



VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
AND TRAINING IN EUROPE
GREECE

SYSTEM DESCRIPTION



VET IN EUROPE 2019

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CHAPTER 1.

Summary of main elements and distinctive features of VET

VET in Greece is strongly state-regulated and, until recently, mostly offered through a school-based approach; overall responsibility has the education ministry in cooperation, occasionally, with the labour ministry. It is offered, after the completion of compulsory schooling, mainly at upper secondary and post-secondary level.

Distinctive features [1]:

Greek society strongly favours general education and appreciates university studies. Both these factors reflect sociological stereotypes rooted in long-lasting perceptions and have affected overall VET attractiveness. VET has been characterised by higher dropout rates; multiplicity and complexity of the legal framework; challenges regarding the design and implementation of VET-related policies; and impediments to linking with the labour market. It remains a second choice and often attracts low performers, who may also come from lower economic backgrounds.

The level of participation in formal education is generally high; Greece has already achieved early school leaving goals. Yet, the national average masks significant variation between geographical regions ([2]), types of schools, gender and social groups (i.e. native and first- and second-generation migrant students) ([3]).

[3] http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/docs/2015/monitor2015-greece_en.pdf

CHAPTER 2.

Main challenges and policy responses

Since 2016, the education ministry has been conducting a major reform of the VET system, taking into account challenges raised by the financial crisis, such as:

- high unemployment rates;
- high NEETs (people not in employment, education or training) rates (24.2% in 2017);
- unexpected influx of refugees halted on Greek territory (requiring training and education programmes, which are currently being designed and implemented);
- ageing population;
- increased brain drain (highly qualified and mostly young people).

This socioeconomic landscape reflects enduring deficiencies in adapting to change and more specifically in equipping people in Greece with the necessary job specific skills that improve employability and well-being prospects.

To counteract these challenges the education ministry has undertaken the following key actions:

- implementing a coherent national strategic framework for upgrading VET and apprenticeships (April 2016) aiming to promote and enhance the social role of VET, upgrade and expand apprenticeships, strengthen links between VET and the labour market, increase VET quality, and promote VET attractiveness;
- establishing (since 2016) a new structure at upper secondary vocational education programmes (EPAL) to reduce early overspecialisation by focusing more on key competences in the first year of the programme; this aids permeability between general and vocational education and allows for better allocation of the teaching staff;
- establishing (since 2016) a new pathway, a one-year apprenticeship programme at post-secondary level to offer upper secondary VET graduates the chance to acquire labour-market-relevant skills and to support them entering the labour market;
- introducing the skills diagnosis mechanism (National Labour and Human Resources Institute - EIEAD) to reduce skills mismatch and update VET curricula.

The future course of development in Greece relies on VET as a primary instrument to provide necessary skills to individuals.

CHAPTER 3.

External factors influencing VET

3.1 Demographics

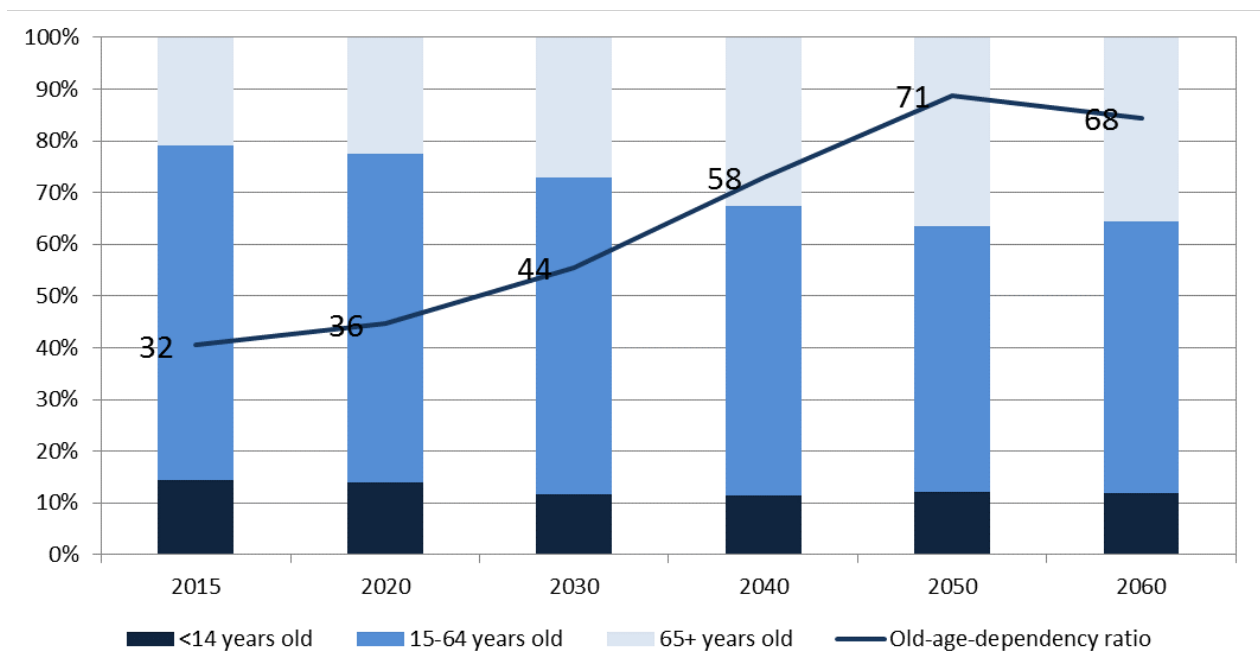
Population in 2018: 10 741 165 ([4])

In the period 2013 to 2018, there is a population decrease of approximately 2.4%, due to negative natural growth (fertility to mortality rate) and migration.

Especially as a crisis effect, the population is ageing. Migration and the lack of significant economic incentives to young couples further deteriorated the phenomenon.

The old-age dependency ratio is expected to increase from 32 in 2015 to 68 in 2060 ([5]).

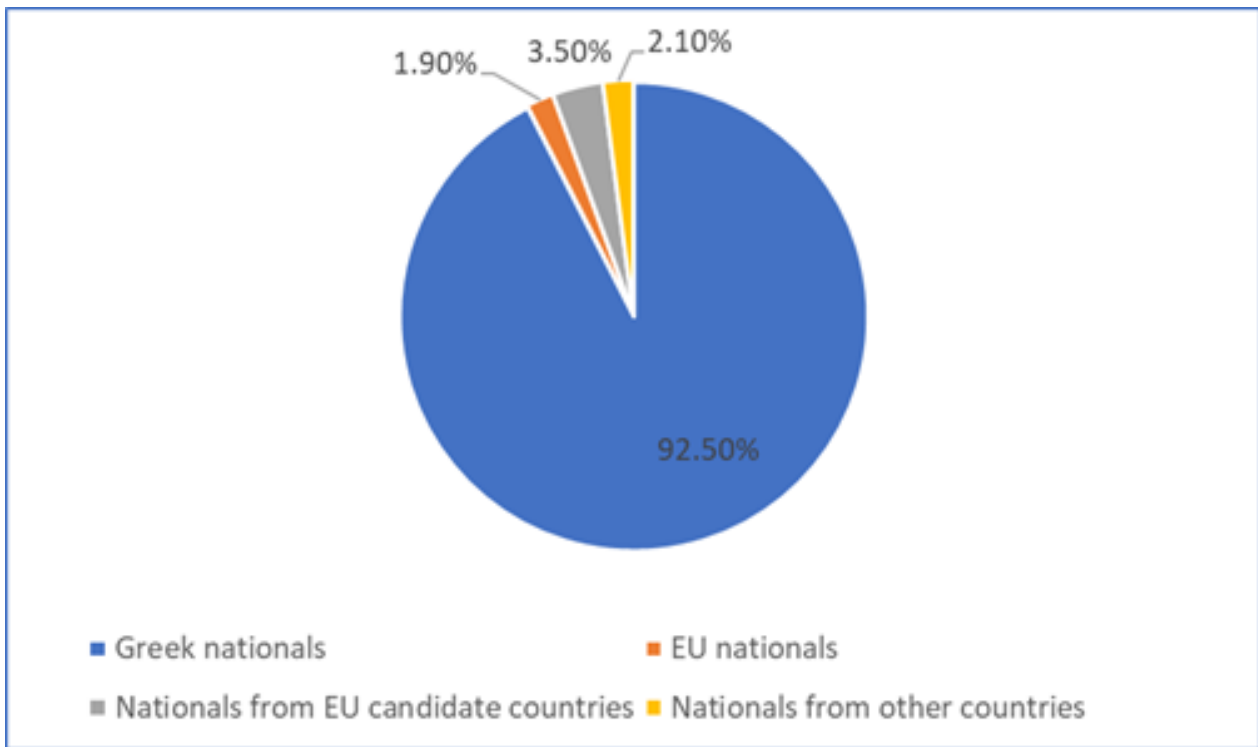
Population forecast by age group and old-age-dependency ratio



Source: Eurostat, proj_15ndbims [extracted on 16.05.2019]

Latest Eurostat data shows a steady increase of overall VET learners in Greece, attributed to increased post-secondary non-tertiary education enrolments. Also, enrolments in upper secondary vocational education (EPAL) provide an indication that recent changes have positive effects. However, demographic changes (low birth rate and brain drain) are considered to have a negative impact on the size of VET learners' population.

