

# Inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices - Cyprus

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## Introduction

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In March 2012, the [Cyprus National Forum of Lifelong Guidance](#) (Εθνικός Φορέας Διά Βίου Καθοδήγησης) was established by a [Decision of the Council of Ministers](#) with representatives from national lifelong guidance providers. Its membership includes many actors across the education, training and labour market sectors. Both Ministries (employment and education) have a strong interest in career guidance. It integrated representation of Cyprus in meetings and working groups in lifelong guidance at European and international levels. Its aim at the time was to develop a specific policy in line with the priorities outlined in the [2004](#) and [2008](#) European Council resolutions on lifelong guidance and the Commission Communication [\(2010\) Europe 2020 - A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth](#):

1. coordination and communication between guidance services
2. establish a guidance quality assurance framework
3. enhance citizens' access to guidance services
4. promote research on guidance

These priorities have remained, and new ones added. More recently, [the Lifelong learning strategy in Cyprus was adopted for 2021-2027](#), which draws on post-2020 EU policies in education, training and the employment and other policy areas, to develop a national strategy.

The main challenges for the lifelong guidance (LLG) strategy in Cyprus remain in enhancing the provision of guidance and counselling services to all population user groups, according to a 2020 report by Euroguidance:

1. addressing the impact of the economic crisis and the re-skilling of the labour force, empowering young people, minorities, the unemployed and those at risk thus improving quality, equity, inclusion, and success for all in education and training
2. adapting the lifelong learning system, decision making and career management skills in an ever-changing world and supporting the green and digital transitions in and through education and training
3. promoting transparency of qualifications (through formal, non-formal or informal learning) and mobility of human resources (inter-sectoral and geographical)

In addition to these are using digital technology in offering career guidance (including career

education) and career management skills and providing a more effective and quality career guidance.

Through the [Cyprus National Recovery and Resilience Plan](#) (EU RRF) the country is attempting to diminish the gap between education and the necessary skills for entering the labour market and to enhance the process of matching skills with jobs, which implies career guidance and support measures as mentioned in the Plan, particularly in reference to youth employment.

## Sources

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## Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders

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At a national level, career support, career guidance and counselling in Cyprus are mainly provided by the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MOEC) (through the Career counselling and education services - CCES/ Y.S.E.A in Greek) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance (MLSI) (Public employment services), that maintain close collaboration with the [Human Resource Development Authority](#) (HRDA).

The HRDA recent programmes according to the website include different types of training provision, planning, organisation, and application of the training programmes by companies and organisation for their employees. These are for businesses with operations in Cyprus (De Minimis 80% / KE 50%). Recent programme offers include digital skills and training for labour market integration for different groups; for entering the blue/green economy; and training, in particular, for the long-term unemployed and for graduates transitioning to employment.

Beyond the main providers of career guidance, other important providers of lifelong guidance in Cyprus, some public which are offered free of charge and some fee-based in the private sector, include:

1. the [Cyprus Youth Board](#) (Οργανισμός Νεολαίας Κύπρου, Organismos Neoleas Kyprou, ONEK) specialised in guidance for youth. The Youth Board (under MOEC but semi-independent) collaborates with youth organisations to provide career guidance for young people (normally up to 30 years) and they provide services through KEPLI, which is the youth information centres; a [call for tender](#) is issued every two years for the purchase of services by career guidance counsellors for the operation of the Career guidance service of ONEK to operate in different regions.

2. trade unions and municipalities;
3. career services of the universities in Cyprus (both private and public universities);
4. career offices in the private sector (fee-based services);

The implementation of the [New modern apprenticeship](#) initiative (Νέα Σύγχρονη Μαθητεία, Nea Syghroni Mathiteia) (Cyprus Productivity Centre (n.d.)). New modern apprenticeship is one of the collaborations between the Ministry of Education, Sport, and Youth (MOEC) and the Cyprus Productivity Centre of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance. The New modern apprenticeship consists of two levels: The Preparatory Apprenticeship and the Core Apprenticeship. There is continuous support by trained career teachers, as well as psychologists and social workers for the students who participate in the New Modern Apprenticeship. Information for students and in reference to apprenticeships is provided by the central CCES/ Y.S.E.A in Greek (Career counselling and education service) offices or otherwise arranged in the private sector or offered by other services according to the needs and age of the students.

Increasing the provision of guidance and counselling services to all population groups is a policy priority. Lifelong learning (LLL) with lifelong guidance (LLG) aim to define an integrated strategy which covers all kinds/types of learning - formal, non-formal and informal at all levels - from pre-school, primary, secondary general and vocational education to higher education, vocational training, and adult education.

The main objective of the [Cyprus Lifelong Learning \(LLL\) Strategy 2021-2027 \(CyLLS\)](#) has been to create a society in which all individuals have the skills that will enable them to deal with any challenge and change that happens in their lives, moving freely between learning settings, jobs, regions, and countries. The Strategy envisages equal and active participation of all members of the society, strengthening the country's productivity, innovation, competitiveness, and dynamism ([Human Resources Development Authority](#)). The CyLLS refers explicitly to career guidance services and their general lack of availability for low skilled youth and adults (p.23) and the areas where this gap in services is most critical for achieving the aims of the Strategy.

