

Modernising VET provision, curricula, examination and recognition of prior learning

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 LATVIA

Timeline

2016 Implementation	2017 Implementation	2018 Implementation
2019 Implementation	2020 Implementation	2021 Implementation
2022 Implementation	2023 Implementation	2024 Implementation

ID number 37689

Background

There is a need to shift from subject-based approach to competence-based and modular VET. In addition, systemic approaches for upskilling adults are needed.

Objectives

To improve approaches to developing and implementing VET curricula and examination as well as recognition of prior learning.

Description

VET provision, curricula, examination

In December 2016, the ESF project 'Development of sectoral qualifications system for vocational education development and quality assurance' was launched to develop new occupational standards and modular VET programmes for most of professional qualifications (sectoral qualifications).

In 2017, amendments to the Vocational Education Law specified the legal framework for the modularisation of VET programmes. VET modules were included in the State vocational education standards and VET providers started issuing a new type of certificate indicating the programme, module(s), achieved learning outcomes and their assessment.

The Cabinet of Ministers 13 June 2017 Regulations No 322 On the Classification of Education in Latvia determining the classification of education in Latvia included descriptions of knowledge, skills and competences in correspondence to the LQF levels.

The Amendments in Vocational Education Law (2022) envisaged continuing and improving the reform of the curricula of vocational education including in connection with professional qualifications in the framework of Latvian qualifications, improving the regulation regarding

modular vocational education programmes, the principles and procedures for accumulating, transferring and recognising the achieved learning outcomes, and documents certifying the acquisition of parts of professional qualifications.

Validation

By 2017, validation of prior learning was available for 155 professional qualifications. An amendment to the Procedures for organising and financing active employment measures were adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers, aiming to compensate the cost of the qualification examination for validation of non-formal and informal learning for the unemployed. Since then, a 90% compensation of the validation cost is awarded to people in employment within the framework of the ESF project on improving the professional competence of employees. Those who have been recognised as in a situation of low-income can be compensated 100%.

In 2018, the Self-assessment report *Implementation of validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes in Latvia* was published and presented to the European Commission's EQF advisory group.

Since 2022, all VET providers can offer validation of prior learning.

2016 Implementation

In 2016, implementation of the ESF project 'Development of sectoral qualifications system for vocational education development and quality assurance' started.

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

Cabinet of Ministers' Regulation of 3 September 2019 No 416 *Regulations on State general secondary education standards and samples of general secondary education programmes* and Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 2 June 2020 No 332 *Regulations on the State vocational secondary education standard and the State vocational education standard* were approved.

Regulations of the Ministry of Education and Science No 11 of 7 May 2019 *Procedure for development of vocational education programmes* were adopted.

68 modular vocational education programmes have been developed for 72 professional qualifications.

Regulations Amendments to Cabinet Regulation No 207 of 28 April 2015 were adopted introducing a new support activity: provision of an individual approach to continuing vocational education or for the acquisition of a professional qualification or assessment of skills.

2020 Implementation

21 new modular education programmes have been developed for 52 professional qualifications; education institutions implemented 269 modular vocational education programmes offering to obtain 79 professional qualifications.

Amendments to the government regulations were adopted allowing the introduction of a new supported activity within the project: implementation of professional development education programmes for the development of professional foreign language, digital and entrepreneurship skills.

The revision process started, and validation of prior learning was offered by 37 competent authorities.

2021 Implementation

In 2021, within the framework of the ESF project '*The effective management of vocational education institutions and improvement of staff competence*', 50 State vocational education programmes were developed, published, and applied in initial and continuing VET. This has diversified the offer, improved the quality of education and reduced the administrative burden for licensing the education programmes

30 education institutions acquired the rights for the validation of professional competences gained outside formal education in 124 qualifications. 575 persons have acquired a qualification certificate in the validation process. From 2011 to 2021, 7 920 persons have acquired a qualification certificate as a result of a validation process.

2022 Implementation

Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 752 of 29 November 2022 'The Content and Procedures for the examination of professional qualifications' facilitated the organisational progress of the examination by using the State Examination Information System (VPIS), reducing the number of documents to be developed to ensure the conduct of examinations, as well as facilitating the introduction of new forms of examinations, and their digitalisation.

In 2022, amendments to the Vocational education law were approved. They determined that the assessment of professional competence acquired outside the formal education system is carried out by accredited professional education institutions and other accredited professional education institutions established by the State, municipalities and State universities. Assessment can also be delegated to accredited private VET providers and examination centres.

In 2022, the ESF project 'The effective management of vocational education institutions and improvement of staff competence' was completed. It supported creation of an independent system that can quickly respond to labor market demand by regularly evaluating and updating the VET content in accordance with the regularly updated structure of sectoral qualifications. The main project results included creating qualification structures of 14 sectors, 202 professional standards / qualification requirements, exams for 206 professional qualifications and 29 teaching aids.

2023 Implementation

To ensure the quality of VET curricula, 102 State approved sample programmes for 187 professional qualifications were designed and published on the National Centre for Education (VISC) homepage. The sample programmes have been regularly updated. Introducing the state-approved curricula helps VET providers, which can use modular and outcome-based sample programmes in designing their programmes. VET schools have to design only programme implementation plans.

