

VET system development programme 2016-20



Timeline



ID number 28826

Background

The 2014 Strategy for education, science and technology foresaw the adoption of the VET system development programme 2016-20 which would elaborate a strategic framework for VET in detail. The programme is in line with the Strategy for education, science and technology and relies on the European strategic framework for VET, including medium-term deliverables of the Riga conclusions.

Objectives

The priorities of the VET system development programme 2016-20 are directed at increasing relevance, quality, excellence, attractiveness and inclusion, as well as the international dimension of VET.

Description

The VET system development programme 2016-20 provides the strategic framework for VET development and reform. The programme was adopted by the Croatian Government in September 2016 and a related action plan was adopted two months later by the ministry responsible for education. It is planned according to the following principles:

- (a) quality assurance, which will increase the transparency of VET, strengthen confidence in the system and lifelong learning;
- (b) partnerships, which will ensure and promote the inclusion of all stakeholders in all phases of planning, implementation and monitoring of VET;
- (c) inclusion, which will strengthen the importance of VET in reducing the risk of social exclusion of vulnerable and underrepresented groups;
- (d) relevance, which will ensure that VET is based on analyses of labour market needs, progression and personal development;
- (e) focus on learning outcomes and developing competences for successful inclusion in the labour market and lifelong learning;
- (f) coherence with different levels and types of education and training.

The programme addresses four priorities with corresponding goals and measures. These are:

Priority 1. Improving the relevance of VET in relation to the labour market;

Goal 1.1. VET directed towards the labour market needs;

- (a) measure 1.1. development, adoption and implementation of the National curriculum for vocational education;
- (b) measure 1.2. development, adoption and monitoring of implementation of sector curricula and/or curricula for attaining VET qualifications;

Goal 1.2. Establishment of a rational and effective network of vocational schools and programmes;

- (a) measure 1.3. rationalisation of a network of vocational schools and programmes;
- (b) measure 1.4. establishment of regional centres of competence;

Priority 2. Improving the quality of VET

Goal 2.1. structuring a coherent quality assurance system in VET;

- (a) measure 2.1. establishment of a unified quality assurance system in VET;
- (b) measure 2.2. modernisation of the self-assessment model and establishment of links with external evaluation of education providers;
- (c) measure 2.3. use of mechanisms for monitoring VET quality and efficiency and system improvement based on measurable indicators;
- (d) measure 2.4. strengthening capacities of VET providers for implementing a unified quality assurance system in VET;

Goal 2.2. improving the system of continuous professional development in VET;

- (a) measure 2.5. strengthening the capacities of VET teachers;
- (b) measure 2.6. strengthening the capacities of workplace mentors;

Priority 3. Promoting excellence, attractiveness and inclusiveness of VET;

Goal 3.1. strengthening excellence and attractiveness of VET;

- (a) measure 3.1. promotion of VET learner skills, modernisation and promotion of VET and skills;
- (b) measure 3.2. support to innovations and VET school projects aimed at strengthening the capacities and ensuring relevant, creative and modern VET in partnership with businesses and the wider community;
- (c) measure 3.3. improving career guidance system;
- (d) measure 3.4. incentives for programmes and projects supporting the inclusion of all groups at risk of early school leaving;

Priority 4. internationalisation of VET and promotion of international mobility of learners and teachers;

Goal 4.1. strengthened international relevance of VET;

- (a) measure 4.1. development and improvement of opportunities for greater mobility of learners and teachers;
- (b) measure 4.2. support to the international dimension of VET.

2016 Approved/Agreed
2017 Implementation
2018 Implementation
2019 Implementation

Further details on 2019 developments are described in the following related policy developments.

- (a) National curriculum for VET (goal 1.1., measure 1.1.)
- (b) Development of occupational standards (goal 1.1., measure 1.2.)
- (c) Regional centres of competences (goal 1.2., measure 1.4.)
- (d) Improving VET school self-assessment (goal 2.1., measures 2.2. and 2.4.)
- (e) VET graduates tracking (goal 2.1., measure 2.3.)
- (f) Modernising VET teacher CPD system (goal 2.2., measure 2.5.; in part also goal 3.1., measure 3.2.)
- (g) Redefining career advancements system for VET teachers (goal 2.2., measure 2.5.; in part also goal 3.1., measure 3.2.)
- (h) Amendments to the Crafts Act (in part goal 2.2., measure 2.6.)
- (i) Reformed model of skills competitions (goal 3.1., measure 3.1.)
- (j) Promotion of ECVET in learner mobility (goal 4.1., measure 4.1.)

2020 Implementation

Further details on 2020 developments are described in the following related policy developments:

- (a) National curriculum for VET (goal 1.1., measure 1.1.)
- (b) Development of occupational standards (goal 1.1., measure 1.2.)
- (c) Regional centres of competences (goal 1.2., measure 1.4.)
- (d) Improving VET school self-assessment (goal 2.1., measures 2.2. and 2.4.)
- (e) VET graduates tracking (goal 2.1., measure 2.3.)
- (f) Modernising VET teacher CPD system (goal 2.2., measure 2.5.; in part also goal 3.1., measure 3.2.)
- (g) Reformed model of skills competitions (goal 3.1., measure 3.1.)
- (h) Promotion of ECVET in learner mobility (goal 4.1., measure 4.1.)