The CyLLS was developed and approved by the Council of Ministers (Decision No: 89.482, Date: 27/5/2020). It aims to assist national agencies and other bodies in Cyprus reaching the EU targets in relevant fields. It is expected to improve efforts to upskill and re-skill low qualified and low skilled adults and address the high percentage of unemployment among young people. The strategy is also expected to benefit many user groups underrepresented such as early leavers from education and training, NEETS, and migrants and refugees. The implementation of a variety of learning opportunities is anticipated to enrich knowledge, skills and competencies for personal development and economic wellbeing of the specified target groups. The strategy draws on EU policies, including mention of the importance of career guidance in Cyprus and the lack of adequate services and links between education and the labour market. There are six strategic horizontal pillars of the CyLLS 2021-2027:

1. Digital transformation
2. Green transition and sustainability
3. Inclusion and equality
4. Validation of non- formal and informal learning
5. Health and wellbeing
6. Lifelong learning culture

[The European and International Affairs, Lifelong Learning and Adult Education Office](#) coordinated a number of actions for the development of the Cyprus Lifelong Learning Strategy (CyLLS) for the years 2021-2027, in cooperation with other ministries and competent bodies. For this purpose, the Office also collaborated with Directorates, Services and Departments within the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MESY), as well as with various governmental and non-governmental bodies, academic institutions, organizations, etc.

Collaboration between Euroguidance Greece and Euroguidance Cyprus led to the development of career training seminars and career management skills (CMS) training seminars for career professionals. Euroguidance is tasked with promoting up-to-date information about education and training opportunities for career practitioners available in Cyprus and in other EU countries.

## Sources

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## Access to guidance

In Cyprus, career guidance services are available for a wide number of user groups covering the population. The main target user groups are school pupils and students, in school and in other settings, adults and youth, which includes all user groups/sub-groups: persons with disabilities and specific needs, employed and unemployed individuals, long-term-unemployed, women returning to work and people living in rural areas, as well as migrants and refugee students. Depending on diverse factors, a service professional may provide referrals to other services after an initial contact with a service user. The development of career services is a shared responsibility for the [Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth](#) (MOEC), the [Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance](#) (MLSI), [Cyprus Youth Board](#) (ONEK), trade unions and the [Human Resource Development Authority](#) (HRDA).

Career guidance services for students in secondary education are primarily the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Sport, and Youth (MOEC), through the [Career counselling and education service](#) (CCES/Y.S.E.A in Greek). Career counsellors at school and at CCES offer students of public secondary general, technical, and vocational schools assistance in developing personal awareness as regards to their interests, needs and skills and in making suitable decisions about their education and career. Academic and career guidance is provided through the CCES to the public on a personal basis. The services are provided by qualified guidance counsellors who are placed in each secondary school and also at the central offices of the CCES at the MOEC.

In the labour market sector, the [vocational guidance service of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance](#) (MLSI) is delivered through the public employment services (PES) and provides access to up-to-date information about education, training and job opportunities for employees and unemployed individuals as well as on skills training opportunities. Furthermore, the PES aid employers, job seekers and those in employment who wish to change jobs through registration and placement services, provision of information on training opportunities and job vacancies. All PES employment counsellors have access to a nationwide candidate placement system, which performs a wide range of functions including registration and updating of clients' history of employers and vacancies and monitoring client interviews with employers. A personalised approach is used for the creation of an individual action plan adapted to the applicant's needs specifying the actions that must be taken for the integration or re-integration of the individual into the labour market.

The main target user groups of the more customised approach are usually the at-risk/vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities or chronic diseases, low-income recipients of special allowance, long term unemployed (LTU), one parent families, ex-prisoners, older adults over the age of 50, etc. Throughout the years, PES providers have developed partnerships with trade unions, employers' associations, municipalities, NGO's and different inter-ministerial structures (further information can be found [here](#)).

The career services offered through the EURES network mainly concern those offered on an individual basis, either online or through contact with a EURES employment counsellor, to job seekers from Cyprus or from other EU member states as well as to employers from

Cyprus or abroad who are searching for employees. In close cooperation, [Euroguidance](#) staff and [EURES professionals](#) provide up-to-date information about career opportunities abroad.

In relation to career information, each year the [Human Resource Development Authority](#) (HRDA) carries out a series of surveys and studies on labour market needs and current trends for forecasting and to support national planning. The studies are available on the web site for further use by all interested parties and services in the field of employment guidance. Advice for training and career opportunities for students, unemployed and employed as well as employers is offered by human resource specialists. The HRDA's recent programmes according to the website include different types of training provision, planning, organisation, and application of the training programmes by companies and organisation for their employees. These are for businesses with operations in Cyprus (De Minimis 80% / KE 50%). Recent programme offers include digital skills and training for labour market integration for different groups; for entering the blue/green economy; and training in particular for the long-term unemployed and for graduates transitioning to employment.

The Youth Board of Cyprus career counselling and Career management service is a comprehensive program, which provides guidance and opportunities for personal and professional development to young people of various ages. It is based on four action pillars (it can be found [here](#)):

1. Individual guidance by Career counsellors
2. Provision of Career Aptitude Tests that enhance young people's self-awareness and help them make more informed and suitable decisions with regard to their studies and career paths.
3. Soft skills development workshops enhance job-seeking and employability skills (CV building, preparation for a job interview, job hunting tips), including other soft skills that aim to assist their professional development (career awareness, self-awareness, and self-confidence, 21st century professional skills, etc.).
4. Career academies: During which young people can attend intensive courses, lectures, workshops by high profile experts on career choice, job hunting, professional development, funding programs, professional skills development, innovation, and entrepreneurship, etc.

In the higher education sector, there are university careers offices/centres which provide career services and support student and alumni in making decisions about their academic path and their career journeys. These include individualised career counselling, practical training and internships, annual career fairs, and individual aptitude tests.