Resident population by citizenship group in Greece 2017



Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT)

The sizeable presence of inflows, especially from third countries, creates the need to integrate them into education and employment. According to 2017 data a 7.5% of the population of Greece comprises of non-Greek nationals (92.5% Greek nationals, 1.9% nationals of other European Union countries, 3.5% nationals of EU candidate countries and 2.1% from other countries) ([6]).

3.2 Economics

Most companies are medium and small-sized with some large sized companies.

Main economic sectors:

- Distribution & transport sector
- Business & other services
- Manufacturing
- Construction ([7])

VET specialties belong mainly to the following sectors:

- Technician of electrical systems, installations and networks
- Administration and Financial
- Vehicle technician
- IT application technician
- Nurse assistant
- Plant production technician

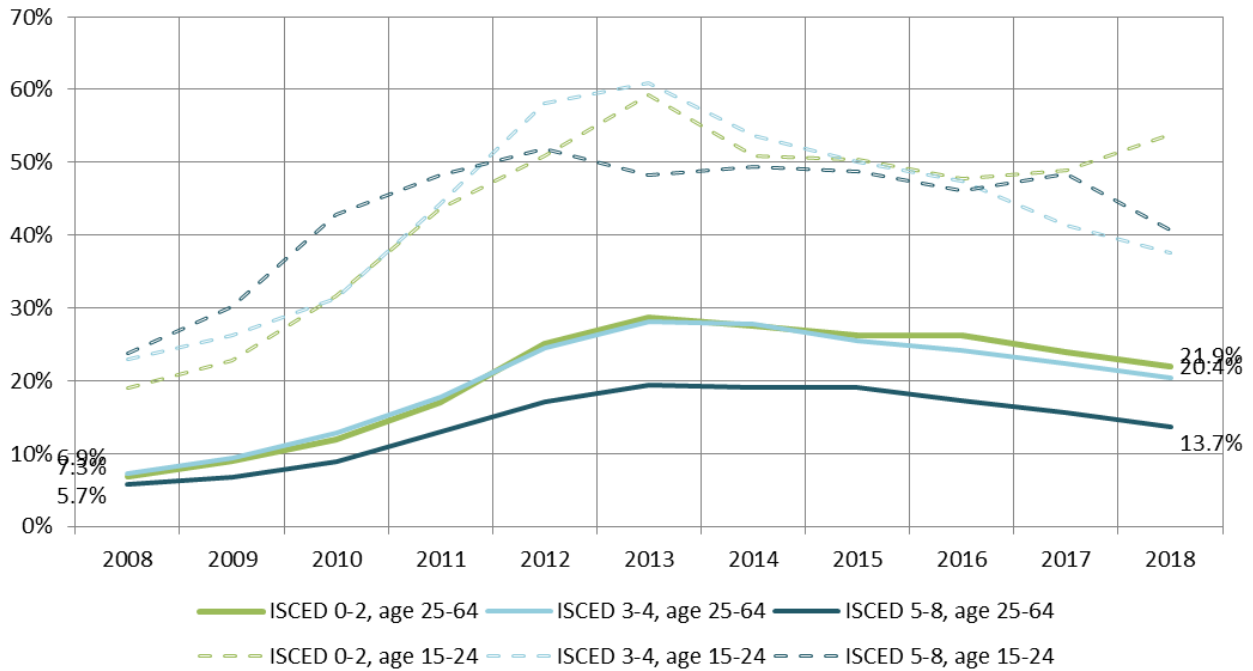
3.3 Labour market

Many occupations/professions are regulated although a lot of diplomas are not connected to professional rights ([8]).

In the private sector both diplomas and skills are taken into consideration while hiring or assessing employees.

Total unemployment ([9]) (2018): 18.2% (6.0% in EU28); it is still 11.6 percentage points higher than in 2008

Unemployment rate (aged 15-24 and 25-64) by education attainment level in 2008-18



NB: data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series.

ISCED 0-2 = less than primary, primary and lower secondary education

ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education

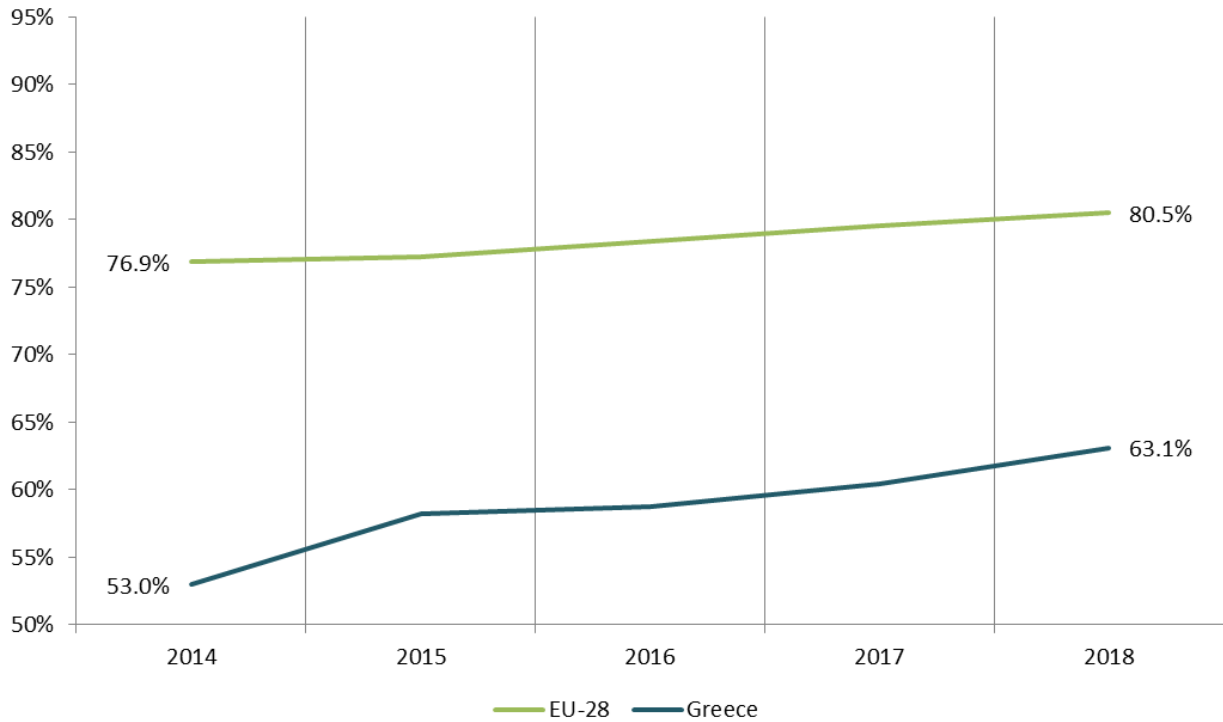
ISCED 5-8 = tertiary education

Source: Eurostat, ifsa_urgaed [extracted on 16.05.2019]

Although unemployment has been reduced by almost 10 p.p., the unemployment rate of those with low and medium level qualifications is still above 20%. Unemployment of tertiary graduates is significantly lower (13.7%), but still considerably high.

Employment rate of 20 to 34-year-old VET graduates increased from 53.0% in 2014 to 63.1% in 2018 ([10]).

Employment rate of VET graduates (20 to 34 years old, ISCED levels 3 and 4)



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series.

ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education

Source: Eurostat, edat_lfse_24 [extracted on 16.05.2019]

The increase (+10.1 pp) in employment of 20-34-year-old VET graduates in 2014-18 was higher compared to the increase in employment of all 20-34 year-old graduates (+8.3 pp) in the same period in Greece ([11]).

For more information about the external drivers influencing VET developments in Greece please see the case study from Cedefop's changing nature and role of VET in Europe project [11a]

[4] Source: Eurostat, tps00001 and proj_15ndbims [Extracted on 16.05.2019]

[5] Old-age-dependency ratio is defined as the ratio between the number of persons aged 65 and more over the number of working-age persons (15-64 years). The value is expressed per 100 persons of working age (15-64).

[6] See ELSTAT, <https://www.statistics.gr> (File A1605_SPO18_TS_AN_00_2009_00_2017_17_F_GR) Retrieved on 6/6/2018.

