

Further development of technical and vocational education and training

POLICY DEVELOPMENT**STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN** CYPRUS

Timeline

2021 Implementation**2022 Implementation****2023 Implementation****2024 Implementation****ID number 44638**

Background

There is a mismatch between supply of, and demand for, professionals in technical professions in Cyprus. Consequently, the need arises for evidence-based policy-making regarding investments in increasing the numbers of enrolled students in secondary technical and vocational education and training.

Objectives

The objectives are the following:

- (a) to improve the relevance of technical and vocational education and training (VET) to the needs of the labour market;
- (b) to facilitate the transition from education to work;
- (c) to increase the attractiveness of STVET;
- (d) to modernise school facilities and provide a test bed for the development of state-of-the-art programmes and promote closer links with the industry;
- (e) to improve the quality of VET by developing skills forecasting mechanisms, by updating curricula, and by further developing the apprenticeship system and work-based learning.

Description

In 2014, the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training (STVET) started implementing the project Further development of technical and vocational education and training (under programming period 2014-20). The project continues with increased ESF+ funding (under the programming period 2021-27). The project covers all VET pathways falling under the authority of the Department of STVET: secondary technical and vocational education, evening schools of technical and vocational education, the apprenticeship system, lifelong learning programmes of VET, and public schools of higher vocational education and training (MIEEK). The project's indicative activities include the development and introduction of new study programmes, the purchase of technical equipment, the organisation of promotional campaigns, the provision of high-quality professional training for VET teachers, the development of a national VET graduate tracking

system, and the construction of new technical schools.

The project consists of the following actions:

- (a) assessing labour market demand in the relative fields of study by introducing new fields of study and specialisations in secondary VET and higher VET, in accordance with the 2015-20 strategic plan for VET. For example, in 2017, with the accreditation/upgrading of the post-secondary institutes of vocational education and training (MIEEK) to public schools of higher VET, new specialisations were developed;
- (b) integrating key competences into curricula: Following the suggestions from the 2015-20 strategic plan, curricula that include foreign languages, entrepreneurial skills, maths, science/technology, digital skills, and learning to learn competences along with career management skills, numeracy and literacy were approved in 2015 and have been implemented since the 2016/17 academic year. To promote cultural expression, music became a compulsory subject in the first year of studies in secondary VET and optional in the second and third year. The Russian language has been introduced as an optional subject in hotel and catering study programmes since the 2016/17 academic year;
- (c) informing pupils, students and trainees, annually, on matters of professional development and the benefits of completing programmes/pathways in the VET system;
- (d) systematic training of instructors, on an annual basis, on technological developments and training on new industrial methods and procedures, with the aim of improving the quality of teaching and their educational abilities, in collaboration with the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute;
- (e) providing practical training in companies for MIEEK students and apprentices;
- (f) improving practical in-company training of MIEEK students and apprentices, for specialisations/qualifications for which it is necessary to have specialised hands-on (work-based) by performing constant inspections;
- (g) ensuring access to modern technical equipment, training materials and infrastructure through training in companies with the appropriate infrastructure (facilities, equipment, etc.);
- (h) organisation of a modern training model in industry by incentivising reputable industrial units which excel in their sector and contribute to the Cypriot economy to provide knowledge, skills and abilities/competences to technical and vocational school students;
- (i) developing learning-outcome-based VET curricula adapted to meet the needs of the labour market;
- (j) expanding and making more flexible technical and vocational evening schools, which operate as second chance schools.

2021 Implementation

In 2021, in the context of the project the following took place.

- (a) Writing of textbooks and student exercise books by VET teachers. 14 books were written for the following fields of study: Hotel and catering professions, Applied arts and mechanical engineering. Academics (scientific collaborators) provided consulting services to the writing teams of the school textbooks, as well as overview and evaluation of the deliverables (parts or the whole of school textbooks), recommendations to the writing teams and cooperation with the responsible inspectors of the Department of STVET.
- (b) Development of curricula from scratch for the developed for the first time STVET specialisations of *Ship mechanics*, *Seamen* and *Cosmetology*.
- (c) Evaluation of the timetable and curricula of all the specialisations of the Mechanical engineering field of study.
- (d) Updating of the curricula of all the other specialisations (not mentioned above) by VET teachers specially appointed for this purpose.
- (e) Upgrading of the workshops for the specialisation Design of furniture and wooden constructions.
- (f) Upgrading of software used for subjects of the Mechanical engineering field of study.

- (g) Purchase of drones, computers and robotic arms for the needs of various VET specialisations.
- (h) Purchase of equipment for upgrading the dairy laboratory.
- (i) Publicity and promotion campaigns using the services of a contractor (purchase of services; this contract has been renewed annually since 2018).
- (j) Creation of registers of instructors (valid until 2023) to teach, through the procedure of purchasing services, at various VET pathways, such as the public schools of higher VET (MIEEK), the lifelong learning programmes of VET, the apprenticeship system and the Cosmetology-hairdressing field of study, and the Maritime professions field of study. The instructors included in the registers come from the industry sector and have knowledge in specific educational subjects.
- (k) Purchase of services from a designer in order to upgrade and design high technology workshops.