Policy efforts are underway that imply increased access to career guidance, in the context of the [Lifelong guidance strategy](#) (CyLLS) (See also [Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders](#)). The main objective of the [Cyprus Lifelong Learning \(LLL\) Strategy 2021-2027 \(CyLLS\)](#) has been to create a society in which all individuals have the skills that will enable them to deal with any challenge and change that happens in their lives, moving freely between learning settings, jobs, regions, and countries. The Strategy envisages equal and active participation of all members of the society, strengthening the country's productivity, innovation, competitiveness, and dynamism ([Human Resources Development Authority](#)). The CyLLS refers explicitly to career guidance services and their general lack of availability for low skilled youth and adults (p.23) and the areas where this gap in services is most critical for achieving the aims of the Strategy, such as in relation to skilling of the adult population through learning opportunities. It aims to face challenges such as the low participation of adults in lifelong learning, which remains below the EU average. It is expected that the new lifelong learning strategy will improve efforts to upskill and reskill low-qualified and low-skilled adults and address the high percentage of unemployment among young people. The strategy is also expected to benefit other groups including adults such as early leavers, NEETs and migrants/refugees. The implementation of a variety of learning opportunities is anticipated to enrich knowledge, skills and competences for personal development and economic well-being of the specified target groups.

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- Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance. <https://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/home-en/home-en?OpenForm>

## Quality assurance

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There are quality principles in the education sector (e.g., the [Career counselling and education service](#), CCES/Y.S.E.A in Greek) through success and adequacy indicators which follow the structured framework and planning of career counselling procedures. Precise information is not available to the public. The CCES appoints a school counsellor (i.e., trained career counselling and education teachers) at each secondary public school. School counsellors are assessed by the Inspector of Secondary Education of CCES every two years. The evaluation involves a thorough presentation of the issues the school counsellor had to handle and the methods they employed to achieve the best possible outcome. The inspector also evaluates the records the school counsellor keeps. This practice aims to promote good practices among the school counsellors.

The [Lifelong Learning Strategy CyLLS](#) (see also [Introduction](#) and [Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders](#)) makes some reference to the importance of career guidance services. It points out the general lack of availability especially for low skilled youth and adults (p.23), lists performance indicators of general relevance to quality of institutions and learning where guidance is embedded, such as those relating to decreasing youth unemployment (targets for education attainment, employment rate, participants for initiatives in labour market integration and adult learning, and education and training for the low-skilled), for increasing participation in adult learning including improvements in the validation of prior learning (VINFL), centralized digital platform, and professionalising adult education.

People also have access to the recognition processes and offices [assistance centre](#) for information on qualifications.

There is no further information available to the public regarding quality assurance methods used in the labour market sector.

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## Career management skills

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Although not yet in the general school curriculum, career management skills (CMS) have been included in the career education subject in schools and are high on the lobby agenda of the Cyprus National Guidance Forum .

There is a framework/strategy for careers education, which is included within the broader role and duties of school career advisors; six teaching periods during the first semester of the third grade of gymnasium include topics such as self-awareness, labour market information (LMI), education systems and choices, and decision-making.

Career academies are organised for young people who can attend intensive courses, lectures, workshops by high profile experts on career choice, job hunting, professional development, funding programs, professional skills development, innovation, and entrepreneurship, etc.

Career fairs are organised by schools, colleges, universities and the (Career counselling and education service) CCES/ Y.S.E.A in Greek of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth in order to provide career information and awareness to all students/participants who attend.

### **Source**

- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth. Counselling and vocational education service (y.s.e.a.). <https://www.moec.gov.cy/ysea/index.html>

## **Evidence, monitoring and assessment**

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There are measures taken in the labour market and education and training sectors to monitor and evaluate career guidance, though few are available to the public. Examples of available information is provided below. Some external measures for developing the system were carried out.

Several measures were taken for the improvement and modernization of the Public Employment Services of the Department of Labour (PES) in order to aid job placement and job creation by improving the matching process, although information is not available to the public on the specific measures.

The PES measures also aim to strengthen administrative and technical facilities, improved monitoring, and individualised employment counselling, and helps private placement agencies improve their services.

An [external evaluation](#) of the Counselling and career education service (CCES/ Y.S.E.A in Greek) of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth was carried out in 2010; the recommendations of the committee provide the basis for making improvements by extending the target user groups and including secondary students, young people generally, and employed individuals as well as in training programmes for career practitioners, and the need for research. There were 28 concrete recommendations drafted by career guidance experts, some of which were given special priority by the evaluators. Some of the recommendations included those intended to support development of a lifelong guidance strategy, such as in developing links between CCES and partners to create a lifelong guidance system and for enhanced coverage of services and cooperation, such as with the Department of Labour within the Ministry of Employment and Social Insurance.

CCES appoints a school career counsellor (i.e., those trained in career counselling and education teachers) at each secondary public school. School counsellors are assessed by the Inspector of Secondary Education of CCES every two years. The evaluation involves a thorough presentation of the issues the school counsellor had to handle and the methods they employed to achieve the best possible outcome. The inspector also evaluates the records the school counsellor keeps. This practice aims to promote good practices among the school counsellors.

Up to December 2021, seven career counsellors are employed in the central offices of CCES and 162 school counsellors at secondary public schools (career counselling and career education teachers) and the district offices of the departments of CCES of the MOEC in the main cities. The career counsellors are placed full-time in schools except for the cases of smaller schools where they are placed for two or three days.

### **Sources**

- Ministry of Education and Culture (2010). Counselling and career education in Cyprus: an external evaluation of the counselling and career education service of the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture.

## Career information, ICT in guidance

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In 2021, (Cedefop, 2023), the share of people with above basic digital skills in Cyprus was 21.5%. Priority is placed on this area of skills and competence development so that the public has better access to services and information, and online learning.

