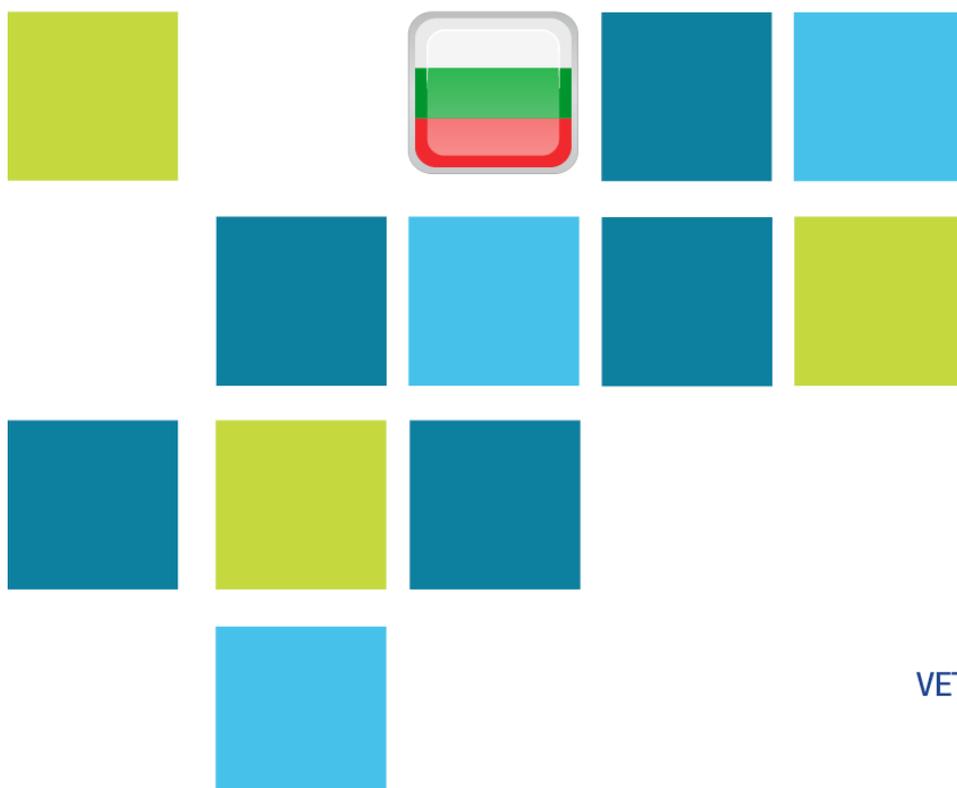




VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
AND TRAINING IN EUROPE
BULGARIA

SYSTEM DESCRIPTION



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- професионална квалификация)
- Initial VET programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (ПАМКОВА ПРОГРАМА В за професионално образование с придобиване на трета степен на професионална квалификация)
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- Initial/Continuing VET programmes leading to EQF level 3, ISCED 354 (ПАМКОВА ПРОГРАМА В за професионално образование с придобиване на втора степен на професионална квалификация)
- Initial/continuing VET programmes leading to EQF level 3, ISCED 354 (ПАМКОВА ПРОГРАМА В за професионално образование с придобиване на втора степен на професионална квалификация)
- Initial/Continuing VET programmes leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 453 (ПАМКОВА ПРОГРАМА Г за професионално обучение с придобиване на четвърта степен на професионална квалификация)
- References

CHAPTER 1.

Summary of main elements and distinctive features of VET

VET in Bulgaria comprises the following main features:

- VET governance is multi-layered (national, regional, local);
- there are four VET qualification levels (ranging from EQF [1] level 2 to EQF level 5);
- dual VET (introduced in 2014) remains a major challenge for the country;
- state educational standards play a major role in shaping qualifications and curricula.

Distinctive features [2]

VET is provided at secondary and post-secondary (non-tertiary) levels. There are more learners in VET compared with general education: 51.7% of the total secondary education population in 2017 and 54,5 % in 2018. Secondary general education schools may also open VET classes by a special order of the Education Minister. This option is popular in small towns and rural areas.

Since 2016/17, secondary education has been offered in two stages. This improves access to VET, as learners may now choose their education path also after completing grade 10.

In the national context, the term initial VET is only used to refer to programmes leading learners to their first qualification, such as textile worker qualification at EQF levels 2 or its part.

VET programmes are pursued afterwards; for example, textile production operator and textile technician qualifications at EQF level 3 and 4 are considered continuing VET.

According to the pre-school and school education act and the VET act, the acquisition of vocational qualifications is regulated by State educational standards. These standards exist for most VET qualifications. VET qualifications at all levels (EQF 2 to 5) are learning outcomes based.

Following the European credit system for VET (ECVET) [3] principles, recent qualifications comprise units of learning outcomes, although a credit system is not yet fully established.

The legal basis for validation of non-formal and informal learning in VET has been in place since 2015 and procedures and quality assurance criteria have been developed. Implementation of the Bulgarian qualifications framework will ease putting validation arrangements in place.

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- [1] European qualifications framework for lifelong learning (EQF). The European qualifications framework for lifelong learning is a common European reference framework whose purpose is to make qualifications more readable and understandable across different countries and systems. Covering qualifications at all levels and in all sub-systems of education and training, it provides a comprehensive overview over qualifications in the 39 European countries currently involved in its implementation. The core of the European qualifications framework is its eight reference levels defined in terms of learning outcomes, i.e. knowledge, skills and autonomy-responsibility. Learning outcomes express what individuals know, understand and are able to do at the end of a learning process. Countries develop national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) to implement the European qualifications framework. The implementation of the European qualifications framework was based on the Recommendation on the European qualifications framework for lifelong learning adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 23 April 2008 (EC 111/01/2008). A revised and strengthened Recommendation on the European qualifications framework (EC/189/03/2017) was adopted on 22 May 2017 by the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council. The purpose of this revised recommendation is to ensure the continuity as well as a further deepening of the European qualifications framework.
- [2] Adapted from Cedefop (2018). *Spotlight on vocational education and training in Bulgaria*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8120_en.pdf
- [3] https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/the-european-credit-system-for-vocational-education-and-training-ecvet_en

CHAPTER 2.

Main challenges and policy responses

To make VET more responsive to labour market needs, the pre-school and school education act (2015), which covers VET, increased the responsibility of local and regional authorities.

The reform increased their role in planning VET intake and defining occupations, funding staff salaries, organising vocational training for the unemployed, and equipping VET schools.

Employer organisations are also becoming more actively involved in implementing VET. Since the 2016 amendments to the VET act, they can propose changes to the list of VET qualifications.

Since the introduction in 2015/16, some schools have started offering dual VET programmes. Several pilot projects supporting dual training aim at expanding the training offer in cooperation with business and public authorities from Bulgaria and abroad. Measures, including specialised forums, media campaigns and events, help attract learners and motivate employers to become involved in dual VET that is still mostly project-based.

To address quality concerns, the Ministry of Education and Science is adopting the European quality assurance reference framework (EQAVET). The 2015 quality assurance regulation mandates VET providers for adult training to organise self-assessment based on a set of indicators.

The government is strengthening initial training and continuing professional development opportunities for VET teachers and trainers to motivate more young people to enter the profession. The new system helps them to keep up with technological innovation and modern teaching methods, and allows for faster career advancement linked to performance.