[7] <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/skills-forecast?locale=EN&dataSource=SFMJ&media=png&width=740&entitle=false>

[8] <https://www.eopep.gr/index.php/el/qualification-certificate/professional-rights>

[9] Source: Eurostat, une_rt_a [Extracted on 20.05.2019]

[10] Source: Eurostat, edat_lfse_24 [extracted on 16.05.2019]

[11] Source: Eurostat, edat_lfse_24 [extracted on 16.05.2019]

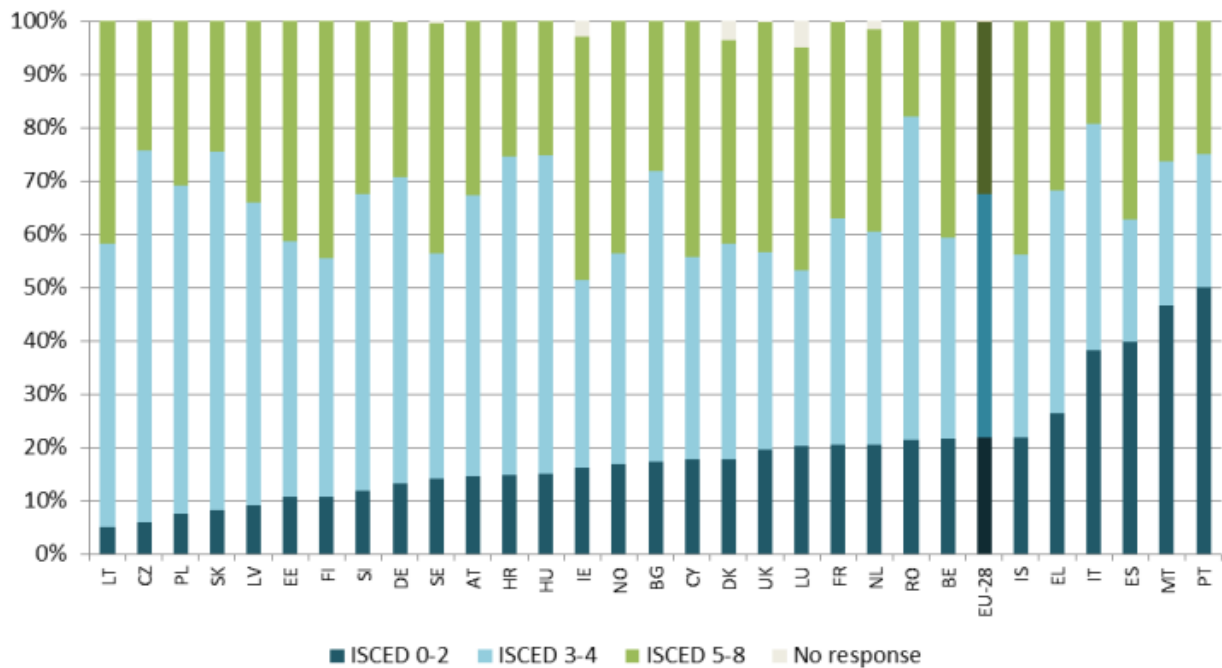
CHAPTER 4.

Education attainment

4.1 Share of high, medium and low level qualifications

Even with reduced spending on education ([12]), Greece has achieved progress in terms of educational attainment, while the already executed financing programme (via the overarching framework of the European Stability Mechanism), as well as the current ongoing reform agenda, place education as part of a national growth and development strategy. The share of those with medium level qualification (41.8%) is lower than the EU average (45.7%), while the share of tertiary graduates (31.7%) is very close to the EU average (32.2%).

Population (aged 25 to 64) by highest education level attained in 2018



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; low reliability for Czech Republic, Poland, and Latvia.

ISCED 0-2 = less than primary, primary and lower secondary education

ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education

ISCED 5-8 = tertiary education

Source: Eurostat, ifsa_pgaed [extracted on 16.05.2019]

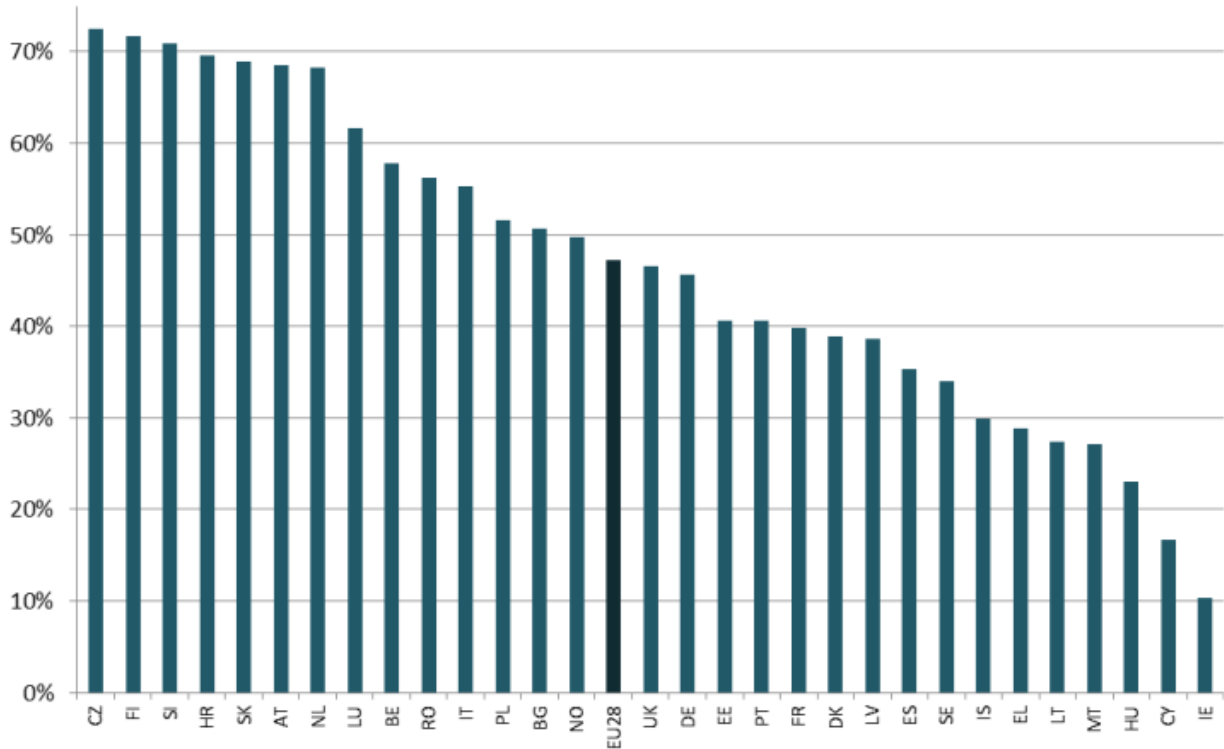
4.3 VET learners by level

Share of learners in VET by level in 2017

lower secondary	upper secondary	post-secondary
1.5%	28.8%	100%

Source: Eurostat, educ_uoe_enrs01, educ_uoe_enrs04 and educ_uoe_enrs07 [extracted on 16.05.2019]

Share of initial VET learners from total learners at upper-secondary level (ISCED level 3), 2017



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; not applicable for Ireland.

Source: Eurostat, educ_uoe_enrs04 [extracted on 16.05.2019].