The **Career Counselling and Educational Service** (CCES/Y.S.E.A in Greek) organises trainings and seminars for school counsellors offered by professionals from the ICT field. Since the pandemic, school counsellors and other organizations providing career guidance, have offered online information, career guidance seminars and one to one advice.

Otherwise, there are some examples of sources for career information on different websites, including in English:

1. The two websites of the **EURES** and **Euroguidance** Network operating in Cyprus offer resources and tools provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance (MLSI)
2. The **Human Resource Development Authority** (HRDA) offers public information on its website including different types of career information
3. The Youth Board's KEPLI (services and operations) offers information and resources for youth on its website.
4. MOEC also maintains a **citizen information services portal** with links and resources and policy also in English regarding the different levels of education and types in the country including on the Cyprus Council of Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications- General Information - KY.S.A.T.S. There are linked to relevant career education services on the main portal.

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## Training and qualifications

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There are several occupational profiles for career guidance practitioners and others providing career guidance and career education in Cyprus, in the education, training and labour market sectors and settings, online and in institutions.

The **Career Counselling and Educational Service** (CCES Y.S.E.A in Greek) of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MOEC) is part of the Department of Secondary Education and it is staffed with qualified career counsellors and education teachers who have gone through specialised post-graduate education in initial education in career guidance either in Cyprus or abroad, and they complete a pre-service training programme while in employment. This is a requirement for becoming a career counsellor and career education teacher in the public sector.

Career professionals also have access to general seminars, workshops, and training and informative courses for professional development organised by the **Human Resource Development Authority** (HRDA) of Cyprus. The CCES offers continuous professional

development (CPD) to its staff through the universities and professional associations and invited as conducted by EU experts.

CCES career education teachers may work part time at the [Career Counselling Service of the Youth Board of Cyprus](#), and therefore have the same qualifications as the CCES Counsellors (as mentioned above).

Public employment services of the Ministry of Labour (MLWSI) are staffed with qualified Employment counsellors with relevant professional qualifications in subjects including sociology, psychology and human resources and are trained on a continuous basis by external experts, to provide all necessary guidance services for the PES. Employment counsellors are however not required to possess a qualification in career guidance or equivalent education or training programme, prior to working at PES.

EURES and Euroguidance staff of the Department of Labour undergo pre-training when they commence their duties. They attend a three to six day yearly advanced in-service training in various topics related to labour mobility and provision of information to clients.

Since 2014, Post graduate guidance programmes are offered in universities in Cyprus (see also [here](#)). Guidance courses at Master's level are offered in Cyprus Universities:

1. European University: Career Guidance and Counselling (Master's programme) -
2. University of Cyprus: School Counselling and Guidance (Master's Programme) -
3. University of Nicosia - Counselling Psychology (Master's programme)
4. The European University offers a Ph.D. programme in Psychology that provides the opportunity to conduct research in a field of Psychology in: Clinical, Counselling, Developmental, Neuropsychology, School, and Social Psychology.

A special agreement is in place so that postgraduate students are allowed to do their fieldwork placement at the Counselling and Career Education Service (CCES) of the Ministry of Education, Sport, and Youth (MOEC) and in secondary schools, where they have a Career counsellor assigned as a mentor to coordinate and supervise their activities.

Several private providers also offer a variety of fee-based career services for users of all ages. There are no general regulations for establishment of these services in terms of provider qualification requirements or fees charged.

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## Funding career guidance

European funds (ESF funding) have been used to develop the public employment services and to provide career guidance services for jobseekers. Moreover, all the services provided by the Counselling and Career Education Service (CCES) of the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) are government funded; however, some of their actions are funded from European funds.

There are therefore specific funding arrangements and as of 2022, which includes several initiatives where lifelong guidance is involved:

- National Guidance Forum and CCES: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORT AND YOUTH
- Programmes 'Preparatory apprenticeships' and the core modern apprenticeship are part of the 'New modern apprenticeships funded by the ESF and the Cyprus Government
- Public employment services (PES): Public and European Funding

- EURES Network: annual operating fund from ESF
- Euroguidance Network receives an annual grant from Erasmus +

More recently, through the [Cyprus National Recovery and Resilience Plan](#) (EU RRF funded) the country is attempting to diminish the gap between education and the necessary skills for entering the labour market and to enhance matching skills with jobs, which implies a role for career guidance and support measures as mentioned in the Plan, particularly in reference to youth employment.

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## Career guidance for school pupils

Elementary teachers (pupils 6 to 12 years old) provide career education to school pupils, through different subjects, while in secondary school career guidance is the responsibility of school counsellors and career professionals of the Career Counselling and Education Service (CCES/ Y.S.E.A in Greek). These trained professionals may work within the schools as career counsellors, or at the main district offices of the CCES in the Ministry of Education (MOEC).

The main aim of the [Career Counselling and Educational Service](#) (CCES) is the personal, social, educational and vocational development of students of public secondary general and technical schools as well as of other individuals. Academic and vocational guidance is provided through the CCES to students during class sessions or on a personal basis upon request. All schools must develop an institutional education plan in which they should include information about career management skills and provide students with the opportunity to become aware of the necessity to be actively involved in school life. Taking into consideration the individuality of each person, their abilities, needs and their freedom of will, [CCES](#) aims to help students and other individual service users to:

1. develop positive self-esteem, self-approval and self-confidence.
2. identify their abilities, interests and skills.
3. use their unique capabilities and aptitudes to achieve self-awareness.
4. acquire the right skills to deal effectively with personal, family and/or social issues in life.
5. adjust to the school environment to progress both educationally and socially.
6. develop critical thinking.
7. develop the necessary skills that will allow the effective use of appropriate information and make well-informed decisions concerning educational, vocational and personal choices.
8. learn about the nature and demands of various vocations as well as the current social, economic, and cultural developments so that correct educational choices are made (Ministry of Education and Culture, n.d.).