The 2015-17 VET strategy action plan proposes ways to address the challenges: modularisation, more flexible VET provision, and better and more easily accessible career guidance services. Its implementation is also likely to contribute to raising adult participation in learning, which is currently among the lowest in the EU.

There is a high level of skills mismatch. According to the NSI business inquiries in March 2019 37.0% of the industrial enterprises pointed out the labour shortages a factor limiting their activity. In comparison with the same period of previous year (March 2018) the value of the indicator increased by 4 p.p. to 33.3%.

Data from VET in Bulgaria Spotlight 2018 [4]

[4] Adapted from Cedefop (2018). *Spotlight on vocational education and training in Bulgaria*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8120_en.pdf

CHAPTER 3.

External factors influencing VET

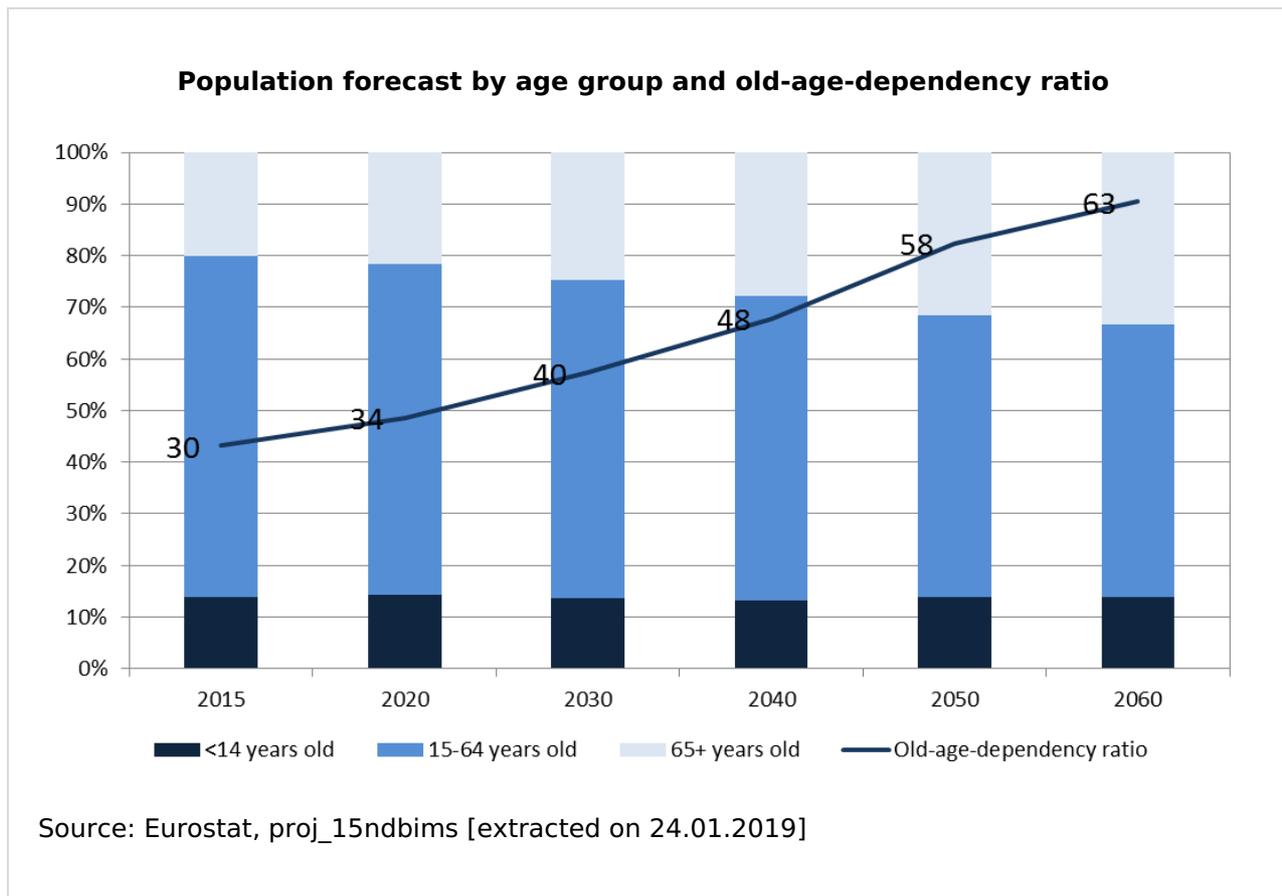
3.1. Demographics

Population in 2018: 7 050 034 [5]

It decreased by 3.2% since 2013 due to negative natural growth and migration [6].

As in many other EU countries, the population is ageing.

An old-age dependency ratio is expected to increase from 30 in 2015 to 63 in 2060.



Demographic changes have an impact on vocational education and training (VET). Participation in secondary education has been decreasing. This has led to optimisation of a school network aiming at better efficiency while safeguarding the quality. Since the academic year 2013/14, the number of VET schools has decreased by 11.9% up to 2018/19. However the number of VET centres has increased by 12.4% for the same period. Adjustments will continue in line with demographic trends.

3.2. Economics

Main economic sectors:

- manufacturing;
- wholesale and retail trade;

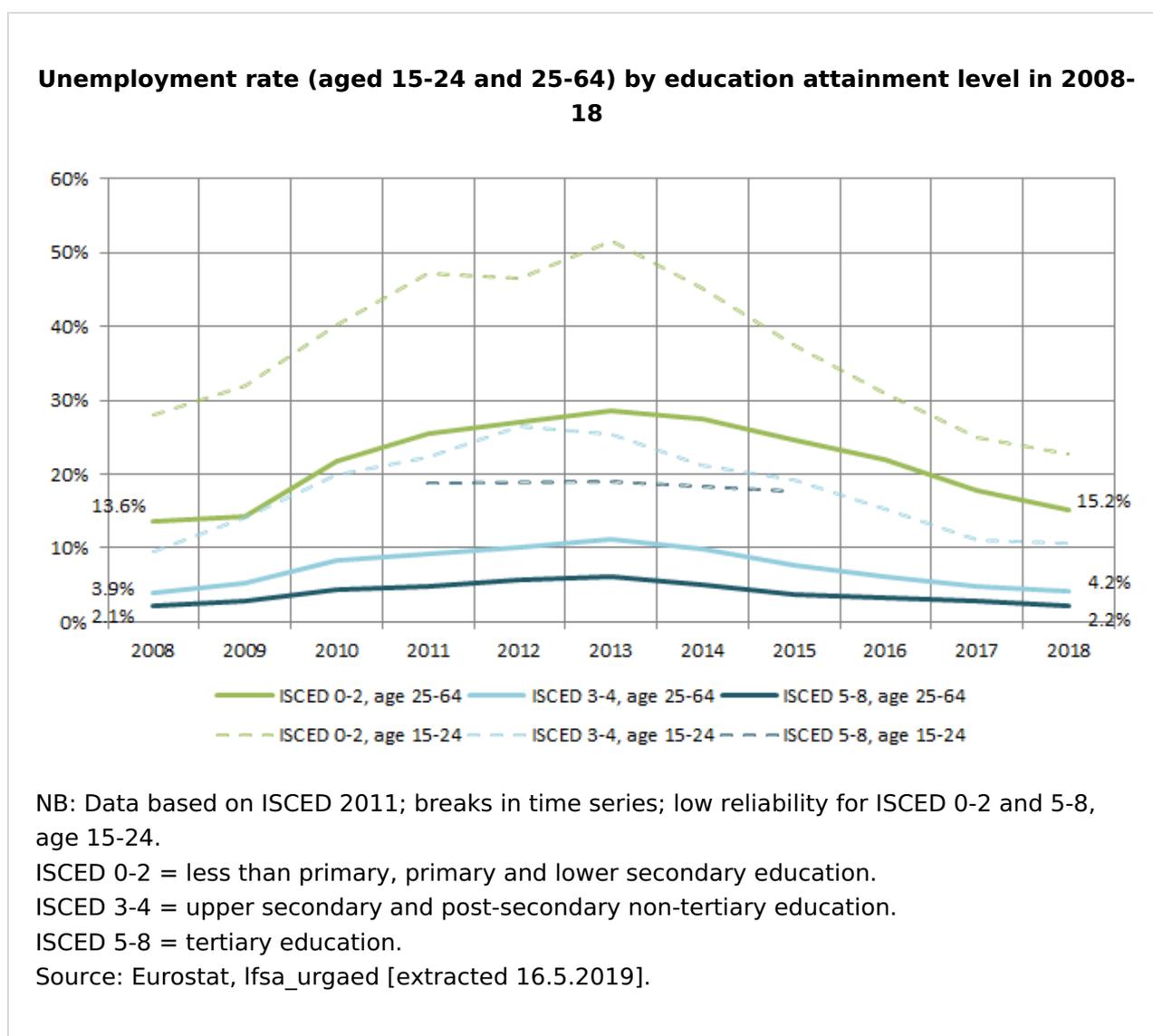
- construction;
- public administration;
- agriculture, forestry and fishing;
- transportation and storage.

