

General education subject curriculum updates / new curricula supporting key competences

POLICY DEVELOPMENT**PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE** CROATIA

Timeline

**ID number 28269**

Background

As foreseen by the 2014 Strategy for education, science and technology, the curriculum reform introduced a comprehensive redesign of curricula in primary and secondary education. As part of the reform, the National curriculum for VET was adopted in 2018. For general education subjects, curricula were developed for cross-curricular study fields and individual subjects for general education on the primary and secondary levels and for VET on the secondary level.

Objectives

Curriculum reform aims to modernise teaching and learning in general education at primary and secondary levels; it affects general education subjects in VET only at CROQF level 4.2 / EQF level 4.

Description

The curriculum reform in general education subjects, which was piloted in primary and secondary schools in 2018/19 ('School for life'), was implemented in all schools as of 2019/20.

In VET, four general education subject curricula (Mathematics, Croatian and foreign languages) have been revised for four-year VET programmes at CROQF level 4.2 / EQF level 4 in 2017-18.

Resources for the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the reform process were mobilised, including the European Structural and Investment Funds, the State budget and the technical assistance of the European Commission from 2018 to 2021.

2017 Design

2019 Implementation

In VET, four general education subject curricula (Mathematics, Croatian and foreign languages) have been adopted in 2019 for four-year VET programmes at CROQF level 4.2 / EQF level 4.

Also, in 2019, seven curricula for cross-curricular study fields were adopted, introducing transversal competences in primary and upper-secondary education, both in general education and in VET:

- (a) learning to learn;
- (b) entrepreneurship;
- (c) personal and social development;
- (d) health;
- (e) sustainable development;
- (f) use of information and communication technology (ICT);
- (g) civic education.

With the adoption of the curricula, the education reform reached the key milestone for the mainstream introduction of curriculum reform in all schools, including general education subjects in VET, as of school year 2019/20, to be introduced in stages to reach full implementation in all grades of primary and secondary school by 2021/22.

2020 Implementation

The curriculum reform is being introduced in general education subjects as foreseen.

2021 Implementation

The curriculum reform is being introduced in general education subjects as foreseen.

2022 Implementation

The Agency for VET and Adult Education produced guidelines for the development of general education subjects in vocational curricula, which serve as a basis for the revision of general education subjects in VET.

2023 Implementation

As part of the VET curriculum reform and the project, Modernisation of the VET System (see Development of occupational standards), 31 general education subject curricula, modules, and units of learning outcomes were finalised for IVET qualifications at EQF levels 3 and 4, supporting key competence development in VET.

2024 Implementation

The proposed VET curricula underwent public consultation in May and June 2024. In August 2024, the ministry responsible for education published reports responding to the feedback received during the consultation. Based on the outcomes of the public consultation, working groups began revising the curricula. During the public consultation stage, stakeholders generally acknowledged the benefits of the reform, including its relevance to contemporary labour market needs, the integration of theoretical and practical teaching and learning, enhanced coherence between learning outcomes across different modules, and the introduction of vocational specialisation choices after the first or second year of study, enhancing permeability. However, there were also concerns regarding the effects of reducing and integrating general education content into vocational modules. General education content was harmonised across all qualifications, proportionally to the shares prescribed by the National Curriculum for VET, adopted in 2018. For example, this involved integrating Biology, Chemistry and Physics into vocational modules, while History, Political Science and Economics, and

Geography remained individual subjects. The instruction of general education remained strongly represented in four-year IVET programmes to prepare learners for taking the State Matura exam as many learners from this VET track traditionally continued onto higher education. Introducing the new curricula in VET schools is planned for the 2025/2026 academic year.

2025 Implementation

147 vocational curricula and 2 general education components were published in the Official Gazette, marking the final prerequisite for introducing the curricula to VET providers in 2025/2026. Full details on introducing new curricula to VET are described under policy development VET curricula reform.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Science, Education and Youth (MZOM)

Target group

Education professionals

Teachers
School leaders

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses
Acquiring key competences

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

Osnabrück Declaration

Sustainability - a green link in VET

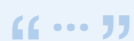
Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

[Official Gazette No 7/2019](#)

[Official Gazette No 10/2019](#)



Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). General education subject curriculum updates / new curricula supporting key competences: Croatia. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28269>