School counsellors are placed in every secondary school. They lay special emphasis on helping students equip themselves with all the necessary skills and up-to-date information to make effective personal, educational and career decisions through the following actions:

1. individual and group counselling on personal, social, educational, and career guidance issues.
2. providing career education.
3. publication of instructional and informative books (career education, scholarships);
4. organisation of training seminars for school counsellors.
5. access to information on educational and vocational guidance.
6. participation in various committees for student benefit.

Extra-curricular seminars are provided in school with the aim of facilitating the

understanding of the labour market and of different careers. All students also have the opportunity students to access short-term work placements. In addition, advice on career education is provided for the parents so that they can support their children in their career development and decision-making (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014)

## Sources

- Ministry of Education and Culture (2014). Vocational Education. [http://archeia.moec.gov.cy/mc/49/epaggelmatiki\\_agogi.pdf](http://archeia.moec.gov.cy/mc/49/epaggelmatiki_agogi.pdf)
- Ministry of Education and Culture (n.d.). Career Counselling and Educational Services (CCES). [http://www.moec.gov.cy/en/career\\_counselling.html](http://www.moec.gov.cy/en/career_counselling.html)

## Guidance for VET participants

Career guidance in relation to VET has developed in relation to the changes within the VET system itself, in relation to both provisions for initial (IVET) as well as continuing VET (CVET), for younger students and for adults. Students can access career guidance through the services available to them.

After the [reform](#) of the VET system in 2016, Cyprus has:

1. improved the infrastructure between VET schools and apprenticeships.
2. provided access to VET programmes for university studies.
3. developed VET programmes in higher and tertiary education institutions (HEIs).
4. initiated evening VET programmes for adults.

The reform of the VET system has also focused on improving career management and entrepreneurship skills and on increasing access to more work-based learning opportunities. Currently, more than 90% of VET students are involved in entrepreneurship education programmes.

A two-year apprenticeship system was in place as part of IVET. Starting with 2013, it was replaced by the [New modern apprenticeship](#) (Νέα Σύγχρονη Μαθητεία, Nea Syghroni Mathiteia) (See [Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders](#)). Career guidance in public vocational schools is provided by the CCES (Y.S.E.A in Greek) school counsellors.

## Sources

- Cyprus Productivity Centre (n.d.). New modern apprenticeship. <http://enimerosi.moec.gov.cy/archeia/1/ypp985a>
- Department of secondary technical and vocational education and training. <https://www.moec.gov.cy/dmteek/en/index.html>

## Guidance for higher education students

Cyprus has one of the highest shares of people with tertiary education in Europe (Cedefop, 2023).

In all universities in Cyprus careers centres provide career services and support student and alumni in making decisions about their academic paths and their career planning and development. These include individualised career counselling, practical training and internships, annual careers fairs, individual aptitude tests, CV writing workshops and interview simulations, Entrepreneur – Start Up, Bootcamps, practical training, and internships.

Career practitioners (counsellors) at the [Career Counselling and Educational Service](#) (CCES/ Y.S.E.A in Greek) of the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) also offer their career guidance and counselling services to higher education students. In contrast to the training

and qualifications of CCES career practitioners dealing with school provisions, there is no specific requirement for career guidance-specific qualifications for those providing career guidance for students in higher education.

## Sources

- Cedefop. Cyprus [country information].  
<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/countries/cyprus#1>
- Ministry of Education and Culture. Career Counselling and Educational Services (CCES).  
[http://www.moec.gov.cy/en/career\\_counselling.html](http://www.moec.gov.cy/en/career_counselling.html)

## Guidance for adult learners

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There are several providers of information and career guidance for adults seeking learning opportunities or within institutional settings. Adult education programmes also include career guidance services offered by the [Ministry of Labour](#), at public employment service offices, as well as by career counsellors of the Career Counselling and Educational Services (CCES/ Y.S.E.A in Greek) who work at [evening schools](#) for adults who wish to complete their initial qualifications.

Adult learners in CVET and those engaging in other types of learning supporting social integration also have access to these services (see [Career guidance for VET participants](#)).

The Department of Labour through the District labour offices cooperates closely with the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) in finding those registered unemployed, especially those experiencing long-term unemployment, and eligible newcomers in the labour market, who can join training programmes, such as those that aim at further improving/upgrading key skills (Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance Insurance - Training, n.d.)

The [Ministry of Education](#), also operates the electronic platform [EPALE \(for Cyprus\)](#) providing a range of information for adult learners in the country, and in other European countries (Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe – EPALE main website: <https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en>).

The main objective of the [Cyprus Lifelong Learning \(LLL\) Strategy 2021-2027 \(CyLLS\)](#) has been to create a society in which all individuals have the skills that will enable them to deal with any challenge and change that happens in their lives, moving freely between learning settings, jobs, regions, and countries. The Strategy envisages equal and active participation of all members of the society, strengthening the country's productivity, innovation, competitiveness, and dynamism ([Human Resources Development Authority](#)). The CyLLS refers explicitly to career guidance services, and also their general lack of availability especially for low skilled youth and adults (p.23) and the areas where this gap in services is most critical for achieving the aims of the Strategy, such as in relation to skilling of the adult population through learning opportunities. It aims to face challenges such as the low participation of adults in lifelong learning, which remains below the EU average. It is expected that the new lifelong learning strategy will improve efforts to upskill and reskill low-qualified and low-skilled adults and address the high percentage of unemployment among young people. The strategy is also expected to benefit other groups including adults such as early leavers, NEETs and migrants/refugees. The implementation of a variety of learning opportunities is anticipated to enrich knowledge, skills and competences for personal development and economic well-being of the specified target groups.