Export comprises mainly manufactured goods, machinery and transport equipment, miscellaneous manufactured articles, food and live animals, chemical and mineral fuel, beverages and tobacco.

3.3. Labour market

Not many occupations/professions are regulated and the labour market is considered flexible.

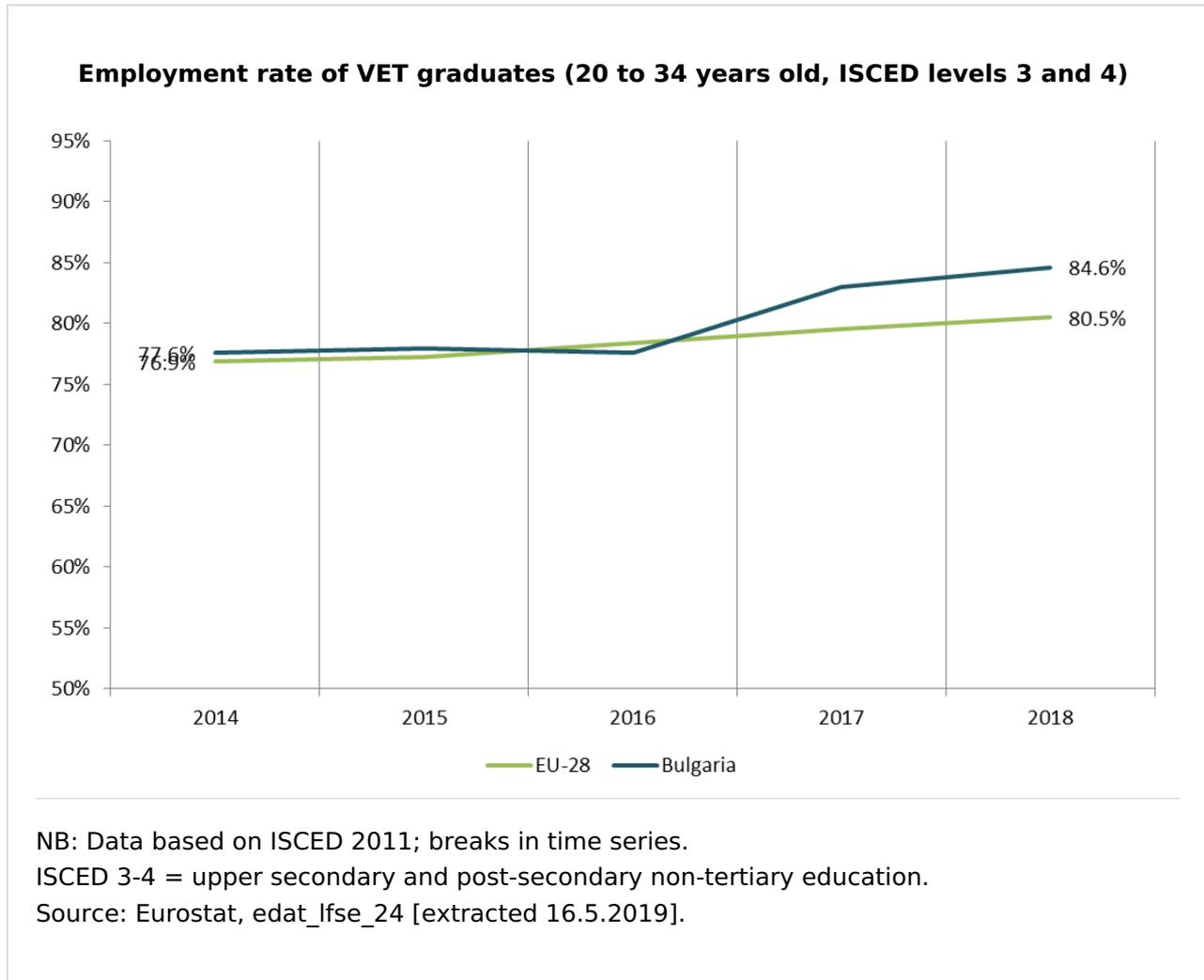
Total unemployment [7] (2018): 4.9% (6% in EU-28); it decreased by 0.1 percentage point since 2008 [8].



Unemployment is distributed unevenly between those with low and high-level qualifications. The gap has increased after the crisis as unskilled workers are more vulnerable to unemployment. People with low qualifications are more likely to be unemployed. In 2018, the unemployment rate of people with medium-level qualifications, including most VET graduates (ISCED levels 3 and 4) is back to the levels of the pre-crisis years.

Employment rate of 20 to 34-year-old VET graduates increased from from 77.6% in 2014 to 84.6%

in 2018.



The increase (+7 pp) in employment of 20-34 year-old VET graduates is lower compared to the increase in employment of all 20-34 year-old graduates (+7.7 pp) in the same period in Bulgaria [9].

[5] NB: Data for population as of 1 January. Eurostat table tps00001 [extracted 28.1.2019]

[6] NB: Data for population as of 1 January. Eurostat table tps00001 [extracted 16.5.2019].

[7] Percentage of active population, 25 to 74 years old.

[8] Eurostat, une_rt_a [extracted 20.5.2019].