The 2023 Government regulation No 52 on State-recognised documents of vocational training and qualifications, module certificates and evidence of completion of part of a vocational training programme ensures that learners can now receive a State-recognised document not only for the acquisition of the entire professional qualification, but also for its part(s). In case of dropping out of the education and training system, learners can receive a document certifying their learning outcomes and improving their chances of finding a job.

Since 2023, VET graduates can receive two documents: a diploma of vocational secondary education and a certificate of a professional qualification. This allows a distinction between documents certifying vocational education and a professional qualification, and each of them can now be obtained separately.

The access to learning in the perspective of lifelong learning is ensured via the 2023 Government Regulation No 70 on recognition of competences for admission to the later stages of VET. The regulation stipulates that individuals can be accepted in later stages of a VET programme, e.g., after a break or after obtaining another professional

qualification, after their professional competences acquired outside the formal education system are recognised through a formal process. This also enables a smoother transfer from one VET school to another or from one VET programme to another. The new regulation promotes a gradual learning results' accumulation mechanism for professional qualifications.

In 2023, State Education Information System (VIIS) was modernised to ensure the implementation of the functions of the State, municipalities and educational institutions. The system allows to obtain data on all levels of education, all types of formal education and partially covers non-formal education. Currently, more than 70 institutions exchange the data within the system. The system also makes the education data accessible to public, including indicators and analyses. Since 2023, the gradual transition to electronic delivery of VET education documents has been implemented. The certificates of professional qualifications are now issued electronically.

Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 804, 19 December 2023 approved European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027, Specific Support Objective 4.2.2 "To improve the quality, inclusion, efficiency and labour market relevance of education and training systems, including through the validation of non-formal and informal learning to support the acquisition of key competences, including entrepreneurship and digital skills, and by promoting the introduction of dual learning systems and apprenticeships' rules for the implementation of the first round of calls for proposals for measure 2.2.9 'Personalisation of the learning process and trans-sectoral cooperation for excellence in vocational education'. The aim of the first round of the measure in 2024-29 is to develop a systematic coordination mechanism for the development of vocational education curricula and to ensure cooperation between vocational education institutions and sectors in the implementation of vocational education content, identifying skills relevant to the labour market and introducing skills into VET curricula for sustainability, digital and green economy and to ensure the development of a cooperation and implementation model for work-based learning in VET.

2024 Implementation

On 20 February 2024, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted regulation No. 110 on the national standard for continuing professional education and professional development education. It expanded adult education and included EQF/LQF levels 2-8. Technical schools and art competence centres became also entitled to implement continuing vocational education programmes enabling the acquisition of EQF/LQF level 5 professional qualifications.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Science
- National Centre for Education (VISC)
- Ministry of Welfare
- Ministry of Economics
- State Education Development Agency (VIAA)
- State Education Quality Service (IKVD)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

Adult learners

Persons in employment, including those at risk of unemployment

Low-skilled/qualified persons

Learners from other groups at risk of exclusion (minorities, people with fewer opportunities due to geographical location or social-economic disadvantaged position)

Education professionals

Teachers
Trainers
Adult educators

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses
Using learning-outcome-based approaches and modularisation

Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Learners' possibilities of accumulation, validation and recognition of learning outcomes acquired non-formally and informally

European and international dimensions of VET

VET internationalisation strategies

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

Flexibility and progression opportunities at the core of VET

Osnabrück Declaration

European Education and Training Area and international VET

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Introducing modular vocational education and training \(VET\) programmes helps VET become more flexible, responsive to labour market needs and attractive; Cedefop news item 2017](#)

[Vocational education law \(in Latvian\)](#)

[Cabinet of Ministers regulation of 13 October 2020 No 633 Procedures for the development of a professional standard, professional qualification requirements \(in force until 1/6/23\)](#)

[Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 2 June 2020 No 332 Regulations on the State vocational secondary education standard](#)

Regulation No 416 of 3 September 2019 Regulations regarding the State general secondary education standards and model general secondary education programmes

The 2018 self-assessment report Implementation of validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes in Latvia

Latvia: demand for validation of non-formal and informal learning increases. Cedefop news 2019

Regulations on nationally recognised documents certifying vocational training and professional qualifications, module certificates and documents certifying completion of part of a vocational training programme

Regulations on the recognition of a person's competence for admission to the later stages of a vocational training programme and the procedure for the recognition of a vocational qualification or part thereof

National standard for continuing professional education and professional development

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

Amendments to the VET law

Amendments to the law should allow students to receive a State-recognised partial vocational qualifications, thus promoting a competence-based approach in VET.

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Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

VET sectoral qualifications

Since 2016 the National Centre for Education (VISC) has been developing sectoral qualifications frameworks as part of vocational education reform supported by a 2016-21 ESF project.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2021 Completed

The 2015-17 implementation plan for the 2014-20 Education development guidelines

The implementation plan adopted in June 2015 provides directions for improving the access to education and preventing early school leaving from general and vocational education, especially for young people subjected to social exclusion.

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Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). Modernising VET provision, curricula, examination and recognition of prior learning: Latvia. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2024 update) [Online tool].

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