. As international initiatives, including ongoing OECD work on leveraging AI in technical and vocational education and training, continue to shape policy discussions, the rapid pace of technological change further reinforces the need for sustained investment in infrastructure, pedagogical autonomy, and continuous professional development and teacher support to ensure that technological innovation strengthens rather than destabilises the workforce in the sector.

The findings also point to an emerging workforce sustainability challenge. Teacher shortages are widespread across highly specialised technical fields, particularly in STEM disciplines, digital technologies, engineering, construction trades, and health-related sectors. These shortages are intensified by significant disparities between salaries and working conditions in education compared to industry. In response, some systems are increasingly relying on short-term contracts or underqualified personnel to fill vacancies, raising concerns regarding deprofessionalisation and the long-term quality and safety of TVET provision.

At the same time, the survey demonstrates that solutions are well understood by the profession itself. Respondents consistently identified the need for stable and secure employment, competitive salaries, manageable workloads, high-quality initial teacher education and continuous professional development, and meaningful professional autonomy. Stronger pathways between industry and teaching are important, but these must be professionally accredited and supported by pedagogical preparation rather than used to bypass professional standards. Respondents also emphasised the importance of sustained public

investment in modern facilities, technological infrastructure, and equitable student access to learning materials and digital tools.

The findings further reinforce the importance of meaningful social dialogue and consultation with teacher unions. While many unions reported some degree of influence over policy development, consultation remains uneven, particularly on professional issues such as curriculum, technology, workload, and professional learning. Effective TVET reform requires governments to engage teachers and their unions not only as stakeholders, but as essential professional partners in shaping the future of the sector.

Ultimately, the future strength of TVET systems depends on recognising that quality vocational education cannot be built on precarious labour, chronic underfunding, or weakened professional autonomy. Expanding TVET provision while failing to invest in the workforce risks undermining the very goals governments increasingly expect the sector to achieve. Sustainable and equitable TVET systems require long-term public investment, secure and attractive employment conditions, meaningful continuous professional development, modern infrastructure, and institutional environments that recognise TVET teachers as highly skilled professionals essential to economic, technological, and social development.



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Survey report

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October 2026



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