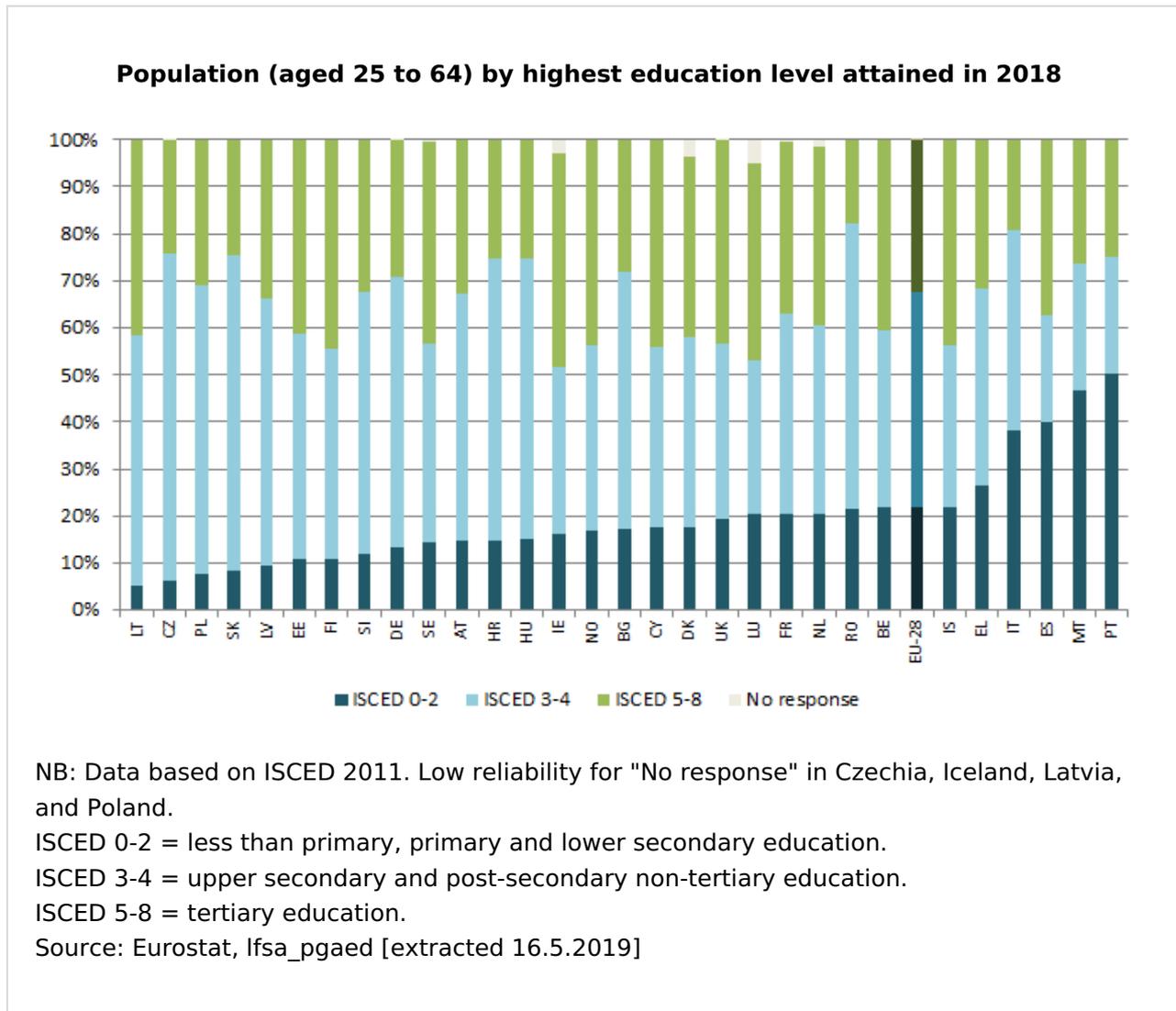
[9] NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series. ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education; Eurostat, edat_ifse_24 [extracted 16.5.2019].

CHAPTER 4.

Education attainment

4.1. Share of high, medium and low level qualifications

The share of the population aged up to 64 with higher education (28.2%) places Bulgaria below the EU28 average. The share of those with low or without qualifications places Bulgaria (17.4%) almost in the middle of EU-28 Member States.



4.3. VET learners by level

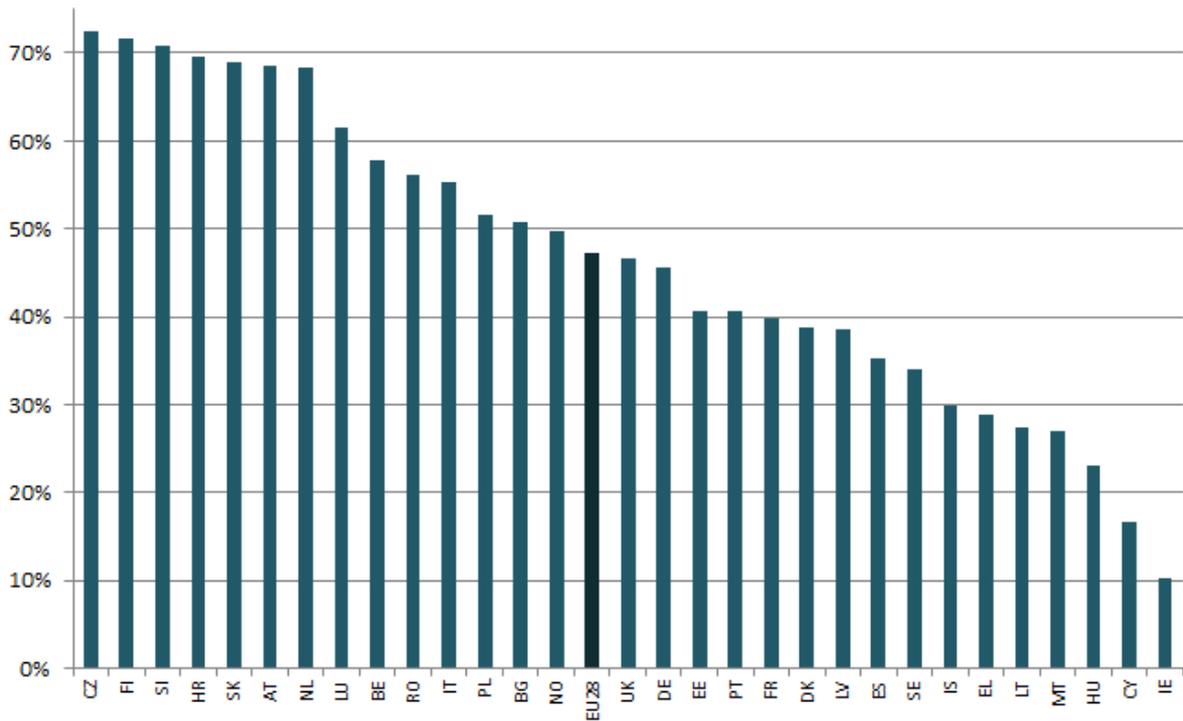
Share of learners in VET by level in 2017

lower secondary	upper secondary	post-secondary
3.7%	50.7%	100%

NB: Data based on ISCED 2011.

Source: Eurostat, educ_uoe_enrs01, educ_uoe_enrs04 and educ_uoe_enrs07 [extracted 16.5.2019].

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



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011.