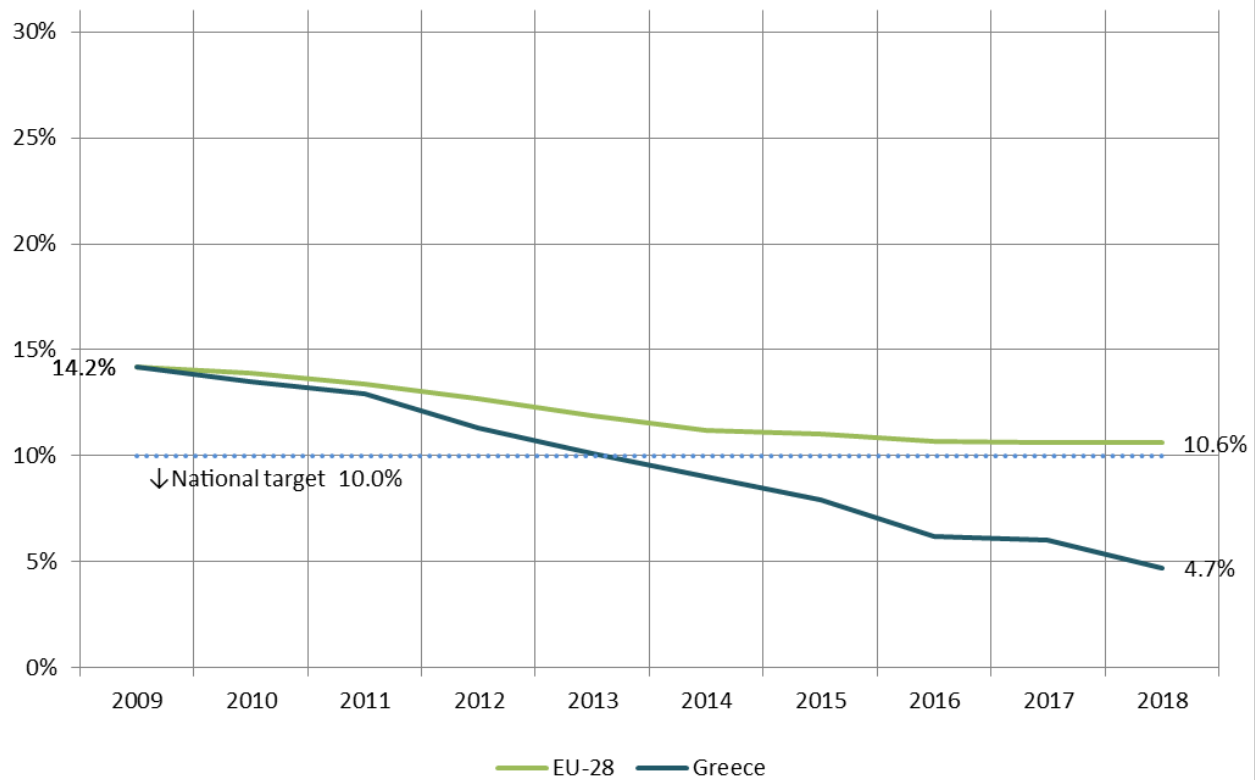
4.4 Female share

Information not available

4.5 Early leavers from education and training

The share of early leavers from education and training has decreased from 14.2% in 2009 to 4.7% in 2018. It is below the national target for 2020 (10.0%) and well below the EU-28 average (10.6%).

Early leavers from education and training in 2009-18



NB: Share of the population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training; break in series.

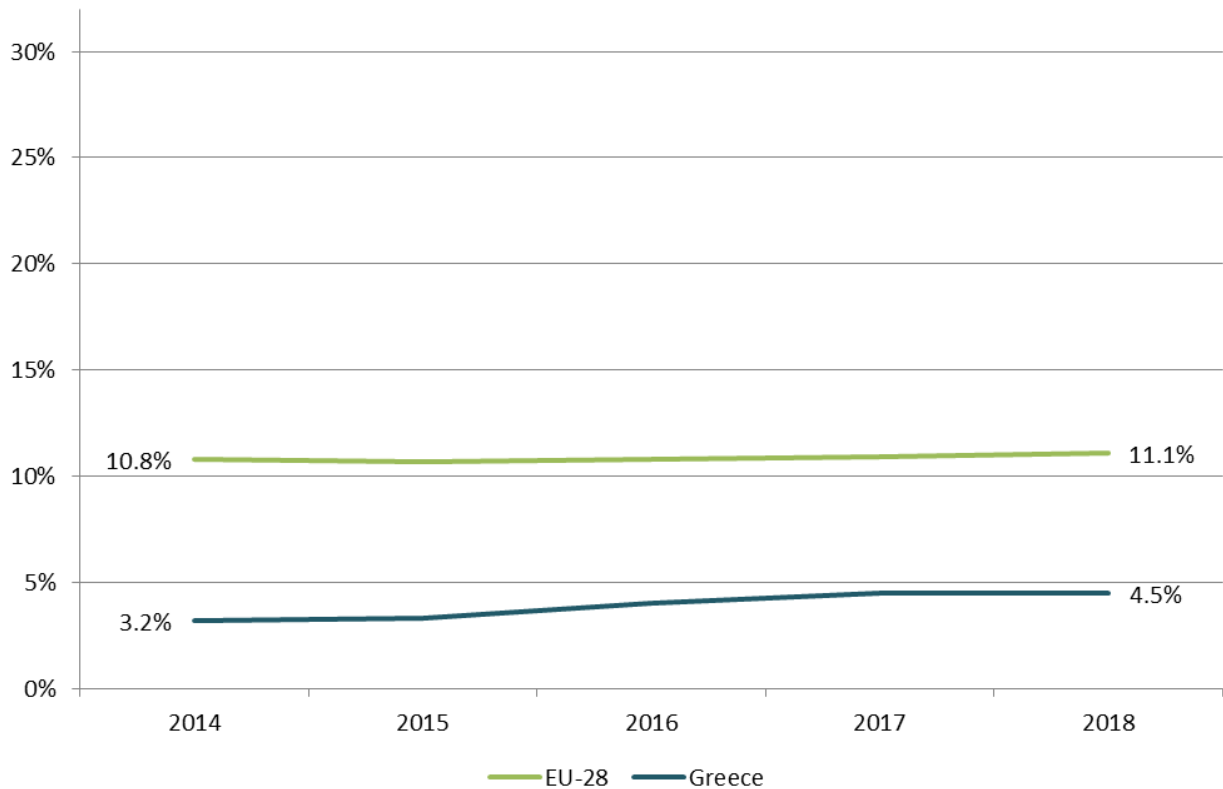
Source: Eurostat, edat_lfse_14 [extracted on 16.05.2019] and European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/info/2018-european-semester-national-reform-programmes-and-stability-convergence-programmes_en [accessed on 14.11.2018]

Dropout rates also vary by region, school and programme.

4.6 Participation in lifelong learning

Lifelong learning (LLL) offers training opportunities for adults, including early leavers from compulsory education.

Participation in lifelong learning in 2014-17



NB: Share of adult population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training.

Source: Eurostat, trng_ifse_01 [extracted on 16.05.2019]

Participation in LLL in Greece has been increasing, although it remains lower than the EU-28 average.

The need for updated skills, low participation in LLL and high NEET rates reflect enduring deficiencies in adapting to change and more specifically in equipping people in Greece with the necessary job specific skills that improve employability and well-being prospects.

4.7 VET learners by age

On average, learners in Greece tend to graduate from upper secondary vocational education and training (VET) programmes at a younger age than in the rest of the OECD: 90% of Greek upper secondary VET graduates are under 25 years old, against 80% on average for the OECD countries ([13]).

[12] A 36% drop in funding for education in 2009-15 has been reported by the Hellenic Government. See http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/docs/2015/monitor2015-greece_en.pdf

[13] http://gpseducation.oecd.org/Content/EAGCountryNotes/EAG2016_CN_GRC.pdf

CHAPTER 5.

VET within education and training system

NQF levels of education and training system ([14]):

- elementary school certificate (NQF level 1);
- lower secondary school certificate (NQF level 2);
- vocational school certificate (EPAS) / vocational upper secondary school degree and certificate (EPAL) / general upper secondary school certificate (NQF level 4)
- vocational upper secondary school degree, apprenticeship class / vocational training diploma (IEK) after graduates' certification / post-secondary and not higher education diploma or degree (NQF level 5)
- bachelor's degree (NQF level 6)
- bachelor's degree of 5 years / master's degree (NQF level 7)
- doctorate (NQF level 8)

Compulsory education in Greece lasts 11 years and extends from the ages of four to 15. The main stages of the Greek education system are three.

Primary education that includes pre-primary and primary schools

- pre-primary school in Greece has become compulsory for all four-year-old children, since school year 2018-2019. It's expected that in three years, the two-year pre-school education will become compulsory in all municipalities of the country and children will enrol in pre-primary schools (nipiagogeia) at the age of four.
- Infant centres (vrefikoi stathmoi), infant/child centres (vrefonipiakoi stathmoi) and child centres (paidikoi stathmoi) represent early childhood care. They operate under the remit of municipal authorities. They cater for children between two months and up to four years old.
- Primary school (dimotiko scholeio) lasts six years. It concerns children in the age range of six to 12 years. Since school year 2016/17, there is a single type of all-day primary school with a new revised daily timetable.

Secondary Education includes two cycles of study

- a lower secondary programme (gymnasio), which is compulsory, lasts three years, provides general education, covers ages 12 to 15 and is a prerequisite for enrolling at general or vocational upper secondary schools. There is also an evening lower secondary programme (esperino gymnasio); attendance starts at the age of 14;
- upper secondary programmes, which are optional and can take the form of a general or vocational upper secondary programme (geniko or epaggelmatiko lykeio); they last three years and learners enrol at the age of 15. There are also evening upper secondary programmes.

