

# Sectoral practical training centres (SPTCs)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 LITHUANIA

## Timeline

2015 Implementation	2016 Implementation	2017 Implementation
2018 Implementation	2019 Implementation	2020 Implementation
2021 Implementation	2022 Implementation	2023 Implementation
2024 Implementation	2025 Implementation	

ID number 28326

## Background

Sectoral practical training centres (*Sektoriniai praktinio mokymo centrai*) were established on the basis of a concept paper (2007) and as part of the national development programme (2008). They built on the concept of specialised training workshops previously set up at VET institutions. The first two SPTCs were established in 2012, with 42 in place by 2015 in a variety of sectors: agriculture (4), engineering (5), energetics (3), transport (4), motor vehicle repair (3), wholesale and retail trade services (3), construction (8), hospitality (5), beauty services (3), textiles (1), the wood industry (1) and food production (2). These training centres were established during the implementation of measures included in the 2007-13 programming period for EU financial assistance (phase No 1 of implementation).

## Objectives

Their main aim of policy in this area is to provide state-of-the art technologies and equipment in physical environments to learners engaged in VET to help them acquire skills for jobs. The idea was that specialists trained at centres would better meet the needs of the labour market and employers, as well as more quickly find a job that matches their qualifications and adapt more easily to specific workplaces. A further expectation was that use of these centres' infrastructure would significantly improve the quality of practical VET education and increase the efficiency of the training process. The overall goal of the centres is to increase the availability of high-quality VET and better respond to labour market demands.

## Description

In May 2016, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport carried out a review of EU investments in the VET system for the 2014-20 period. This analysed results from the previous programming period and new proposals, as well as labour market (regional) trends and forecasts. It also offered suggestions for improving the provision of practical training in IVET, either in sectoral practical training centres or other training institutions. The review

proposed that selected sectoral training centres should become competence centres with extended responsibilities, including the piloting of new training methods and programmes, support for the continuing professional development of VET teachers, the training of employees and higher-education students, and the handling of career education for students in general education. The 2017-20 action plan for lifelong learning includes measures for the development of sectoral practical training centres. It provided that, taking into account the demographic situation in Lithuania and the trends in the country's economic sectors, only 22 SPTCs would be further developed in different cities. It was decided that it was particularly important to create preconditions for using the training services at these centres to enable the largest possible flow of students, as well as facilitating short stays for those coming from remote areas of the country. During the course of implementation of measures in the EU's 2014-20 programming period, these 22 SPTCs have been further improving the practical training infrastructure and renovating dormitories managed by the relevant VET institutions (phase two of implementation).

The piloting of the new approach started in 2018, focusing on three competence centres covering the widest variety of sectors with the highest number of qualifications: accommodation and catering; construction; and engineering.

Since 2018, within the framework of the 2018-22 ESF project for the development of a national system for assessing and recognising competences and professional qualifications, coordinated by the Qualifications and VET Development Centre (KPMPC), 18 SPTCs have been selected to become assessment centres. In parallel, a model for the assessment of competences and the recognition of qualifications is being developed. It has been stipulated that it is important for this to be designed in such a way that allows for the assessment and recognition of competences acquired through informal and non-formal learning, and so that it is optimally adapted not only to the needs of clients looking to improve their qualifications, but also to those seeking retraining. In this way, it will allow the country to focus on increasing the opportunities for lifelong learning and rapid retraining among people of working age in cases where they lose their job or the parameters of their role change significantly due to rapid technological change and economic trends.

#### **2015 Implementation**

#### **2016 Implementation**

#### **2017 Implementation**

#### **2018 Implementation**

#### **2019 Implementation**

After the completion of the inspection of SPTC development projects in 2018 and the signing of financing agreements, the years 2019-21 are dedicated to the implementation of these projects. There were no significant changes in the SPTC network in 2019, as the procurement procedures for the first investments of the project (acquisition of equipment and inventory or infrastructure development works) took a particularly long time.

In parallel with this project, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports of the Republic of Lithuania is preparing a draft description of the procedure for assessing the competences acquired by a person. Its latest version in August 2020 was still being discussed and agreed with the social partners. Thus, the new competence assessment mechanism has not yet been approved and no SPTC acts as a competence assessment body for graduates of other VET institutions.

#### **2020 Implementation**

In 2020, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports approved a new procedure for the assessment of acquired competences, according to which a VET diploma is issued. This procedure will come in force from 1 September 2021. Possibilities to participate in the assessment of competences will extend to self-trained candidates who have acquired professional competences through apprenticeships, work experience, self-

education, and non-formal learning. The competence assessment will be organised by the KPMPC. Accredited institutions uniting and representing employers' associations will delegate experts (practitioners and professionals of the sector from companies) to the competence assessment commissions, to assist in the preparation of the assessments. Candidates will be required not only to complete practical skills related tasks but also to take a standardised test on the theoretical part of competences to assess basic knowledge. This test will be performed centrally through an electronic testing system administered by the National Education Agency. The practical part of the assessment will take place in the sectoral practical training centres (SPTCs).

In 2020, ESF funding was allocated to increase the relevance of VET and adult education to the labour market and attractiveness by supporting and promoting the acquisition of practical skills in the workplace and sectoral practical training centres. A national mobility scheme has been set up to support the practical skills of VET students at SPTCs. For this action EUR 3.62 million were allocated from ESF funding.

### **2021 Implementation**

In 2021, the earlier funded projects were implemented consistently and the infrastructure of sectoral practical training centres was strengthened. As from September 2021, the centres provide their facilities and staff for the running of competence assessment examinations organised by the KPMPC in line with the new legislation on competence assessments in VET approved in 2020.