Source: Eurostat, educ_uoe_enrs04 [extracted 16.5.2019]

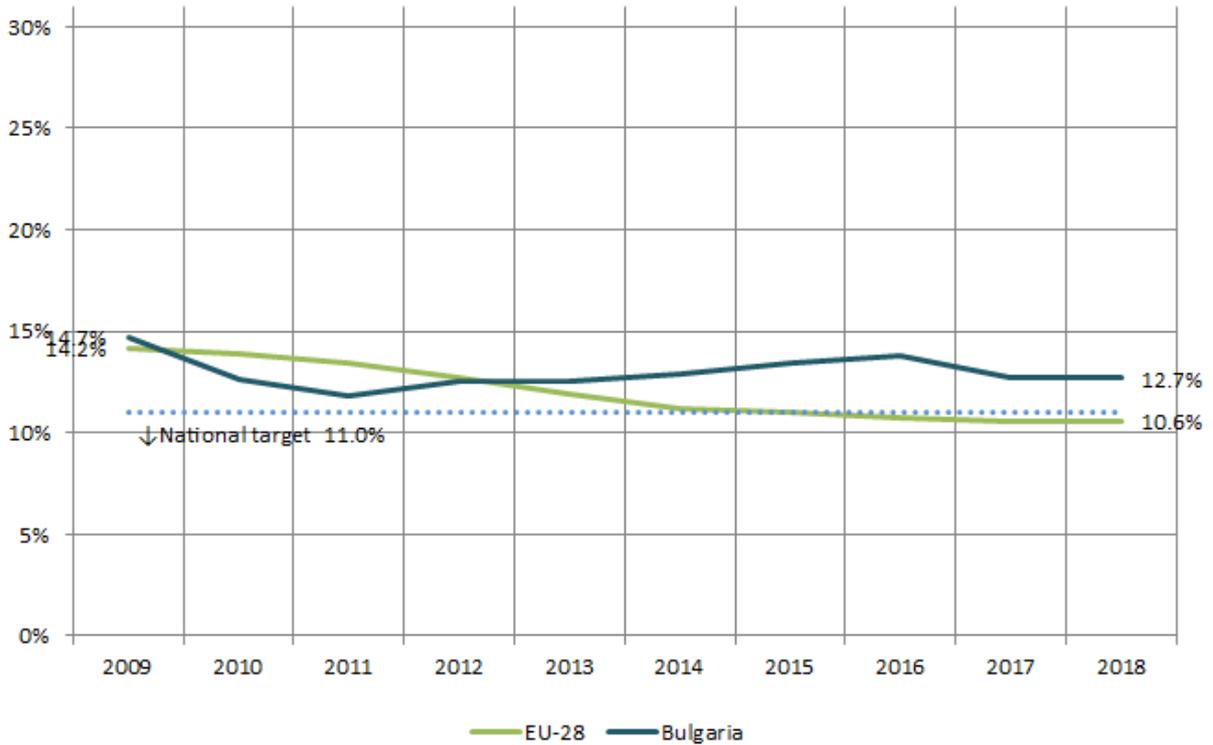
4.4. Female share

Traditionally there are more females (53.2% for 2018) in VET [10]. Females enrol more often in economics and administration programmes (the most popular options), services (tourism, hotels and restaurants) as well as design and clothing industry. Males prefer programmes related to computer systems and coding (the most popular options), transport, agriculture, economy, construction.

4.5. Early leavers from education and training

The share of early leavers from education and training has decreased from 14.7% in 2009 to 12.7% in 2018. It is 2.1 pp above the EU-28 average and also above 11.0%, the national country target.

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.

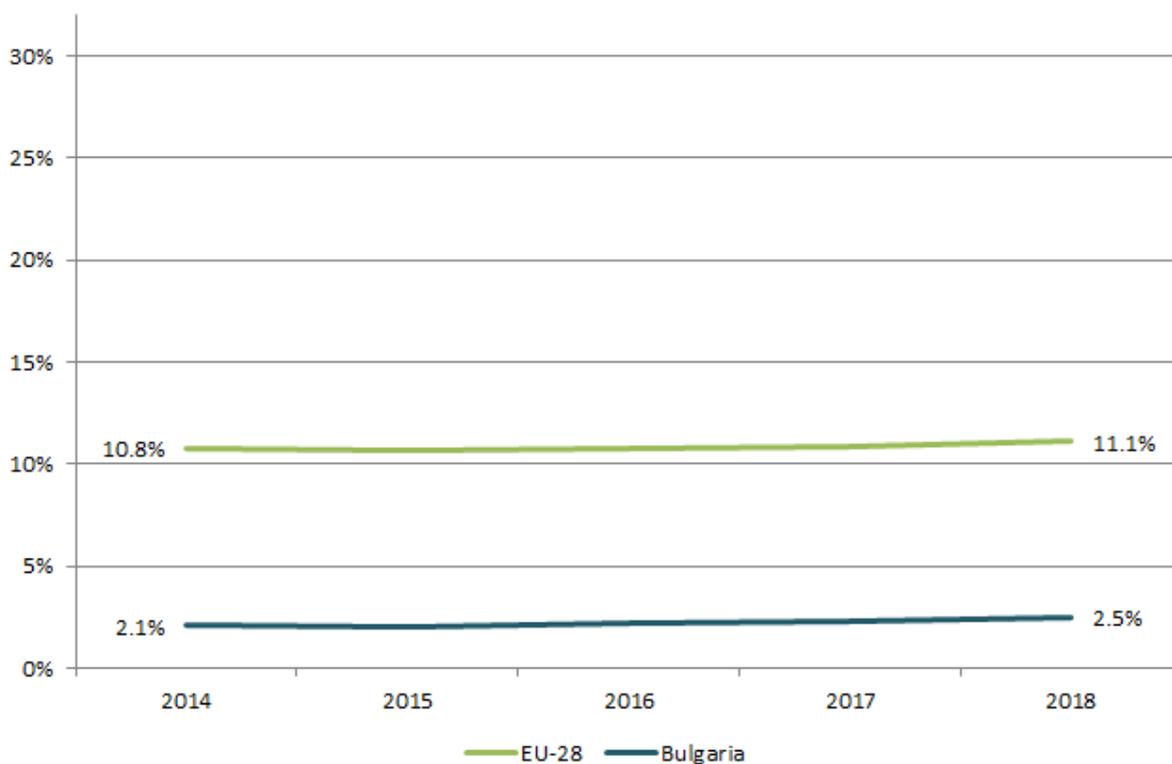
Source: Eurostat, edat_ifse_14 [extracted 16.5.2019] and European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/info/2018-european-semester-national-reform-programmes-and-stability-convergence-programmes_en [accessed 14.11.2018].

Dropout rate from VET (%)

4.6. Participation in lifelong learning

Lifelong learning offers training opportunities for young people and adults.

Participation in lifelong learning in 2014-18



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

Source: Eurostat, trng_lfse_01 [extracted 16.5.2019]

Participation in lifelong learning in Bulgaria has slightly increased in the past decade. However, it is well below the EU28 average (with 2.5% participation in lifelong learning in 2018). Increasing participation is one of the biggest challenges that the country faces.

4.7. VET learners by age

Information not available

[10] <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/4921/persons-who-attained-professional-qualification-level-vocational-training>

CHAPTER 5.

VET within education and training system

The education and training system comprises:

- primary and lower secondary education (1, 2 and 3);
- secondary education comprises general (profiled) (ISCED 344 and 341) and VET programmes (ISCED 351 and 354) in two subsequent stages: the first (3-year, grades 8-10) and the second (2-year, grades 11-12). It is compulsory for learners until they reach age 16. At the end of stage two, learners who pass State matriculation examinations (*matura*) (Bulgarian language in addition to another subject or – for VET learners – State qualification examination) receive a secondary education diploma (EQF level 4) and certificate for VET qualification after successful passing the State qualification examination. Others receive a certificate for the completion of secondary education with access to vocational training for adults but not to higher education. VET programmes provide graduates with general education diploma in addition to a VET qualification certificate;
- post-secondary non-tertiary VET (ISCED level 4);
- higher education (ISCED levels 6, 7 and 8);
- apprenticeships, internships and dual VET (range of VET qualifications ranging from ISCED 351 to 454).