Tertiary Education

Most undergraduate degree programmes last four academic years of full-time study. Postgraduate courses last from one to two years, while doctorates last at least three years. The tertiary education comprises:

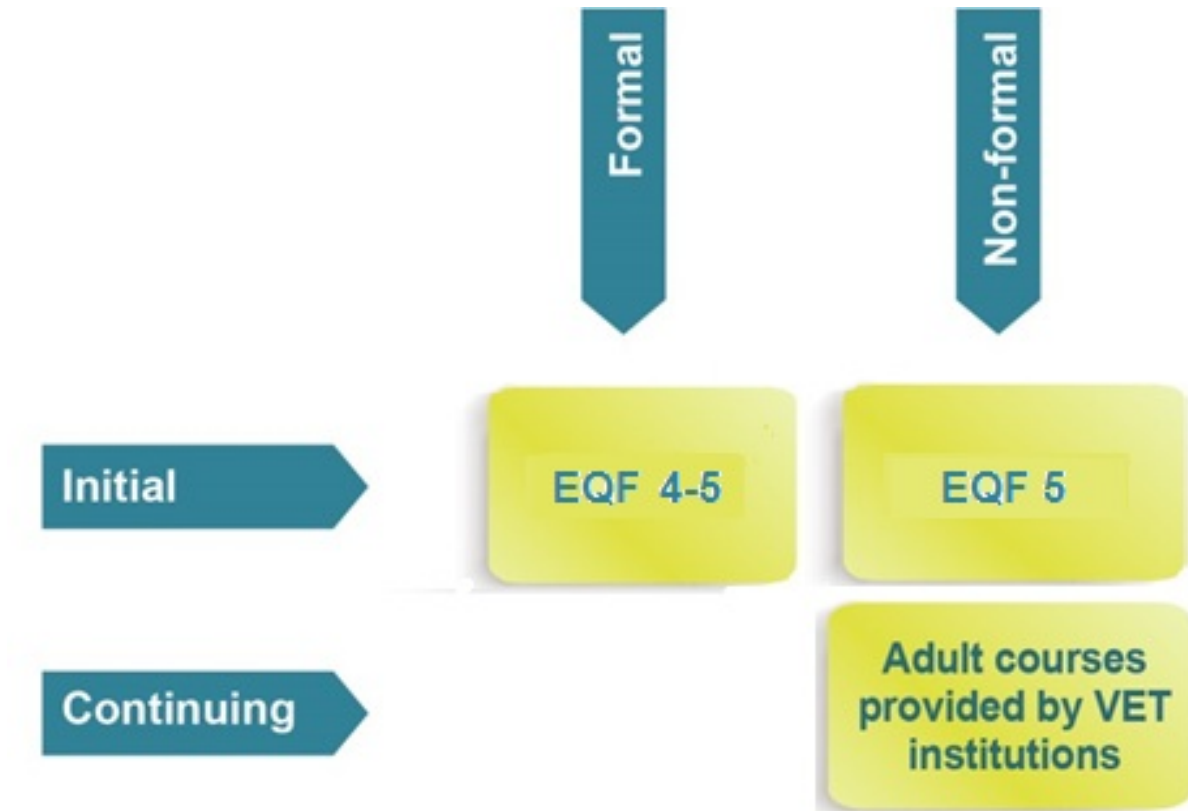
- universities (panepistimio)
- polytechnics
- the school of fine arts.
- technological education institutions (technologika ekpaideftika idrymata) (upgraded in universities in 2019)

- the school of pedagogical and technological education (ASPETE).

Two to four-year higher professional programmes are offered by higher professional schools, under the supervision of the competent ministry ([15]).

The Law 3879/2010 distinguishes between initial and continuing VET.

Formal, non-formal, initial and continuing VET



Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Greece

Both types provide the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to enter the labour market. Only initial VET is linked to professional rights (licences). Some initial VET programmes give learners access to the next qualification level (post-secondary or tertiary level). Non-formal continuing VET is part of adult learning. It is partially recognised in the private sector of labour market.

Formal VET leads to qualification level 4 and non-formal VET to qualification level 5 (of NQF and EQF), apart from the non-formal continuing VET certificate for “Security staff” awarded to professionals, which is at NQF level 3 (law 4229/2014).

The VET standard specifies the volume, learning outcomes, conditions for completion and continuation of studies for each VET type.

There are several VET learning options:

- school-based learning
- work practice (including internships and apprenticeships)
- self-learning (too partial)

The title of VET programmes is awarded to learners after state examinations that certify their qualifications. The examinations are usually learning-outcomes based and include a theoretical and a practical part. Responsible for the certification procedure are the education ministry or the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP) or the labour ministry.

[14]

Source: <https://nqf.gov.gr/en/index.php/ta-8-epipeda> Training schools (SEK) are not functioning any more, but their certificate (post lower secondary training, NQF level 3) are recognised.

[15] Source: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/greece_en

CHAPTER 6.

Apprenticeship

In upper secondary VET, there are apprenticeship programmes offered by EPAS Schools (scholes mathiteias).

In post-secondary VET, vocational training schools (IEK) offer 2.5-year programmes including optional internships; upper secondary vocational schools (EPAL) also offer apprenticeship programmes.

The apprenticeship programmes (offered by upper secondary vocational schools – EPAL) give to EPAL graduates the opportunity to upgrade their education qualifications and obtain work experience. The programme lasts for one academic year leading to a qualification at EQF level 5 and the corresponding professional license. It combines a seven-hour school-placed laboratory course (once per week) and the “workplace education programme – apprenticeship at work” in public and private companies (28 hours/ four days per week). During the latter, the apprentices receive a salary of 75% of the legal minimum wage and full insurance coverage, so that they become familiar with the rights and obligations of workers and so that employers acquire a sense of commitment to the apprentices' training.

CHAPTER 7.

VET governance

The government approves the national education policy designed by the education ministry. Social partners including trade unions and employer organisations participate in the working group on developing legislation.

Public and private VET providers are monitored, evaluated and usually funded either by the General Secretariat of lifelong learning, the directorates of secondary or professional education of the education ministry or supervised organisations by the education ministry (i.e. National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance -EOPPEP, universities).

The National committee for VET was set up in 2017. It is responsible for the overall coordination of governance of the Greek VET system, monitoring the implementation of the 2016 National strategic framework for the upgrade of VET and apprenticeship and evaluating its results. The National committee is supported in its work by a Technical committee for VET. VET governance has been also reinforced through the introduction of two new bodies, i.e. the National apprentice co-ordination body (ESOM) and the National council for education and development of human resources (ESEKAAD).

Several advisory bodies and social partner organisations participate in policy implementation. County governments prepare and implement local education development plans and coordinate activities of municipal educational institutions.

The governance of VET depends on different committees' decisions. As a consequence, its management has not yet reached the desirable integrity, immediacy or even coherence.

CHAPTER 8.

VET financing mechanisms

Formal VET is mostly state financed.

Apprenticeship programmes are financed from national, private and/or EU funds (i.e. European Social Fund). Participating enterprises contribute 45% of the apprentices' remuneration. EU funds amount a total of approximately € 30 million.

CHAPTER 9.

Teachers and trainers

9.1 VET teacher types

The following main categories of teachers and trainers are at play in VET programmes:

- general subject teachers
- vocational subject teachers
- teachers of practical training
- post-secondary VET teachers (in-school trainers)
- in-company trainers

General subject teachers are required to hold a higher education degree and pedagogical and didactical expertise. Vocational subject teachers are required to hold either a higher education degree and pedagogical and didactical expertise, or a lower vocational degree and relevant work experience.

Teaching staff in public post-secondary VET institutions come from two alternative lists:

- one comprising holders of the teaching competence certification, obtained on passing the certification exams;
- a second list with trainers who possess specific qualifications – tertiary education degrees, teaching experience, relevant training – but have not (yet) completed the certification process.

Since December 2015, the mechanism for certification of trainers from this second list has become self-funded via certification fees that the candidates have to pay on submission of their application and portfolio. According to Law 4485/2017, the certification of teaching competences of VET teachers and adult trainers will become a prerequisite for their enrolment in training programmes partly funded by the State. This will affect post-secondary non-formal IVET and CVET teachers.

9.2 Continuing professional development of teachers/trainers

The formal VET (EPAL) teachers' training is continuous and co-financed by ESF funds. Particular attention is paid to the CPD of teaching staff who work in school-based programmes and will be (re)allocated to the new apprenticeship programmes (at post-secondary level). Focus is on developing their knowledge and competences for collaborating with enterprises and apprentices. Also important is peer-learning and capturing the experience of teachers who already piloted work-based learning activities (other than apprenticeships) in previous years.

The informal VET (IVET and CVET) adult trainers' training is continuous. In order to be certified by the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP) they must attend a programme of at least 100 hours on adult training. They also have to renew their certification every 10 years; to do so they either have to acquire teaching experience of at least 150 hours or attend a programme of at least 50 hours on adult training.