The national mobility initiative was also further developed; it is planned that it would cover travelling within Lithuania, accommodation costs and teachers' working hours. The aim of the initiative is to enable short-term visits of trainees and teachers from vocational training institutions, which do not have a sectoral training centre for relevant training programmes, to sectoral training centres for practical training and introduction to new technologies and equipment.

### **2022 Implementation**

Since 2022, a new funding initiative for the SPTC with the title 'Acquire practical skills through training in SPTC's' is implemented with the support of NextGeneration EU funding. The call for projects is aimed to help to acquire practical skills in SPTCs and enables short-term visits of trainees and teachers from VET institutions which do not have an SPTC for relevant training programmes. Learners have practical training during this short time mobility and teachers can have seminars introducing new technologies and equipment in related economy sectors.

VET centres not having their own SPTC but providing the training in the same economy sector have a possibility to send trainees and teachers to SPTC in other part of Lithuania for short term practice mobility and afterwards apply to cover the expenses. Project funding covers:

- (a) expenses intended for practical training in the SPTCs in line with the fixed unit costs for the mobility of students of VET institutions to SPTCs),
- (b) expenses resulting from dissemination/provision of information about the projects,
- (c) indirect costs and other costs according to the fixed rate of project costs.

The calls will be periodically (several times a year) open till 2026. Fundings are based on a study determining fixed unit costs for the mobility of students from VET institutions to SPTCs, which enabled the establishment of fixed cost rates for training in the SPTCs.

### **2023 Implementation**

New calls for the project applications for national mobility aimed to help acquire practical skills in sectoral practical training centres (SPTCs) and enable short-term training visits of trainees and teachers from VET institutions that do not have an SPTC,

were launched in September 2023. 43 VET institutions participated in the call out of 44. These mobilities allow students, teachers, and trainers to use the latest equipment, acquire practical skills, and improve their digital skills. It is planned to include 12 394 students of VET institutions in the project (from which at least 40% will improve digital skills). The project covers the costs of accommodation, transport, catering, the wages of the staff of the host VET institutions and the purchase of the necessary tools for practical training.

### **2024 Implementation**

The call for project applications for national mobility in sectoral practical training centres (SPTCs) continued in 2024. Results from the previous year showed that 3 414 students from 43 VET centres had the opportunity to undertake practical training in the modern training facilities of other institutions.

### **2025 Implementation**

During the reporting period, three calls for applications were announced under the joint project 'Acquire practical skills through training in SPTC's' (No. 10-025-J-0001). For the 2024/25 academic year, two calls resulted in 3 800 students from all VET institutions in Lithuania participating in practical training. A total of EUR 2 million was allocated for this initiative. The final call for joint project applications was announced in September 2025, and 27 applications were received. These are expected to support the practical skills development of 4 000 students in the 2025/26 academic year.

In December 2024, the project 'Investments in VET Infrastructure in Central and Western Lithuania' (No. 10-021-P-0001) was launched to assess investment needs in VET infrastructure. The analysis considered equipment shortages, regional development plans, municipal strategies, employment services, and other relevant data. The European Union and co-financing sources fund the project. The comprehensive analysis is now complete and includes information about future steps.

## **Bodies responsible**

- Qualifications and VET Development Centre (KPMPC)
- European Social Fund Agency (ESFA)

## **Target group**

### **Learners**

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

Young people (15-29 years old)

Adult learners

Persons in employment, including those at risk of unemployment

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

## **Thematic categories**

### **Modernising VET infrastructure**

Modernising infrastructure for vocational training

### **Modernising VET offer and delivery**

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

### **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

Flexibility and progression opportunities at the core of VET

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

Establishing a new lifelong learning culture - relevance of continuing VET and digitalisation

## **Subsystem**

IVET CVET

## **Further reading**

[Cedefop ReferNet Lithuania \(2012\) Two practical training centres opened](#)

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[Cedefop ReferNet Lithuania \(2016\) 42 modern practical training centres established](#)

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[ESF projects on Development of Sectoral practical training centres \(SPTCs\) \(only in Lithuanian\)](#)

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[ESF projects on Supporting and promoting the acquisition of practical skills \(only in Lithuanian\)](#)

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[Call for the national mobility programme](#)

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[Information about the 2023 call on National mobility programme for practical training at SPTC](#)

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[Information about the joint project 'Acquire practical skills through training in SPTC's' and calls \(only in Lithuanian\)](#)

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[Information about the project 'Investments in VET Infrastructure in Central and Western Lithuania' \(only in Lithuanian\)](#)

## Related policy developments

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2025 Implementation

### CPD system for VET teachers

In October 2016, a national-level project was launched with the aim of creating a CPD system for vocational teachers and adult educators.

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#### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

#### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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2025 Implementation

### Upskilling people in employment

A range of projects for continuing vocational education and training (CVET) were planned within the 2014-20 ESF programming period under the responsibility of the Ministry of Economy and Innovation.

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#### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

#### Subsystem

CVET

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2025 Implementation

### Competence assessment and validation arrangements

In 2016, to address the problem that non-formal training for unemployed adults organised by the public employment service (the Lithuanian labour exchange) did not lead to formal qualifications, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport agreed to enable validation and

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#### Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

#### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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**2021 Completed**

## The 2017-20 action plan for lifelong learning

A 2017-20 action plan for lifelong learning was adopted by the Ministry of Education and Science in June 2017, and was later amended in December 2017. The plan replaced the former 2014-16 action plan for VET development and, in part, the 2014-16 action plan for non-formal adult education.

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### Type of development

Strategy/Action  
plan

### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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**2025 Implementation**

## Promote vocational training in the form of apprenticeship

Legislation in 2015 introduced provisions for the implementation of apprenticeships. It stipulated that apprenticeships can be organised by a VET institution together with employers, with practice and theory to be provided in alternating periods at the company and VET provider.

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### Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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