Primary and lower secondary education (grades 1-7) is compulsory [11]. Primary education starts at age seven and is provided by State, municipal and private schools. There are no VET programmes at this level. Graduates may continue to general or vocational secondary education. In 2016/17, all general secondary education programmes became 'profiled', i.e. they specialise on a selected subject, for example, mathematics, natural sciences or foreign languages.

Secondary education comprises general (profiled) (ISCED 344 and 341) and VET programmes (ISCED 351 and 354) in two subsequent stages: the first (3-year, grades 8-10) and the second (2-year, grades 11-12). It is compulsory for learners until they reach age 16. At the end of stage two, learners who pass State matriculation examinations (*matura*) (Bulgarian language in addition to another subject or – for VET learners – State qualification examination) receive a secondary education diploma (EQF level 4) and certificate for VET qualification after successfully passing the State qualification examination. Others receive a certificate for the completion of secondary education with access to vocational training for adults but not to higher education. VET programmes provide graduates with a general education diploma in addition to a VET qualification certificate.

Higher education comprises the following programmes:

- professional bachelor (ISCED 655, EQF level 6; NQF level 6a);
- bachelor (ISCED 645, EQF level 6; NQF level 6b);
- master's (ISCED 766, 767, EQF/ NQF level 7);
- PhD (ISCED 864, EQF/ NQF level 8).

School based VET is provided only at a secondary level. Until August 2016, the lowest level of qualification could also be acquired in lower secondary education programmes. Out-of-school adults (16+) can still acquire the lowest VET qualification level (VET qualification level 1, EQF level 2) before secondary education.

Secondary VET aims at obtaining a vocational qualification but also comprises a general education part that is required to acquire a secondary education diploma.

Vocational education and training complies with the requirements of the State educational

standards and consists of theory and (study and production) practice.

Post-secondary, non-tertiary vocational qualifications (ISCED 2011 level 4, EQF level 5) can be acquired only by people with completed secondary education. The acquired qualification at this level provides access to the labour market.

Examples of such qualifications are company manager, hotel manager, restaurant manager as well as sports and military/defence qualifications.

Training in real work environment: apprenticeships, internships, dual VET

There are several types of training in real work environment.

In 1992, so-called apprenticeships for employees were introduced. They often guarantee a job at the end of training, according to the contract with the employer. The duration of this type of apprenticeships is up to six months.

In 2014, internships were introduced for young people (up to 29 years old) who have already acquired a VET qualification (or higher education degree) but have no work experience in the profession. The duration of internships is between six and 12 months.

Since 2014, dual VET has started to evolve. It allows learners to acquire VET qualifications. The practical training in a company alternates with periods of theoretical training in a school or another VET provider. In-company trainers (mentors) are responsible for the practical training.

For adult learners the following options are available in order to acquire a VET qualification:

- 300 hours for EQF level 2;
- 660 hours for EQF level 3;
- 960 hours for EQF level 4;
- 1 260 hours for EQF level 5.

The legal framework distinguishes six types of initial and continuing VET (IVET and CVET) programmes, defines age and entry requirements, and regulates content and duration.

[11] Education is compulsory till the age of 16.

CHAPTER 6.

Apprenticeship

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Since 2014, dual VET has started to evolve. It allows learners to acquire VET qualifications. The practical training in a company alternates with periods of theoretical training in a school or another VET provider. In-company trainers (mentors) are responsible for the practical training. They are required to have a VET or higher education qualification and at least three years of professional experience.

More information for Bulgaria is available at: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/apprenticeship-schemes/country-fiches/bulgaria>

Learn more about apprenticeships in the national context from the European database on apprenticeship schemes by Cedefop: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/apprenticeship-schemes/scheme-fiches>

CHAPTER 7.

VET governance

VET stakeholders are the following:

- the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria – implements the legislative activity in the field of VET;
- the Council of Ministers sets out the government policy in the field of VET;
- the education ministry manages, coordinates and implements the VET policy;
- the labour ministry participates in the implementation of the national VET policy;
- the culture ministry implements the VET policy in art schools;
- the sports ministry implements the VET policy in sports schools;
- the health ministry participates in the coordination of the list of professions;
- the sectoral ministries are involved in the development, coordination and updating of the State educational standards for the acquisition of qualifications; in the development, coordination and updating of the list of professions; in coordinating the admission plan for schools, funded by them;
- the employers' representatives participate in the development, coordination and updating of the State educational standards for the acquisition of qualifications, the legislative framework and policy documents, as well as in the updating of the list of professions and in organising and conducting qualification examinations;
- the Economic and Social Council discusses and makes proposals with regard to issues, related to education, including VET in the context of lifelong learning;
- the National Council for Tripartite Cooperation discusses and gives opinions on draft legislation regarding employment and vocational qualification and thus participates in the formulation of VET policy. The Council is composed on the tripartite principle. It is a body for consultations and cooperation at a national level for labour, social insurance and living standard issues, consisting of two representatives of the government (of whom one is the Vice Prime Minister), two representatives of trade unions and two representatives of employers' organisations;
- the National Council for Vocational Qualifications at the labour ministry coordinates the development of national policies and strategies for training for unemployed and employees, leading to the acquisition of professional qualifications;
- the National Council for the Promotion of Employment at the labour ministry is also constituted on the tripartite principle. Its functions are to discuss and give opinions regarding the development and implementation of the employment policy and the national action plan for employment.
- the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training (NAVET) is a specialised body within the Council of Ministers. The Agency develops the State educational standards for the acquisition of VET qualifications; it maintains the list of professions according to the needs of the labour market; it licenses and exercises further control over the activities of VET institutions for people over 16 years of age and over the activities of vocational guidance providers;
- the Employment Agency implements the State policy on promoting employment and provides career information, counselling and training for employees and unemployed;
- the Human Resource Development Centre is a national agency, which coordinates the management and administration of the EU Erasmus+ Programme;
- the National Inspectorate of Education is a new structure (2018). The Inspectorate does not exercise control over the activities of directors and teachers in schools and kindergartens. In fact, the inspection, performed by the inspectorate, is the process of preparing a comprehensive independent assessment of the quality of services provided by kindergarten

or school education at some point of their Activities, based on criteria and indicators, grouped into fields.

At regional level:

- the regional administration participates in the implementation of the government policy for employment and acquisition of VET qualifications;
- the Regional Employment Service Directorates implement the government policy for training of unemployed and employed adults for acquiring a vocational qualification; they offer training measures and projects; provide coordination and support in the field of vocational training, consultancy of and guidance for the local employment offices;
- the regional management units of the education ministry (territorial administrative units of the education ministry, situated in the 28 district centres) implement the State policy in the field of VET at a regional level through projects, programmes and strategies for development, functioning and improvement of VET at a district level;
- the permanent and temporary employment committees to the Regional Councils for regional development identify, organise and control the implementation of the State policy on the promotion of employment and training for acquiring a vocational qualification at a regional level.

At local level:

- the municipalities participate in the development of a VET policy within their territories regarding: the employment needs for vocational guidance and training of students, unemployed and other groups; the necessary equipment of schools, vocational training providers and centres for information and guidance through funds from the municipal budget;
- the Labour Offices of the Employment Agency provide career services: career information; advice and guidance for inclusion in the appropriate program/measure for employment and training;
- the Cooperation Councils at the Labour Office Directorates monitor the implementation of programmes and measures included in the national action plan for employment.