The 2016 National strategic framework for the upgrade of VET and apprenticeship introduced broad provisions on requirements and training of enterprise staff that will become in-company trainers, linked to a future goal of accreditation of companies that participate in apprenticeships. The strategy foresees that in-company trainers (at least one per company) will attend a short and flexible training programme, focusing on pedagogical knowledge and competences as well as on adult training techniques. Participation by professional associations and chambers is encouraged. In-company trainers should attend a training programme designed jointly by the national employment service, chambers and education institutions. Greek authorities are aiming at creating a register of certified in-company trainers.

CHAPTER 10.

Shaping VET qualifications

As a major step to cover the gap between VET and labour market needs ([16]), a new skills forecasting mechanism has been introduced ([17]). The mechanism:

- addresses the necessity for early identification of medium-term trends in labour market needs;
- eases the design of employment policies in accordance with training and education programmes;
- allows the implementation of the Youth Guarantee scheme in Greece;
- increases the impact of VET (i.e. development of required VET curricula), most importantly via providing necessary labour market information that will inform evidence-based policy making in the field of VET.

See also Cedefop's skills forecast ([18]).

10.2 Designing qualifications

In April 2016, the education ministry published the Strategic framework for upgrading VET and apprenticeships where there is an explicit reference to the need of upgrading the quality of curricula.

Upper secondary vocational programmes (EPAL) offer specialties that are defined by law; these specialties and their provision are determined by a decision of the education Minister. The specialties offered should reflect the needs of the economy, the proposals of the regional VET boards (not fully established), social partners, chambers and professional associations, and the recommendations of the labour ministry, OAED ([19]), the ministry of development and other competent ministries and will also be informed by the results of the skills forecasting mechanism. A structured procedure for this kind of consultation does not exist. The detailed curriculum of each specialty must be designed in accordance with the relevant occupational profile (if this exists) ([20]) and the principles and guidelines laid down by ECVET. The curricula of formal upper secondary VET are developed by IEP ([21]) and issued in the form of ministerial decisions. The new law also requires that the duration and details of the timetable and curriculum will be assessed and, if this is deemed necessary, revised ([22]). The education ministry has been recently promoting through a large-scale ESF project the upgrading and updating of EPAL curricula, the writing of new education material (laboratory guides, books) and relevant training for EPAL teachers.

Specialties of apprenticeship programmes were decided by the National committee for VET and apprenticeships, based on recommendations by the Technical committee ([23]) and considering the findings of the skills forecasting mechanism. Several factors, such as demand for existing specialties and regional recommendations were taken into account. IEP is responsible for the development of curricula for the EPAL apprenticeship class and apprenticeship programmes (EPAS), which should include a clear workplace component (that was missing from existing EPAS programmes).

The curricula of post-secondary VET programmes (IEK) are developed by the General Secretariat for vocational education, training and lifelong learning (which also supervises all the public and private vocational training providers) and certified by the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP). The study guide of each specialty includes the job profile, the learning outcomes expressed as knowledge, skills and competences by subject and specialty, the corresponding credits, the potential candidate placement in the labour market, the timetable and specific curriculum, the teaching methods, and the necessary equipment. In 2017/18, 65 curricula of the new IEK specialties (established by Law 4186/2013) were drawn up together with the respective exam-subjects repository.

- [17] Based upon Law 4368/2016, February 2016 and Ministerial Decree 4013/410/26.05.2016 on the introduction and operation of a relevant network and the supportive information system
- [18] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/skills-forecast>
- [19] Manpower Employment Organisation
- [20] In the context of the overall updating of certification, the Ministry of Education in co-operation with EOPPEP and in consultation with social partners, is still in the process of reforming the system of Occupational Profiles.
- [21] Institute of Education Policy
- [22] In these terms Law 4386/2016 introduces ongoing evaluation of curricula in contrast to Law 4186/2013 where revision was programmed for every 6 years.
- [23] The National committee for VET was set up in 2017. It is responsible for the overall coordination of governance of the Greek VET system, monitoring the implementation of the 2016 National strategic framework for the upgrade of VET and apprenticeship and evaluating its results. The National committee is supported in its work by a Technical committee for VET.

CHAPTER 11.

Quality assurance

The law on lifelong learning (Law 3879/2010) sets quality standards for lifelong learning, introducing a requirement of teacher and trainer competence and professional development for teachers and trainers in adult education and stipulating continuous monitoring and evaluation of the national lifelong learning network. Specifically, it envisages (Article 18) that providers of lifelong learning services that are funded from the public purse must be evaluated as regards the realisation of the objectives set out in their lifelong learning programme and receive subsidies based on their effectiveness. It also provides (Article 19) for the establishment of a system for the professional development and evaluation of the trainers and staff involved in non-formal education and teachers in 'second chance' schools.

Other legislative initiatives in Greece aiming to upgrade the quality of education provided at all levels are:

- law 3848/2010 on upgrading the role of the teachers and trainers – establishment of norms for evaluation and meritocracy in education and other provisions;
- law 4009/2011 on the structure, operation, quality assurance of studies, and internationalisation of institutions of higher education;
- Joint Ministerial Decision 26381/2017 (GG 490B/20.2.2017) on the quality framework for apprenticeship and the implementation of the apprenticeship class which falls under the jurisdiction of the education ministry upgrading the learning methods of apprenticeship implementation, setting specific obligations for both the companies and the apprentices and providing the means to evaluate the apprenticeship system;
- Joint Ministerial Decision No 26385 (GG 491B/20.2.2017) on the quality framework for VET curricula.

Specifically, for apprenticeship programmes, the education and labour ministries provide:

- quality assurance at the curriculum design stage;
- quality assurance at the stage of preparation for implementation;
- quality assurance at the implementation stage;
- post-implementation evaluation.

CHAPTER 12.

Validation of prior learning

Not applicable

CHAPTER 13.

Incentives for learners

The main incentives used by the state to increase VET participation, include:

- reinforcing the permeability for graduates of upper secondary vocational education (EPAL). EPAL graduates can take part in a designated national examination for admission to tertiary education programmes. They have at least a 20% quota (recently increased) for technological bachelor and higher professional programmes. A 2018 law provides for an increase to 5% admission quota to bachelor programmes, reinforcing VET permeability. Also, graduates have access to a joint group of faculties at universities, tertiary not higher education schools and military schools regardless of their graduation field, by sitting the same examinations as the general education graduates. EPAL graduates will also have direct access to the newly formed two-year professional programmes provided by universities ([24]) leading to a degree at level 5 of the National qualifications framework.
- the “Post-secondary year - apprenticeship class” for EPAL graduates. This apprenticeship programme strengthens VET attractiveness by enabling EPAL graduates to upgrade their professional qualifications. Apprentices receive a salary of 75% of the legal minimum wage and full insurance coverage.

The Lifelong learning law (Law 3879/2010) covering CVET provision also foresees incentives for updating the knowledge, skills and competence of the labour force (Article 18). These may include:

- granting education leave for participation in lifelong learning programmes, especially for workers in the private sector;
- setting up personal education accounts, with contributions from the employer and the employee (and possibly the state) to cover the worker’s training needs;
- establishing personal learning time accounts to let workers take part in continuous training programmes.

Apart from such regulatory incentives, there are also financial incentives for workers and the unemployed to take part in continuing training programmes aiming to upgrade their knowledge, skills and competences. In practice, participation of learners in CVET is promoted through financial incentives that combine a voucher for classroom training with remuneration foreseen for workplace training / work placements in many programmes promoting key Active labour market policies (ALMP). Continuing training is subsidised primarily from ESF, but also from the Greek training fund (LAEK).

In an effort to tackle youth unemployment the labour ministry, in cooperation with the ministries of education, culture and development, elaborated a unified operational ‘Action plan of targeted interventions to boost youth employment and entrepreneurship in the framework of the national strategic reference framework (NSRF) operational programme (2014-2018). In the framework of this action plan, vocational training-related initiatives were implemented to foster employment and entrepreneurship of persons aged 15 to 24 and 25 to 35 ([25]). The budget was 620 million EUR (total) and the potential beneficiaries were estimated to 380 000 people for the programming period 2014-20.

[24] They will only accept EPAL graduates

[25] The first Youth Guarantee implementation plan was submitted to the European Commission in 31.12.2013. An updated plan was submitted and approved in May 2014. An update file for 2018: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1161&langId=en&intPageId=3337>

CHAPTER 14.

Incentives for enterprises to boost their participation in VET provision

The lifelong learning law (Law 3879/2010, Article 18) establishes incentives for the development of lifelong learning and updating of the knowledge, skills and abilities of the country's human resources, including subsidies for lifelong learning providers. They are supported by public funds based on their effectiveness. This provision has not yet been implemented, but overall work on this topic was recently reassumed.

In addition, companies are entitled to receive back their contributions to the Greek training fund (LAEK) if they carry out training programmes for their personnel. The revenues of this account, which is managed by the Manpower employment organisation (OAED), come from employers' contributions to the Social Security Organisation, with each company contributing 0.24% of its gross wage bill.