[Adult education centres](#) provide fee-based courses (including discounts for certain groups) in general adult education in Cyprus within the framework of providing lifelong learning opportunities. These adult learners can also access career guidance at the CCES offices. The main objective of the Adult education centres is the general development of each adult's personality as well as the social, financial, and cultural development of citizens and society in general for social integration and to engage in lifelong learning. Courses offered focus mainly on the teaching of foreign languages, arts and crafts, cultural programmes, health,

and other issues, as well as on teaching professional and vocational skills.

Adult Education Centres organise free of charge learning activities each year for various target groups, such as people with literacy difficulties, people with specific needs and disabilities, enclaved Cypriots, prisoners, and older adults. They also offer, free of charge, Greek language courses to children of repatriated Cypriots, to political refugees and to Turkish Cypriots. Moreover, Turkish language courses are offered free of charge to Greek Cypriots.

## Sources

- Euroguidance Cyprus.  
[http://www.euroguidance.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/euroguidance/euroguidance.nsf/index\\_gr/index\\_gr?OpenDocument](http://www.euroguidance.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/euroguidance/euroguidance.nsf/index_gr/index_gr?OpenDocument)
- Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance.  
[http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/index\\_en/www.aboutcyprus.org.cy](http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/index_en/www.aboutcyprus.org.cy)
- Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance – Training. [https://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/page1h\\_en/page1h\\_en?OpenDocument](https://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/page1h_en/page1h_en?OpenDocument)
- Ministry of Education Culture, Sport, and Youth – Evening schools. [http://www.moec.gov.cy/esperina\\_scholeia/index.html](http://www.moec.gov.cy/esperina_scholeia/index.html)
- National strategy for lifelong learning 2021 – 2027.  
[http://www.moec.gov.cy/eiao/en/life\\_long\\_learning\\_strategy.htm](http://www.moec.gov.cy/eiao/en/life_long_learning_strategy.htm)

## Guidance for the employed

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Cyprus has a small, predominantly service-based economy, with tourism, financial services and shipping being the important sectors. The country has one of the highest shares of people with tertiary education in Europe. Cyprus initially withstood the economic crisis that began in 2008 relatively well but experienced a major economic downturn in 2012.

Employment has dropped significantly, and the unemployment rate remains well above the EU average. Looking to the future, employment is projected to continue grow strongly over the period to 2030, as well as the working age population. Most employment growth will be in professional services, transport & storage, and education. Fastest growing occupations will be those requiring medium-level qualifications: office associate professionals and sales workers, and where there are shortages in economic sectors such as for health professionals (Cedefop, 2023).

Career guidance services for employees are coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, EURES and [Euroguidance Cyprus](#). Career Guidance is provided by all First line employment officers and Employment counsellors, either in person or via other means (communication and provision of job references via email or telephone), via mini counselling guidance and information sessions. In addition, job seekers wishing to change jobs are registered with the Public Employment Service (PES), if they are interested in being employed in the public sector.

Career guidance for workers can be a source of information on working conditions and labour related issues. The Department of Labour, under the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance is responsible for employment issues related to gender equality. More specific responsibilities of the Department include, among other things, protection of special groups in employment, public employment services, free movement of European Union workers, employment of workers from third countries, and some aspects of human resource development. The Department of Labour Relations is responsible for implementing the Government's policy in the area of industrial relations. In particular, the Department is responsible for safeguarding and maintaining industrial peace and healthy conditions in the area of industrial relations, with a view to achieving social cohesion, productivity in work, the establishment of democratic practices and the achievement of socio-economic progress.

The web portal of the Republic of Cyprus is a gateway to information on different resources, including links to information on [equality and discrimination at work](#), on disability and employment and legislation.

## Sources

- Cedefop. Cyprus [country information].  
<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/countries/cyprus#1>
- Department of Labour, Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance. [https://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/index\\_en/index\\_en?OpenDocument](https://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/index_en/index_en?OpenDocument)
- Euroguidance Cyprus.  
[http://www.euroguidance.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/euroguidance/euroguidance.nsf/index\\_gr/index\\_gr?OpenDocument](http://www.euroguidance.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/euroguidance/euroguidance.nsf/index_gr/index_gr?OpenDocument)
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[http://www.moec.gov.cy/en/career\\_counselling.html](http://www.moec.gov.cy/en/career_counselling.html)
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, and Youth. <http://www.moec.gov.cy/en/>
- Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance.  
<https://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/home-en/home-en?OpenForm>

## Guidance for unemployed adults

The unemployment rate in Cyprus in 2021 was 7.5% (Cedefop, 2023). The country has one of the highest shares of people with tertiary education in Europe. Cyprus initially withstood the economic crisis that began in 2008 relatively well but experienced a major economic downturn in 2012. Employment has dropped significantly, and the unemployment rate remains well above the EU average. Looking to the future, employment is projected to continue grow strongly over the period to 2030, as well as the working age population.

The career guidance services for unemployed adults are offered both by the [Department of Labour](#), Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, which includes information supplied by Euroguidance.

Career Guidance is provided for the mainstream unemployed population registered with the public employment Services (PES) of Cyprus. The PES of the Department of Labour operate at central and district level, with four Labour offices at the districts of Nicosia, Limassol, Larnaca, and Pafos and 2 sub-offices at Paralimni and Polis.