CHAPTER 8.

VET financing mechanisms

According to the VET Act, sources of financing for State and municipal schools, vocational training centres for information and vocational guidance and training centres for trainers are:

- the State budget;
- the municipal budget;
- donations;
- own revenue;
- national and international programmes;
- other sources.

Funding mechanism for secondary VET schools is based on financial resources delegated to schools per student and varies between EUR 1 000 and 1 500 per year per student depending on the specifics of the VET programmes delivered.

The financing of vocational training offered after secondary education is provided by individuals under the terms and conditions set by the education minister. The training is financed by:

- learners;
- employers;
- the State budget (active labour market policy);
- EU programmes (mainly ESF).

Secondary VET is mostly State-financed. Private VET schools may also apply for State funding. However, only 11 out of 350 VET schools were private in 2017/18.

Most (over 90%) adult VET providers are private. They may also receive public financing. In 2016, self-financing of training courses by learners was the most common source (53.49%) followed by employer financing (29.14%) and funding through national or European public resources (16.83%).

CHAPTER 9.

Teachers and trainers

9.1. VET teacher types

In VET there are:

- general subject teachers;
- vocational subject teachers;
- trainers who work in vocational centres;
- mentors for training that takes place at enterprises.

The qualification requirements are set by the relevant legislation. Strategic documents also contain provisions for teachers and trainers.

The required qualification of teachers in general studies subjects is a Master's, Bachelor's or Specialist /Professional Bachelor (national qualifications framework level 6A, European qualifications framework level 6) higher education degree acquired in:

- a specialty of a professional field corresponding to the relevant school subject with a professional qualification in teaching;
- a specialty of another professional field and additional professional qualification in teaching in the relevant school subject.

There is no special training provided to teachers in general studies subjects in respect of their work at vocational schools, since the mandatory general education background for a certain educational level is the same for all types of schools in the country.

Teachers in a vocational training subject must hold a Master, Bachelor or Specialist higher education degree in:

- specialties of vocational fields corresponding to the professions on the list of professions for vocational education and training taught at the relevant school and an additional professional qualification in teaching;
- specialties of a professional field corresponding to the professions taught at the relevant school. This is applied in cases where specialists working in companies or prominent experts in the respective field are invited to participate in vocational training at VET institutions, with the aim to provide up to date specialised knowledge and improve the link with practice and increase the attractiveness of VET.

The required qualification of trainers at vocational training centres is laid down in the State educational requirements by professions in the 'Requirements to trainers'. A trainer is required to be a university graduate with a Master or Bachelor educational degree in a specialty corresponding to the professional field out of the list of professions for vocational education and training wherein the profession to be taught has been classified. There is no requirement for additional pedagogical qualifications for trainers at vocational training centres.

The conditions for professional development of staff within the public education system (in-service training) and also the procedures for acquiring professional qualification levels are set by Regulation No 5 (1996) [12].

There are five professional qualification levels (highest being level one) and three types of teachers positions that depend on the experience and qualifications. These are: a teacher, a

senior teacher and a head teacher- . The Ordinance No 12 (2016) sets the terms and conditions for acquisition of such position, the conditions for continuing teachers' qualification on the base of credit points. Training is provided by the approved training providers which are registered in the teachers training programmes informational system of the education ministry [13]

VET teacher's profession isn't attractive in Bulgaria.

The decrease of VET teachers aged up to 34, the fact that the profession was amongst those with high demand (12 420 vacancies), together with the steady increase of the relative share of older VET teachers (aged 60+) poses a risk of staff shortage in the next 20 years.

9.2. Continuing professional development of teachers/trainers

The 2016 Ordinance No 12 [14] regulates the statute and the professional development of the teachers, school headmasters and pedagogical staff. According to the ordinance, teachers (including VET teachers) are required to improve their competences continuously.

Teachers receive a certificate for continuing training or specialisation credit points. Sixteen training hours (academic) equals to one credit point. At least three credit points in acquired in external programmes are compulsory for each period of appraisal in addition to one credit point per year acquired in the institution they work. The credit system ensures opportunities for accumulation, recognition and transfer of credits (for the forthcoming periods, or in case of change of school, in application for higher qualification level). Teachers, headmasters and other pedagogical staff now have to create and maintain their professional portfolio.

According to the State requirements (Ordinance 162/1997), the basic training of teachers (10 hours) is designed so as to include obligatory practical training, which is carried out through doing teacher observation (60 hours), ongoing teaching practice (60 hours) and an internship (100 hours).

The ongoing teaching practice relates to participation in the organisation of the educational process under the direct supervision of a teacher at the higher education institution. The internship for people who would like to work as teachers is carried out under the supervision of a mentoring secondary education teacher and a teacher at the higher education institution.

European funds have been used for continuing vocational training of teachers.

More information is available in the Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspective on teachers and trainers [15].

[12] Ordinance No 12, active as of 1.9.2016:

https://www.mon.bg/upload/2333/naredba_12_01.09.2016_prof_razvitie_uchiteli.pdf

[13] <http://iropk.mon.bg/>

[14] https://www.mon.bg/upload/2333/naredba_12_01.09.2016_prof_razvitie_uchiteli.pdf

[15] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/teachers-and-trainers>

CHAPTER 10.

Shaping VET qualifications

10.1. Anticipating skill needs

The demand for qualifications is forecasted based on the macro-economic model (for medium and long-term forecasts) and the annual employer skill needs survey (for short-term forecasts).

The labour ministry is responsible for skills forecasting for medium and long term forecasts and the Employment Agency – for short term forecasts which are based on the employer skill needs survey provided twice in the year in accordance with the Employment Promotion Act.

Medium- and long-term forecasts take into account the demographic trends and changes in the educational attainment of the labour force and in the structure of the economy.

They provide information on labour demand and supply by:

- level of education (basic, secondary or higher);
- economic activity;
- profession;
- structural shortage/surplus of labour by education level.

Since 2018, the Employment Committees of the Regional Development Councils biannually collect, process and submit to the Employment Agency information on the employers' demand for the labour force.

See also Cedefop's skills forecast [16] and European Skills Index [17].

10.2. Designing qualifications

VET qualifications are classified in the list of professions by education field, vocational area, occupation and specialty.

According to the Pre-school and School Education Act [18] and the VET Act [19], the acquisition of vocational qualifications is regulated by the State educational standards. The national agency for VET designs the standards in coordination with the relevant ministries and departments, and the education minister endorses them. The standards are by occupation (profession).

State educational standards are developed in units of learning outcomes. They include:

- requirements for the candidates – minimum entry level qualification and education requirements for pupils and adults;
- option for validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences;
- opportunities for continuing vocational training;
- description of profession – with core working activities, responsibilities, job conditions specification, used equipment and tools, special requirements etc.
- opportunities for professional development according to the national classification of professions and occupations;
- units of learning outcomes for general, sectoral and specific vocational training- with defined knowledge, skills and expected competences;
- defined assessment tools for theoretical and practical skills;
- execution of the examination conditions;
- assessment criteria;
- requirements for training facilities;

- requirements for trainers.

The approach for development of State educational standard in units of learning outcomes implements the principles of the European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET) recommendation since 2016. The standards are mandatory for VET programmes leading to nationally recognised qualifications, also for adults.

