

# ECVET

POLICY DEVELOPMENT
REGULATION/LEGISLATION
 BULGARIA

## Timeline

2016 Approved/Agreed	2017 Implementation	2018 Implementation
2019 Implementation	2020 Implementation	2021 Implementation
2022 Implementation	2023 Implementation	2024 Implementation
2025 Implementation		

**ID number 28059**

## Description

The 2016 amendments of the VET Act regulate the structure of the State education standards for the acquisition of qualifications. The structuring of qualifications in terms of units of learning outcomes is the main principle of ECVET, providing flexible learning pathways. In 2017 and 2018, the number of the State education standards (SES) described as units of learning outcomes increased significantly. The SES were approved by orders of the education minister and were published in the Official Gazette. Pursuant to Art. 13a of the VET Act (amended in 2016), the national methodology for developing the SES was refined. In accordance with the new structure, the SES are developed in terms of units of learning outcomes. NAVET, according to Art. 42 of the VET Act, is the institution responsible for developing/updating the SES. The SES can be found in NAVET’s relevant webpage as well as on the education ministry’s relevant webpage.

<p><b>2016 Approved/Agreed</b></p> <p>The amendments of VET Act were approved.</p>
<p><b>2017 Implementation</b></p>
<p><b>2018 Implementation</b></p>
<p><b>2019 Implementation</b></p> <p>In 2019, NAVET, with the experience gained from the project <i>Technical assistance in the implementation of the National qualifications framework in VET</i>-financed by the European Commission (EC) under the <i>Structural reform support programme (SRSP)</i>-applied the SES for the optimisation of VET beyond the three sectors where the SES were initially piloted: textiles, woodworking and electric vehicles. Based on the workshops that were carried out and the experience gained, the document <i>Methodological guidelines for the development of the SES for the acquisition of professional qualifications</i> was drafted and published on NAVET’s website. This document improved the applicability of the approved standards in terms of recognising learning outcomes and developing flexible individualised training programmes for learners over the age of 16. In addition to NAVET and the education ministry, the Human Resources Development Centre (HRDC), within which a national network of</p>

ECVET experts, contributes with the national network of ECVET experts in promoting the benefits of ECVET implementation. The network organised events – seminars, workshops, round tables – with the participation of professional gymnasiums, centres of vocational training, employers, and other stakeholders. In 2019, in accordance with an annual plan, four seminars were held and various promotion materials (brochures, flyers, etc.) were published. NAVET, as a national reference point (NRP) for the implementation of ECVET also contributed to the promotion of the benefits of ECVET through a specially created and maintained rubric on ECVET’s website.. In December 2019, the main stakeholders and professional organisations discussed measures for facilitating the process of ECVET implementation.

### **2020 Implementation**

In 2020, NAVET, together with the HRDC and the education ministry, continued to develop the activities for preparation for the introduction of ECVET at national level. The main part of the activities for the introduction of ECVET was related to the development and updating of the State education standards for acquiring qualifications in professions, with the ECVET principles. In 2020, three online events were held on information, promotion, and practical guidelines on the implementation of ECVET.

### **2021 Implementation**

In 2021, the National VET team was established (members of the team are former ECVET national experts), aiming to introduce successful models of ECVET integration and for contributing in the development of inclusive vocational education and training in Bulgaria, including better implementation of distance learning and training during pandemics.

In 2021, several events were organised as part of the annual plan for development and promotion of VET.

In September 2021, a specialised seminar was held at the Human Resources Development Centre (HRDC) in partnership with NAVET as part of a series of events to improve and promote vocational education and training in Bulgaria. The seminar agenda provided opportunities to discuss the results of successful projects related to monitoring the professional realisation of trainees, quality assurance of VET and the application of ECVET in the creation of new training programmes and State education standards for acquiring qualifications in professions.

In the open format of the event, the need for updated regulations for the award, accumulation, and transfer of credits in the national VET system and the increasingly relevant partnership between vocational and higher education as a means for providing more flexible learning pathways were discussed.

### **2022 Implementation**

In 2022, the issue of transparency and comparability of professional qualifications and the issue of facilitating mobility- especially in the socio-economic context caused after the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the migrant crisis on the European labour market, became the key themes. Another issue that rose was the provision of training opportunities for migrants alongside migrants’ qualifications recognition. VET experts had the opportunity to participate in a series of online events, where leading experts in the field of VET offered ideas and solutions for adapting to the new conditions. Several reports, publications and informational materials of the OECD, Cedefop, the European Commission were reviewed, and their summaries were uploaded to NAVET’s website and to social networks.