At the district labour offices, job seekers are assisted in finding suitable employment through registration and placement services, as well as through the provision of vocational guidance and counselling on training opportunities. They are also informed about the terms and conditions of employment in various occupations.

Individualized counselling sessions are also provided for the unemployed who belong to vulnerable groups such as long-term unemployed (LTU), youth, persons with disabilities, former prison inmates, single parents, former persons with substance use disorder, welfare recipients, and adults 50+. Specialized employment counsellors, through in-person or online counselling and information sessions, asses the service users needs, employment readiness and distance from the labour market, and agree on a suitable action plan for engaging or re-engaging in the labour market.

Career guidance services are also offered from the [Career Counselling and Educational Services](#) (CCES/Y.S.E.A.) for unemployed adults who attend evening schools.

Counselling and career guidance for different groups of adults and young people, including NEETs are mentioned as priorities in the Lifelong learning strategy (CyLLS) (2021-2027). More recently, through the [Cyprus National Recovery and Resilience Plan](#) (EU RRF funding) the country is attempting to diminish the gap between education and the necessary skills for entering the labour market and to enhance matching skills with jobs, which implies a role for career guidance and support measures as mentioned in the Plan, particularly in reference to youth employment.

## Sources

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/skills-intelligence/countries?country=CY#1>

- Euroguidance Cyprus.  
[http://www.euroguidance.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/euroguidance/euroguidance.nsf/index\\_gr/index\\_gr?OpenDocument](http://www.euroguidance.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/euroguidance/euroguidance.nsf/index_gr/index_gr?OpenDocument)
- Ministry of Education and Culture (n.d.). Career Counselling and Educational Services (CCES). [http://www.moec.gov.cy/en/career\\_counselling.html](http://www.moec.gov.cy/en/career_counselling.html)
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, and Youth. <http://www.moec.gov.cy/en/>
- Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance.  
<https://www.mlwi.gov.cy/mlwi/mlwi.nsf/home-en/home-en?OpenForm>

## Guidance for older adults

Within the overall scope of services, public employment services (PES) of the [Department of Labour](#) organise career guidance activities for older adults who are still of working age and wish to work. They offer customized counselling sessions and provide information about programmes that are being offered by the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance (MLWSI) and other governmental organisations such as the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) in an effort to assist older adults to integrate or re-integrate smoothly into the Labour Market.

Individualized counselling sessions are also provided for the unemployed who belong to vulnerable groups such as adults over 50+. Specialized employment counsellors, through in-person or online counselling and information sessions, assess the service users need, employment readiness and distance from the labour market, and agree on a suitable action plan for engaging or re-engaging in the labour market.

The [Ministry of Education](#), also operates the electronic platform [EPALE \(for Cyprus\)](#) providing a range of information also relevant for older adult learners in Cyprus and in other European countries ([Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe](#), EPALE).

Career guidance services are also offered from the [Career Counselling and Educational Services](#) (CCES) of for unemployed adults who attend evening schools.

### Sources

- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth (n.d.). Electronic platform for adult learning in Europe. <http://www.moec.gov.cy/epale.html>
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, and Youth. <http://www.moec.gov.cy/en/>

## Guidance for early leavers

In Cyprus, the rate of early school leaving from education and training (18 to 24 years) has decreased compared to recent years, and in 2022 was 8.1%, which was below the EU average ([Eurostat data: indicator SDG\\_04\\_10](#) ).

The [lifelong learning strategy](#) of Cyprus (CYLLS) (See [Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders](#)) includes an indicator on young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age, and labour status (NEET rates) for those aged 15-34.

Preventative career guidance for early school leavers from education and training is offered through preparatory apprenticeship to young people between the ages of 14 and 16, who have not completed their compulsory education (gymnasium) which in Cyprus ends at age 16. The programme can last from one to two years and depending on students' academic progress and maturity (readiness) they can either advance to the Core apprenticeship, or through an examination procedure, revert to the general secondary education.

Set up initially as a pilot initiative, in cooperation with career counsellors and with the help of psychologists, students are offered the chance to discover their talents and abilities which also build their self-confidence designed to lead to empowerment. The programme continues

up to the present in all Districts.

Career guidance for young people who have left school early and are under 30 is offered by the [Cyprus Youth Board](#) and the public employment services (PES).

## Sources

- Cyprus Youth Board. <https://onek.org.cy/>
- Department of secondary technical and vocational education and training (n.d.).  
Vocational Education and Training Apprenticeship System.  
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- Eurostat. Early leavers from education and training by sex [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/sdg\\_04\\_10/default/map?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/sdg_04_10/default/map?lang=en)
- Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth. National strategy for lifelong learning 2021 – 2027 [http://www.moec.gov.cy/eiao/en/life\\_long\\_learning\\_strategy.html](http://www.moec.gov.cy/eiao/en/life_long_learning_strategy.html)

## Guidance for NEET

In 2022, the rate of young people aged 15 to 24 not in education, training or employment (NEET) in Cyprus was among the highest in the EU at 12.9% (Eurostat, [indicator TIPSLM90](#)), after Romania and Italy.

Counselling and career guidance for NEETs, (as well as those leaving education and training early - ELET, see Career guidance for ELET) are mentioned as priorities in the [Lifelong learning strategy](#) (CyLLS) (2021-2027). More recently, through the [Cyprus National Recovery and Resilience Plan](#) (EU RRF funding) the country is attempting to diminish the gap between education and the necessary skills for entering the labour market and to enhance matching skills with jobs, which implies a role for career guidance and support measures as mentioned in the Plan, particularly in reference to youth employment.