In line with the implementation of the project Further development of technical and vocational education and training for the period 2021-27, setting up two new VET schools was implemented under the authority of the Department of Technical Services of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MESY), in cooperation with the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training. The Department of Technical Services has great experience in architectural, structural, electrical and mechanical studies, the implementation and supervision of construction projects and material control, upgrading of school building structures, surveys and various construction projects. This development is part of Cyprus' Recovery and Resilience Plan and the Cohesion Policy Programme THALIA 2021-2027. Funding is secured to construct two new Technical and Vocational Schools of Education and Training, one in Limassol (in replacement of the A' Technical and Vocational School of Education and Training in Limassol) and one in Larnaca (in replacement of the Ayios Lazaros Technical and Vocational School of Education and Training). The replacement of the two Technical Schools is essential because, these schools could not adequately serve their educational purpose anymore and they were offering minimum flexibility in designing and offering new programmes of study. The two new Technical Schools will serve a large number of enrolled students and adult learners, featuring teaching rooms, labs, multi-purpose halls, sports facilities, staff and management rooms.

2022 Implementation

In 2022, in the context of the project, the following took place.

- (a) Continuation of publicity and promotion campaigns using the services of a contractor (purchase of services).
- (b) Continuation of writing school textbooks and students' exercise books. 17 books were written for the following fields of study: Architecture and civil engineering, Hotel and catering profession, Mechanical engineering and Electrical engineering.
- (c) Continuation of updating of the curricula of specialisations by specially appointed VET teachers.
- (d) The education ministry signed 1-year contracts with various instructors from the industry sector with knowledge in specific educational subjects, who were included in the various registers.
- (e) Continuation of the design of high technology workshops.
- (f) Purchase of librarian services at technical and vocational schools of education and training.
- (g) Continuation of workshop upgrades and equipment supply (robots, robotic arms, computers, interactive screens).
- (h) Supply of books for MIEEK.

A contractor for the external evaluation of MIEEK was selected through a call for tenders. The last evaluation improved the quality of learning provision, thus enabling further development.

Preparatory actions for the designing of the two new VET schools in Limassol and Larnaka started.

2023 Implementation

- (a) Continuation of writing school textbooks and students' exercise books. 30 books were written for the following fields of study: architecture and civil engineering, hotel and catering professions, mechanical engineering and electrical engineering.
- (b) Continuation of updating the curricula of specialisations by specially appointed VET teachers.
- (c) The education ministry signed 1-year contracts with various instructors from the industry sector with knowledge in specific educational subjects, who were included in the various registers.
- (d) Continuation of the design of high technology workshops.
- (e) Purchase of librarian services at technical and vocational schools of education and training.
- (f) Continuation of workshop upgrades and equipment supply.
- (g) Supply of books for the Public School of Higher VET-MIEEKs and fields of study of the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training.
- (h) Development of educational materials for the expansion of the active laboratory system in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Electronic Applications.
- (i) Purchase of services for the digitization of educational content.
- (j) Implementation of public procurement procedures for tenders related to the construction of a new VET school focused on green professions.
- (k) Systematic training of VET instructors on technological developments and new industrial methods and procedures, with the aim of improving the quality of teaching.
- (l) Practical training for the Public School of Higher VET-MIEEK students, as well as in-company training for the apprentices of the apprenticeship system, in order to acquire qualifications for which it is necessary to have specialised hands-on experiences.

The construction of the new VET school in Limassol, included in the Cyprus recovery and resilience plan (RRP), began on 1 March 2023, and an amount of more than EUR 4 million was already spent. Regarding the second new VET school in Larnaca, the project was included in the Cohesion Policy Programme THALIA 2021-27, focusing on green professions. The deadline for tender submissions was on 27 October 2023, and the bid expiration date was on 26 April 2024.

2024 Implementation

In 2024, in the context of the project, the following actions were implemented:

- (a) continuation of workshop upgrades and equipment supply;
- (b) continuation of publicity and promotion campaigns, using the services of a contractor (purchase of services).

The contractor for the external evaluation of MIEEK in the context of the implementation of the contract, delivered the final report on the results of the aforementioned evaluation. The results of the final report were presented publicly, and actions have already been planned for their further utilisation. The last evaluation improved the quality of learning provision, thus enabling further development of the Public School of Higher VET (MIEEK).

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MESY)
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth (MoECSY) (until 2022)
- Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) (until 2019)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)
Adult learners

Entities providing VET

Companies
Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Optimising VET funding
Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET
Establishing and developing skills intelligence systems

Modernising VET infrastructure

Modernising infrastructure for vocational training

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses
Developing and updating learning resources and materials
Acquiring key competences
Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

VET as a driver for innovation and growth preparing for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand

VET as an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training and skills

Osnabrück Declaration

Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

Public procurement service webpage: procurement for purchasing robotic arms

Public procurement service webpage: procurement for purchasing equipment and services for Department of Secondary Vocational and Technical Education and Training (DoSVET)

Public procurement service webpage: procurement for purchasing equipment for state-of-the art laboratory

Public procurement service webpage: procurement for purchasing equipment and services for Department of Secondary Vocational and Technical Education and Training (DoSVET)

Public procurement service webpage: procurement for purchasing equipment for state-of-the art laboratory

Public procurement service webpage: procurement for purchasing books for MIEEK and fields of study of the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

Public procurement service webpage: procurement for the construction of a new VET school focused on green professions

Public procurement service webpage: procurement for purchasing equipment for Department of Secondary Vocational and Technical Education and Training (DoSVET)

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Public procurement service webpage: procurement for purchasing services of publicity and promotion campaigns

Announcement by the Ministry of Education, Sport, and Youth regarding the building infrastructure and maintenance of public schools for the start of the academic year 2024/25

Related policy developments

2023 Completed

External evaluation of the Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training (MIEEK)

The contractor, in the context of the implementation of the contract, is expected to examine various factors and, more specifically, to produce:

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2024 Implementation**Development and management of the alumni community platform**

The online alumni community platform is a network of graduates from all the pathways offered by the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training. It will give VET graduates the opportunity to stay engaged with the department.



CYPRUS

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/44638>