2021 Implementation

Further details on 2021 developments are described in the following related policy developments:

- (a) National curriculum for VET (goal 1.1., measure 1.1.)
- (b) Development of occupational standards (goal 1.1., measure 1.2.)
- (c) Regional centres of competences (goal 1.2., measure 1.4.)
- (d) Improving VET school self-assessment (goal 2.1., measures 2.2. and 2.4.)
- (e) VET graduates tracking (goal 2.1., measure 2.3.)
- (f) Modernising VET teacher CPD system (goal 2.2., measure 2.5.; in part also goal 3.1., measure 3.2.)
- (g) Reformed model of skills competitions (goal 3.1., measure 3.1.)
- (h) Promotion of ECVET in learner mobility (goal 4.1., measure 4.1.)

2022 Implementation

Further details on 2022 developments are described in the following related policy developments:

- (a) National curriculum for VET (goal 1.1., measure 1.1.)
- (b) Development of occupational standards (goal 1.1., measure 1.2.)
- (c) Regional centres of competences (goal 1.2., measure 1.4.)
- (d) Improving VET school self-assessment (goal 2.1., measures 2.2. and 2.4.)
- (e) VET graduates tracking (goal 2.1., measure 2.3.)
- (f) Modernising VET teacher CPD system (goal 2.2., measure 2.5.; in part also goal 3.1., measure 3.2.)
- (g) Reformed model of skills competitions (goal 3.1., measure 3.1.)
- (h) Promotion of ECVET in learner mobility (goal 4.1., measure 4.1.)

2023 Completed

The first stage of the implementation of the main reform initiatives linked to the VET System Development Programme 2016-20 and funded through the ESF was completed in 2023 (specifically, the flagship initiatives such as the VET curricula reform, skills competitions, and regional centres of competences). The second stage of the reform initiatives in VET is linked to the new strategic framework for VET - the National Education System Development Plan for the period up to 2027 (see related policy development). The funding support from the ESF+ will continue for the main initiatives throughout 2029. Further details on 2023 developments are described in the following related policy developments:

- (a) National curriculum for VET (goal 1.1., measure 1.1.)
- (b) Development of occupational standards (goal 1.1., measure 1.2.)
- (c) Regional centres of competences (goal 1.2., measure 1.4.)
- (d) Improving VET school self-assessment (goal 2.1., measures 2.2. and 2.4.)
- (e) VET graduates tracking (goal 2.1., measure 2.3.)
- (f) Modernising VET teacher CPD system (goal 2.2., measure 2.5.; in part also goal 3.1., measure 3.2.)
- (g) Reformed model of skills competitions (goal 3.1., measure 3.1.)
- (h) Promotion of ECVET in learner mobility (goal 4.1., measure 4.1.)

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Science, Education and Youth (MZOM)
- Agency for VET and Adult Education (ASOO)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers
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
School leaders

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies
Optimising VET funding
Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET
Further developing national quality assurance systems

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses
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

Lifelong guidance

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

European and international dimensions of VET

VET internationalisation strategies

Mobility of learners and staff

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[VET system development programme 2016-20 \(unofficial translation to English\)](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

VET curricula reform

The most comprehensive update of VET curricula in over two decades in Croatia began in 2018 with the adoption of the National Curriculum for VET and continued within the framework of the project Modernisation of the VET System, supported by EUR 17.7 million from the European Social Fund (ESF) and

 CROATIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Development of occupational standards

From March 2015 until June 2016, HZZ developed and conducted occupational standards survey for 50 occupations. The results were used as an analytical basis for the development of occupational standards and disseminated through 60 workshops throughout Croatia.

 CROATIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

2025 Pilot

VET graduate tracking

In the framework of the Erasmus+ grant Support to European quality assurance in vocational education and training: national reference points (2017-19), the Agency for VET and Adult Education (ASOO) developed a model for school-based VET student tracking upon completion of formal education.

 CROATIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

2025 Implementation

Improving quality assurance mechanisms in IVET

The Agency for VET and Adult Education (ASOO) conducted continuous monitoring of the self-assessment of VET schools and analysing existing self-assessment mechanisms.

 CROATIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Reformed model of skills competitions

In January 2017, an initiative on Promoting student competences and VET through skills competitions and fairs was launched to modernise VET student skills competitions in Croatia and encourage participation in national and international skills competitions.

 CROATIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

2022 Discontinued

Promotion of ECVET in learner mobility

A national ECVET portal was developed in 2016. A growing number of Croatian institutions are recognising the benefits of ECVET. Amendments to the VET Act from 2018 stipulated that VET students can acquire learning outcomes during periods of international mobility.

 CROATIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

2018 Approved/Agreed

National curriculum for VET

The National curriculum for VET (*Nacionalni kurikulum za strukovno obrazovanje*) was adopted in July 2018, as the common framework for the development of VET curricula (at CROQF/EQF levels 2-5) in Croatia.

 CROATIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Redefining career advancements system for VET teachers

The 2019 framework for career advancement and rewards to teachers encourages mentorship and peer collaboration, teaching innovation, CPD, production of teaching resources and open digital education content, participation in projects, as well as contribution to the education system through engagement

 CROATIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

2025 Implementation

Modernising the VET teacher CPD system

The project Modernisation of the continuing professional development (CPD) system for VET teachers started in June 2017 and lasted until 2021.

 CROATIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2025 Implementation

Regional centres of competences

In July 2018, following a public call procedure, the ministry responsible for education appointed 25 VET schools as the future regional centres of competences in Croatia. Selection criteria included:

 CROATIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28826>