Discussions are underway regarding provisions through a new tender agreement that will be launched. Specialized trained career counsellors will be assigned the responsibility to track early school leavers from education and training and young people who are not in education, employment or training and through individualised counselling motivate potential beneficiaries to register with the PES where provisions are organised to support them to effectively integrate into the labour market or to engage in training.

## Sources

- Eurostat. Young people neither in employment nor in education and training. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/TIPSLM90/default/table?lang=en>
- Ministry of Education. National strategy for lifelong learning 2021 – 2027 [http://www.moec.gov.cy/eiao/en/life\\_long\\_learning\\_strategy.html](http://www.moec.gov.cy/eiao/en/life_long_learning_strategy.html)
- Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance. <https://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/home-en/home-en?OpenForm>

## Guidance for young people at risk

Career guidance for young people at risk is offered through the Preparatory apprenticeship schools, provided, and operated by the Ministry of Education. This in-demand preventative programme with career guidance is offered to young people between the ages of 14 and 16, who have not completed their compulsory education (gymnasium), which in Cyprus ends at age 16. Career counsellors along with the help of psychologists, offer students the chance to discover their talents and abilities designed to lead to their empowerment and self-confidence. Thus, they become better equipped to choose their educational path or future

career. The programme can last from one to two years and depending on students' academic progress and maturity (readiness) they can either advance to the Core apprenticeship, or through an examination procedure, revert to the general secondary education.

#### Source

- Cyprus Productivity Centre (n.d.). New modern apprenticeship.  
<http://enimerosi.moec.gov.cy/archeia/1/ypp985a>

## Guidance for persons with disabilities

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The career guidance services for people with specific needs and disabilities are coordinated by the [Department for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities](#) and through provisions support the means for empowerment and support to persons with disabilities by promoting innovative actions and implementing programmes, in order to protect and ensure their equal enjoyment of human rights and achieve their full and effective participation in society. Policies focus on providing access to quality information about training and job opportunities, designing targeted schemes for training and retraining of people with special needs and disabilities, while, with the help of the [Department of Labour \(PES\)](#), ensuring equal access into the labour market.

In the school context, where all students have the same rights to any career guidance offered, career guidance in schools for students with specific higher-level needs can include a school assistant and counsellors, providing diverse types of support, can advocate for these students on the benefits they are entitled to, according to their needs and in sharpening their career skills. Dedicated classes can be arranged for those with higher level needs.

The [Cyprus government web portal](#) provides links to resources and information regarding a range of citizenship and public issues including on services, rights and opportunities and lists the different legislation and resolutions relevant for disability specifically.

#### Sources

- Department for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.  
[http://www.dmsw.gov.cy/dmsw/dsid/dsid.nsf/index\\_en/index\\_en?OpenDocument](http://www.dmsw.gov.cy/dmsw/dsid/dsid.nsf/index_en/index_en?OpenDocument)
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- Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance. <https://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/home-en/home-en?OpenForm>

## Guidance for immigrants

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Section 21B of the Cyprus Refugee Law of 2000 provides that the person who is recognized as a refugee receives equal treatment as the citizens of the Republic as regards wage-earning employment. In other words, refugees have the same rights as Cypriot citizens to employment and to career support and career guidance. They can access services at the public employment offices.

Asylum seekers have access to the labour market one month after the date of the submission of their application for international protection, in specific sectors and occupations according to the relevant Decree of the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance.

School counsellors keep their practice up-to-date and are trained and informed about good practices and relevant tools (such as the [EU skills profile tool for third country nationals](#)), so that they can offer appropriate services to individuals from various socioeconomic backgrounds.

## Source

- Department of Labour (site under construction 15/02/2024)  
[https://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/page5j\\_en/page5j\\_en?OpenDocument](https://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/page5j_en/page5j_en?OpenDocument)

## Gender-based policies

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Gender equality is an important issue in Cyprus as progress is slow, as it is internationally, and career guidance providers can raise awareness on the key issues and inform clients on their rights and where to turn in case of issues. The Committee for Gender Equality in Employment and Vocational Education (EIF), was established and operates based on Articles 22 and 23 of the Equal Treatment Between Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training Law, 2002 (L. 205(I)2002). This Law aims at the implementation of the principle of equal treatment between men and women as regards access to vocational orientation, education and training and the terms and conditions for their provision, the access to employment and independent professions, the terms and conditions of employment, including promotion, the terms and conditions of dismissal, as well as the membership and involvement in organisations of workers or employers. The Department of Labour under the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance is also responsible for employment issues related to gender equality.

## Sources

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[http://www.eif.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/genderequality.nsf/home\\_en/home\\_en?opendocument](http://www.eif.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/genderequality.nsf/home_en/home_en?opendocument)
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- Cyprus Youth Board (n.d.). Counseling services. <https://onek.org.cy/programmata-ypiresies/symvouleftikes-ypiresies/ypiresia-kathodigisis-karieras/>
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- Decision of the Council of Ministers. [http://www.moec.gov.cy/foreas\\_kathodigisis/](http://www.moec.gov.cy/foreas_kathodigisis/)
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- Department of secondary technical and vocational education and training.  
<http://www.moec.gov.cy/dmteek/index.html>
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[http://www.moec.gov.cy/dmteek/en/smeek\\_preparatory\\_apprenticeship.html](http://www.moec.gov.cy/dmteek/en/smeek_preparatory_apprenticeship.html)
- European and International Affairs, Lifelong Learning and Adult Education Office: <http://www.moec.gov.cy/eiao/en/index.html>
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