Many companies receive financial incentives to offer training places to students in or graduates of VET programmes. In this way they contribute to the education of learners, as for example in the EPAL ([26]) and EPAS ([27]) apprenticeship schemes. There are also subsidies for companies that take part in vocational training actions funded by ESF that combine training with counselling and work placement schemes. CVET providers benefit from the training voucher schemes that largely form the basis of active labour market policies.

[26] <https://www.e-nomothesia.gr/inner.php/epaggelmata-tekhnes/koine-upourgike-apophase-26385-2017.html?print=1> (Joint Ministerial Decision No. 26385/2017 GG 491 / B / 20-2-2017: Apprenticeship Quality Framework)

[27] <https://www.taxheaven.gr/laws/circular/view/id/23805> (Joint Ministerial Decision No. 24018/411 / 26.5.2016-Subsidy for the practical training of pupils of the EPAs.OAED Apprenticeship under Law 3475/2006)

CHAPTER 15.

Guidance and counselling

The education ministry offers in-school vocational guidance to students and parents (information about job and study possibilities, alternative pathways, risks that go with dropping out of school) through the decentralised structures of the department of vocational orientation. The secondary school programme includes a vocational guidance class, and vocational guidance can be selected as the focus of inter-thematic projects. There are also counselling and guidance centres for meetings bringing together children or young people (up to age 25) and their teachers and guardians (KESY).

OAED ([28]) has established 30 vocational education career offices (GDEE) within the framework of the EPAS schools, aiming at linking vocational education to the world of work by placing students in appropriate jobs in private and public-sector enterprises. OAED also offers counselling services aimed at mobilising the unemployed and helping them enter the labour market. These services include ([29]):

- workshops for activation - mobilisation of the unemployed;
- vocational guidance counselling - career management, for first-time jobseekers with no clear occupational goal and people obliged to change their occupation;
- job search counselling;
- counselling for business involvement- to encourage the development of entrepreneurial skills and help unemployed persons start businesses with enhanced feasibility prospects.

OAED is also a member of the European job mobility portal (EURES) network, which provides information, advice and hiring/placement services to workers and jobseekers in other European countries, and to employers looking to hire people. In Greece there are 39 EURES points in various cities.

Specialised centres offer counselling and vocational guidance (SYEP) services to students, jobseekers, employed individuals interested in managing their career or in a career change, parents, and special target groups (such as special education needs learners and migrants).

The agency responsible for lifelong counselling and vocational guidance is EOPPEP ([30]), which is a member of the corresponding European network (ELGPN) that was set up by the European Commission in 2007. EOPPEP is responsible for: helping to design and implement national counselling and vocational guidance policy, coordinating the action of public and private SYEP services providers, promoting the training and further education of SYEP staff and specifying the required qualifications, implementing actions supporting counsellors, and supporting citizens in matters relating to development and career management.

Teenagers can use a designated vocational guidance portal ([31]) to look for information about occupations, take skills and vocational guidance tests and create their own personal skills file.

There is also an electronic lifelong careers counselling forum (IRIS), which is intended for public and private sector vocational guidance and careers counsellors and aims at encouraging supplementary actions by public and private sector counselling bodies and staff, nationally and in each region separately, and improving the quality of the services provided ([32]).

The National strategic framework for upgrading VET and apprenticeships (2016) explicitly refers to the need for an expansion of the guidance services. EOPPEP has developed occupational standards for career counsellors and at this stage is working on the creation of an institutional framework - qualification certification system for the careers / vocational guidance advisors and the set-up of a relevant register of certified career guides / vocational guidance officers ([33]).

Please see:

- Information on guidance services in Greece ([34]);
- Cedefop's labour market intelligence toolkit ([35]);
- Cedefop's inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices ([A1]).

[A1] <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-greece>

[28] Manpower employment organisation

[29] <http://www.oaed.gr/symbouleutikes-yperesies1> (10/10/2018)

[30] <https://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/el/work-guidance-and-consulting/eoppep-syep> (10/10/2018)

[31] <http://www.EOPPEP.gr/teens/> (10/10/2018)

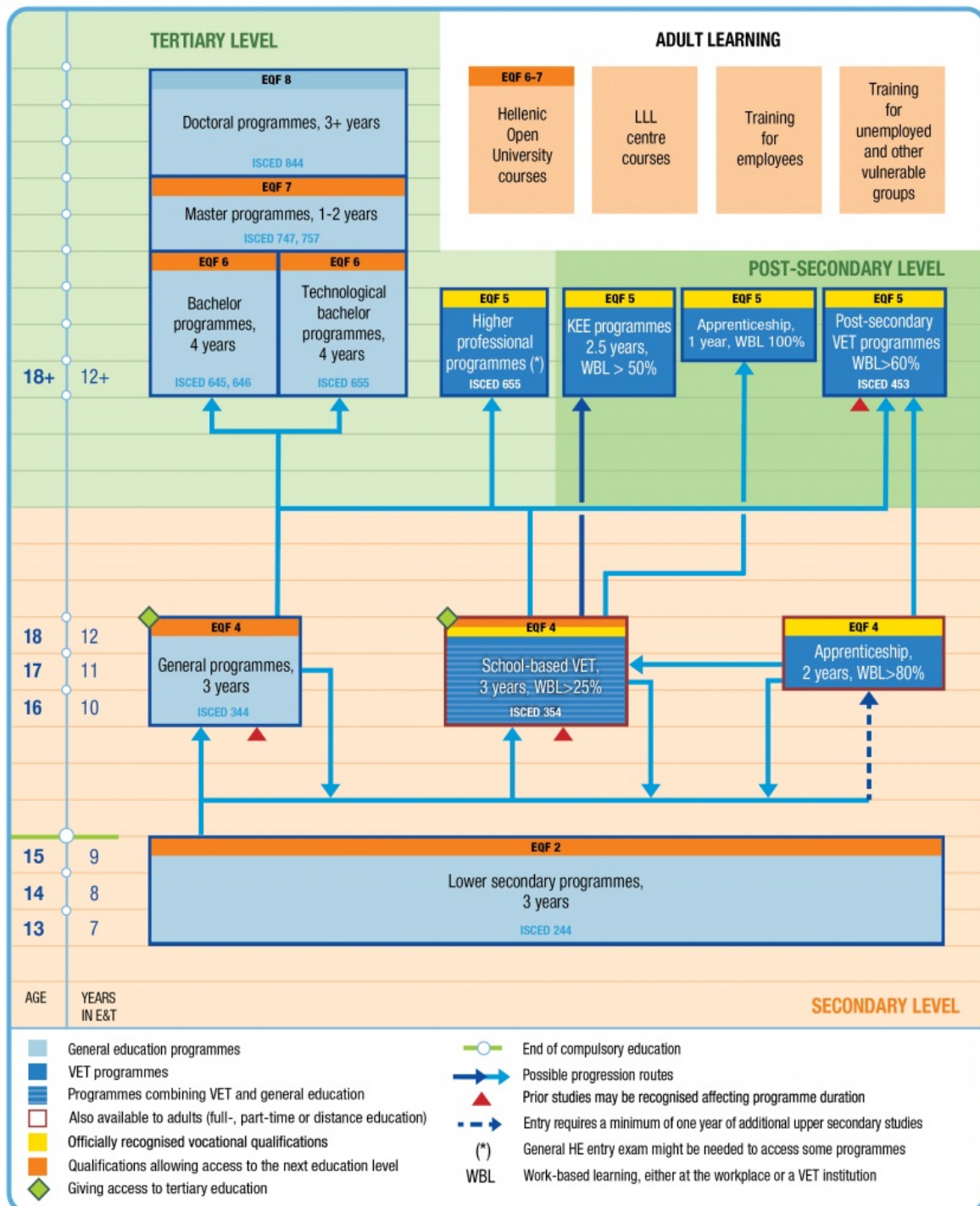
[32] <https://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/el/how-to/register-freelance> (10/10/2018)

[33] <https://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/el/work-guidance-and-consulting/eoppep-upgrade-actions/national-forum-syep-irida> (10/10/2018)

[34] <https://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/en/counseling-a-vocational-guidance-en/euroguidance-national-centre-1>

[35] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/resources-guidance/toolkit/where-can-you-find-more-information-in-your-country-and-elsewhere>

Vocational education and training system chart



NB: ISCED-P 2011.

Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Greece, 2020.

VET Programme Types

EQF 4
School-based VET
3 years, WBL>25%
ISCED 354

School-based VET programmes leading to EQF level 4. ISCED 354 upper secondary vocational education (Epaggelmatiko Lykeio - EPAL)

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	10	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	16	Usual completion age	18
Length of a programme (years)	3		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓

ECVET or other credits Not applicable

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance) Full-time

- school-based learning
- work practice (practical training at school)

Main providers Public schools supervised by the education ministry.