In 2022, as part of the annual working plan for the development and promotion of the VET system, the two national VET experts participated in events organised by the Human Resources Development Centre (HRDC). These events had as topics the tools for measuring the quality and impact of the Erasmus+ programme, challenges for VET

in the period of the COVID-19 pandemic and offered the opportunity for sharing practices, solutions, and methods used by educators. A round table on digital skills and using microcredentials was also organised.

### 2023 Implementation

In 2023, as part of the development plan for the VET system, the team of national VET experts participated in activities and events organised by the Human Resources Development Centre (HRDC). The VET development plan is part of the action plan until 2024 accompanying the *Strategic framework for the development of education, training, and learning in the Republic of Bulgaria (2021-30)*. The action plan sets out activities in the various priority areas of the strategic framework, deadlines for their implementation, funding sources, as well as indicators for monitoring and analysing its results. These activities implement the objectives and measures indicated in the strategic framework.

### 2024 Implementation

In 2024, a new national VET team was established as part of the Erasmus+ programme for the 2021-27 period, following a selection procedure, initiated by the Human Resources Development Centre (HRDC). This national VET team provides methodological support and guidance to organisations involved in VET, as well as to businesses, with the goal of promoting more effective models for ensuring quality, innovation, and sustainability in Bulgaria's VET sector.

Also in 2024, the HRDC recruited nine experts as members of the national VET team to support its activities over a three-year period. These activities include:

- (a) organising and participating in national training activities, competitions, information days, seminars, conferences, consultations, and other events related to the national VET team;
- (b) participating in training activities, seminars, and events at European level;
- (c) raising awareness and disseminating information among education and labour market stakeholders about the VET system in Bulgaria;
- (d) preparing analyses, contributing to the development of a work programme, and drafting annual activity reports;
- (e) writing news articles and publications related to the VET system in Bulgaria.

### 2025 Implementation

In 2025, the activities of the national VET team further expanded to strengthen the visibility and implementation of the Bulgarian VET system. The team prepared thematic articles for publication with Cedefop, UNESCO, the European Commission, and other organisations in the field of VET. Among these, specific articles focused on the new Herring Declaration (September 2025) and the EU priorities for VET up to 2030, ensuring that Bulgarian developments were aligned with European policy debates. An annual brochure – 'The green and digital transition and the role of VET' was also produced, highlighting the dual focus on sustainability and digitalisation as drivers of transformation in vocational education and training. Capacity-building and dissemination activities included webinars on 'The uptake of augmented and virtual reality (AR/VR) in vocational education', the organisation of *Panorama of professions 2025*, targeted initiatives for students with hearing impairments, and a national event 'Panorama of skills in the use of artificial intelligence.' Additional thematic events reinforced the importance of aligning national practice with EU-level developments and promoted the use of learning outcomes, validation, and flexible pathways as core elements of the Bulgarian VET system.

## Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Science

- National Agency for Vocational Education and Training (NAVET)

## Target group

### Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices  
Adult learners

### Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

## Thematic categories

### Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Using EU transparency tools (EQF, Europass, ESCO, ECTS, ECVET principles)

### Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

## European priorities in VET

### VET Recommendation

Flexibility and progression opportunities at the core of VET

## Subsystem

IVET CVET

## Further reading

[Web page of NAVET](#)

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[Web page of Ministry of Education and Science](#)

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[Webpage of the National VET team](#)

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[Annual brochure - The green and digital transition and the role of VET](#)

## Related policy developments

**2025 Implementation**

### Curriculum update

In 2018, updated curricula were adopted for upper secondary education (grades 11 and 12). The learning objectives are set for both general education and VET learners, including a learning module on 'civil education' aimed at the acquisition of social and civic competences.

**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

IVET

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**2025 Implementation****Legislative basis for the validation of prior learning**

Following the 2015-20 VET development strategy adopted in October 2014 (and the updated VET strategy in Bulgaria for the period 2019-21), the VET Act was amended, introducing the legislative basis for validation of prior learning in VET.

 BULGARIA**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2025 Implementation****The Bulgarian National qualifications framework for lifelong learning (BQF)**

Since the academic year 2017/18, the EQF/NQF level of the occupation in which the qualification is acquired is stated in the completion documents: the 'vocational qualifications certificate' and the 'vocational training certificate for part of the profession'.

 BULGARIA**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2025 Implementation****Amendments to the VET Act**

The VET Act of 1999 was amended in August 2016 (entered into force in August 2017), confirming that apprenticeships should offer the possibility to acquire professional qualifications through practical training, organised in cooperation with enterprises.

 BULGARIA**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28059>