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies >25%

Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships) Practical training at school

Main target groups	<p>Programmes are available for graduates of lower secondary programmes young people and also for adults.</p> <p>There are specific programmes for learners with special educational needs, such as moderate and severe disability. These programmes are offered by special vocational schools (ENEEGYL law 4459/2018 – state gazette A' 142)</p>
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Learners should hold a lower secondary school leaving certification (compulsory education) and be at least 15 years old.
Assessment of learning outcomes	To complete a VET programme, learners need to pass a final examination.
Diplomas/certificates provided	Successful graduates receive a vocational upper secondary school degree and / or a vocational upper secondary school certificate.
Examples of qualifications	Vehicle technician, employee in administration and finance, technician of electrical systems, installations and networks, IT applications technician
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	<p>They can enter to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • higher professional programmes at level 5; • tertiary education at level 6; • post-secondary VET programmes (IEK) at level 5; • post-secondary VET apprenticeship programmes (EPAL) at level 5; • secondary school VET EPAL (different specialty) at level 4; • labour market.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	Not applicable
General education subjects	<p>✓</p> <p>All students attend general education subjects such as mathematics, physics, Greek and English language, history, gymnastics, ICT, religion, civic education</p>
Key competences	<p>✓</p> <p>([36])</p>
Application of learning outcomes approach	<p>✓</p>

Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners Information not available

[36] <http://proson.eoppep.gr/en/QualificationTypes/Details/54> and <http://proson.eoppep.gr/en/QualificationTypes/Details/53> and Law 4186/2013

EQF 4

Apprenticeship

2 years, WBL>80%

ISCED 353

Apprenticeship programmes leading to EQF level 4. ISCED 353 Epagelmatiki Sxoli (EPAS)

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	353
Usual entry grade	11	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	17+	Usual completion age	18+
Length of a programme (years)	2 (up to)		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓

ECVET or other credits Not applicable

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance) Full-time

- school-based learning
- work practice (practical training at school)
- apprenticeship

Main providers Public schools supervised by the labour and rural development ministries

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies >80%

Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)

- practical training at school
- apprenticeships

Main target groups Programmes are available for learners that have successfully completed the first year of upper secondary education; they can also be adults.

Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Learners should have successfully completed the first year of upper secondary education and be at least 16 years old.
Assessment of learning outcomes	To complete a VET programme, learners need to pass a final in-school examination (Law 3475/2006-State gazette 146 vol.B-article 11).
Diplomas/certificates provided	Vocational school (EPAS) specialisation diploma (ptychio) (according to Law 3475/2006-State gazette 146 vol.B-article 12)
Examples of qualifications	Beautician, metal working technician, agrotourism and agroindustry businesses, dairy - cheese making
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	<p>Progression opportunities are significantly limited for graduates of EPAS apprenticeships programmes. They can enter to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • second year/class of school based upper secondary vocational education programmes (EQF4); • post-secondary VET programmes (IEK, EQF 5); • labour market.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	Information not available
General education subjects	✗
Key competences	<p>✓</p> <p>Depending on the curriculum of each specialisation.</p>
Application of learning outcomes approach	✗
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

EQF 5

Post-secondary VET
programmes

WBL>60%

ISCED 453

Post-secondary VET programmes leading to EQF level 5. ISCED 453 Institouto Epagelmatikis Katartisis (IEK)

EQF level	5	ISCED-P 2011 level	453
Usual entry grade	13	Usual completion grade	15
Usual entry age	18+	Usual completion age	21+
Length of a programme (years)	2,5		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✗
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	Yes and No At public schools, free of charge. At private schools, learners pay fees.	Is it available for adults?	✓ only for adults

ECVET or other credits Not applicable

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance) Full-time

- school-based learning (2 years)
- work practice (practical training at school or in-company learning)
- internship or apprenticeship (6 months)

Main providers Public or private schools supervised by General Secretariat of lifelong learning (GSLL) of the education ministry

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies >60%

Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practical training at school • apprenticeship or internship
Main target groups	Programmes are available for adults.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	<p>Successful completion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • secondary apprenticeship programmes (EPAS); • upper secondary vocational programmes (EPAL); • upper secondary general education programmes (GEL). <p>Learners should be adults.</p>
Assessment of learning outcomes	These programmes only allow learners to obtain an attestation of programme completion; alternatively, they can take VET certification examinations (practical and theoretical) conducted by the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP) leading to an EQF level 5 certificate ([37]).
Diplomas/certificates provided	Diploma of vocational training at post-secondary level (<i>Diploma epagematikis katartisis epipedou metadefterovathmias epagelmatikis katartisis</i>)
Examples of qualifications	Accounting office specialist, nursing traumatology, computer networks technician
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	They can enter to Labour market
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	Information not applicable
General education subjects	✗
Key competences	✗
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓

Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners Information not available

[37] <https://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/el/certification-exams/thesmikoiek>

EQF 5

Apprenticeship

1 year, WBL 100%

ISCED 453

Apprenticeship programmes leading to EQF level 5. ISCED 453

Apprenticeship programmes offered by upper secondary vocational schools (EPAL)

EQF level	5	ISCED-P 2011 level	453
Usual entry grade	13	Usual completion grade	13
Usual entry age	18+	Usual completion age	18+
Length of a programme (years)	1		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✗
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓
			(only for adults)
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	Full-time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in workshops (1 day/week) • apprenticeship (4 days/week) 		
Main providers	Public schools supervised by the education ministry		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	100%		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apprenticeship • workshops at schools 		
Main target groups	Programmes are available for adult graduates of upper secondary vocational education.		
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	This programme is offered to those who hold an upper secondary school leaving certificate and an EPAL specialisation degree.		

Assessment of learning outcomes	To complete this programme, learners need to pass a final examination.
Diplomas/certificates provided	Degree of VET specialty (<i>Ptychio epagematikis eidikothtas ekpaideusis kai katartisis</i>)
Examples of qualifications	Vehicle technician, employee in administration and finance, technician of electrical systems, installations and networks, IT applications technician.
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	They can enter the labour market.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	Information not applicable
General education subjects	✗
Key competences	✓ Depending on the programme
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

EQF 5

Higher professional
programmes

ISCED 655

**Higher professional programmes leading to EQF level 5. ISCED 655
Higher Professional Programmes (Sxoles anoteris epaggelmatikis
ekpaidefsis) (dance and theatre schools, schools of petty officers and
the Academy of merchant navy)**

EQF level 5**ISCED-P 2011 level** 655**Usual entry grade** 13**Usual completion
grade** 15+**Usual entry age** 18+**Usual completion age** 21+**Length of a
programme (years)** 3-4**Is it part of
compulsory
education and
training?** ✗**Is it part of formal
education and training
system?** ✓**Is it initial VET?** ✓**Is it continuing VET?** ✗**Is it offered free of
charge?** Yes and No
At public schools, free of
charge. At private schools,
learners pay fees.**Is it available for
adults?** ✓
(only
for
adults)**ECVET or other credits** Not applicable**Learning forms (e.g. dual,
part-time, distance)** Full-time**Main providers** Public and private schools supervised by respective ministries
(e.g. education, culture, defence, tourism, mercantile Marine)**Share of work-based
learning provided by
schools and companies** It depends on the programme**Work-based learning type
(workshops at schools, in-
company training /
apprenticeships)** work practice (practical training at school or on the job training)

Main target groups	Programmes are available for adults. Special education needs learners can also attend these programmes.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Admission is granted via general national or a programme-specific examination to graduates of upper secondary vocational education programmes (EPAL) or upper secondary general education programmes (GEL).
Assessment of learning outcomes	To complete a higher professional programme, learners need to pass a final examination
Diplomas/certificates provided	Title of other type of typical tertiary education school (Ptycheio / Diploma)
Examples of qualifications	Actor, dance teacher, merchant marine officer
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	They can enter to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • higher education (tertiary) through a specific examination • labour market
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	Information not applicable
General education subjects	✗
Key competences	✓
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

EQF 5

KEE programmes

2.5 years

WBL>50%

Post-secondary vocational programmes provided by universities leading to EQF level 5 (KEE programmes – VET centres; currently not available)

EQF level	5	ISCED-P 2011 level	Not applicable
Usual entry grade	13	Usual completion grade	15
Usual entry age	18+	Usual completion age	21+
Length of a programme (years)	2,5		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✗
Is it initial VET?	✗	Is it continuing VET?	✓
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓
			(only for adults)
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	Full-time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-based learning (theoretical and laboratory training) • practical training (placement in a company) 		
Main providers	Vocational centres supervised by each university (higher tertiary education level)		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	50%		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical training (placement in a company) • workshops at schools 		
Main target groups	Programmes are available for adults.		