In the beginning of 2019 NAVET's methodology guidelines for development of State educational standards were revised. In addition of core development process there were included two more options:

- collecting information for the profession from employers' organisations by online questionnaires
- consultation with branch employers (before the final acceptance), according to development or updating the standards

The up-to-date State educational standards are available for free use on the websites of the education ministry and the national agency for VET [20].

Each time that the State educational standards are amended, vocational training centres are obliged to update the relevant training programmes and curricula.

The curricula are based on framework programmes [21] and on the State educational standards for VET.

The education ministry develops the compulsory part of the VET curricula for new professions or forms of learning in VET schools.

VET teachers and employers support designing the curricula.

School-specific curricula part is designed by VET providers for each programme in order to reflect the specificities of the local labour market.

Curricula for VET schools comprise a training schedule, subject distribution between general and vocational parts, graduation requirements, explanatory notes, etc. to ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Vocational training centres develop their own training programmes that take account also of prior learning. These programmes are evaluated (licenced) by the national agency for VET.

Since 2018, in the amended VET Act, the requirement to update modules in VET curriculum once every five years was added.

[16] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/skills-forecast>

[17] <https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/indicators/european-skills-index>

[18] <https://www.mon.bg/bg/57>

[19] <https://www.navet.government.bg/bg/media/ZPOO-2018-1.pdf>

[21] Framework programmes include: general provisions, including the regulatory basis, the aim and purpose of the programme; requirements: entry (age, medical, previous education and qualification level), career and education pathways, form(s) of training (day full time, evening, part-time, individual, distance, dual, self-learning); curriculum; training module content (theoretical and practical); graduation requirements (State examinations for full qualifications and final examinations for partial qualifications).

CHAPTER 11.

Quality assurance

The Pre-school and School Education Act (2015, in force since August 2016) and the VET Act (2014)) establish the process of quality management, including VET. The quality management is a continuous process of organisational development based on its analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation. The evaluation is performed through self-assessment and inspection. It aims at preparing the internal evaluation of the quality of provided education through operations, procedures and criteria set by schools. It is carried out under terms and conditions determined by the State educational standard for quality management in the institutions.

The process follows these steps:

- establishing a working group;
- defining activities, procedures, criteria, indicators and tools;
- contacting learners, teachers and parents;
- performing self-assessment and analysing the results that may lead to recommendations;
- preparing and validating the report.

The inspection is a process of preparing an overall independent expert evaluation of the education quality in schools at a given moment and guidelines for improvement. At least one inspection should be carried out in each school every five years.

All VET providers have to introduce an internal system for quality assurance to meet the requirement of the standards.

This system comprises:

- policy and goals for quality assurance;
- quality management responsibilities;
- rules for the system's implementation;
- annual schedule for self-assessment;
- rules and procedures for measuring the quality achieved through self-assessment.

A significant role is given to the improvement of the working environment, learning outcomes, interaction with the local community stakeholders, social partners, employers' organisations and universities, and staff training. The education ministry supports and monitors the implementation of quality assurance in VET schools and the national agency for VET in vocational training centres.

CHAPTER 12.

Validation of prior learning

In 2014, the validation of informal and non-formal learning outcomes was introduced by the amendments to the VET Act [22].

The validation of knowledge, skills and competences acquired in non-formal and informal learning is regulated by Ordinance No 2/2014 (in force since 1.1.2015) [23], approved by the minister of education and science.

VET providers organise the validation for professions and specialties that are included in the list of professions for VET [24].

Introducing a new approach for the development of State educational standards, based on units of learning outcomes in 2015 [25], made the validation process more transparent.

Applicants present the evidence for the learning outcomes they possess in order to acquire a full or partial qualification allowing their access to vocational training and/or to the labour market.

The methods for assessing the learning outcomes are essentially identical to those for assessing knowledge, skills and competences applied in formal education and training.

Two types of certificates can be issued as a result of the validation:

- a certificate validating a full qualification. By means of examination it certifies that all units of learning outcomes defined in the State educational standard have been achieved;
- a certificate validating a part of vocational qualification (partial qualification). It certifies through an examination that one or several units of learning outcomes included in the State educational standard have been achieved.

Holders of these certificates have the same rights as those who have attained corresponding certificates through the formal education system.

Validation procedures are monitored by the regional education authorities and national agency for VET.

They also consult and guide providers methodologically.

Validation procedures can be funded by beneficiaries (individuals), companies and projects.

Validation fee for individuals cannot exceed the actual expenditure incurred by a provider.

For more information about arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning please visit Cedefop's European database [26].

[22] <https://www.mon.bg/bg/57>

[23] <https://www.mon.bg/bg/59>

[24] <https://www.mon.bg/bg/100053>

[26] https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/2016_validate_BG.pdf

CHAPTER 13.

Incentives for learners

VET is attractive because after graduation learners receive both a diploma for secondary education (giving access to higher education) and a certificate for vocational qualification.

Allowances, grants, vouchers and travel subsidy

Secondary VET learners may receive grants:

- performance scholarships are awarded to learners with high learning achievements;
- social allowances support access to education and prevent early leaving from VET of disadvantaged learners, e.g. with special education needs or orphans.

The grants are offered on a monthly basis and vary between 5% and 15% from the minimal national salary.

Learners in dual VET receive monthly remuneration from the companies they are trained in based on their contract. In addition, secondary VET learners can participate in ESF projects for work-based learning where they can also receive an additional grant of EUR 150.

- The Government Decree No 280 of October 2015 [27] determines the terms and conditions for provision of training vouchers for unemployed and employees, co-financed by the European social fund. The decree regulates different types of training, target groups and requirements to training providers.

A person (employed or unemployed) may have only one training voucher for key competences and one for VET training during the implementation of the programme:

- at EQF level 2 – EUR 300;
- at EQF level 3 – EUR 600;
- at EQF level 4 – EUR 900.

All secondary VET learners are entitled to receive discounts when using public transport, including trains and in-city public transport. The discount can be up to 60% and is decided by each municipality.

[27] <https://www.navet.government.bg/bg/publikovano-e-pms-280-ot-15-10-2015-g-za-opredelyane-na-usloviyata-i-reda-za-predostavyane-na-vaucheri-za-obuchenie-na-bezrobotni-i-zaeti-litsa/>

CHAPTER 14.

Incentives for enterprises to boost their participation in VET provision

According to the VET Act, provision of training is free of value added tax for companies.

Financial support for offering dual VET

Employment Promotion Act foresees financial benefits for employers for creating training places (jobs) for the unemployed. State budget pays remuneration, social security and health insurance for apprentices for up to 36 months. It also covers the costs of the training institution that provides theoretical lessons to an apprentice and mentoring costs.

CHAPTER 15.

Guidance and counselling

According to the VET Act the system of vocational education and training includes vocational guidance, vocational education and vocational training.

The institutions, which provide vocational guidance for students are structured on regional principle for 28 regions.

The responsible institution for licensing centres for information and vocational guidance for adults is NAVET.

Up to 31.12. 2018, 48 centres for information and vocational guidance for adults were licensed.

The regional employment service directorates, which are part of the employment agency, provide vocational guidance to the unemployed individuals and for those, who wish to change their current job.

The employment service directorates provide vocational guidance services in the form of:

- in person vocational consultation;
- vocational consultation in groups.

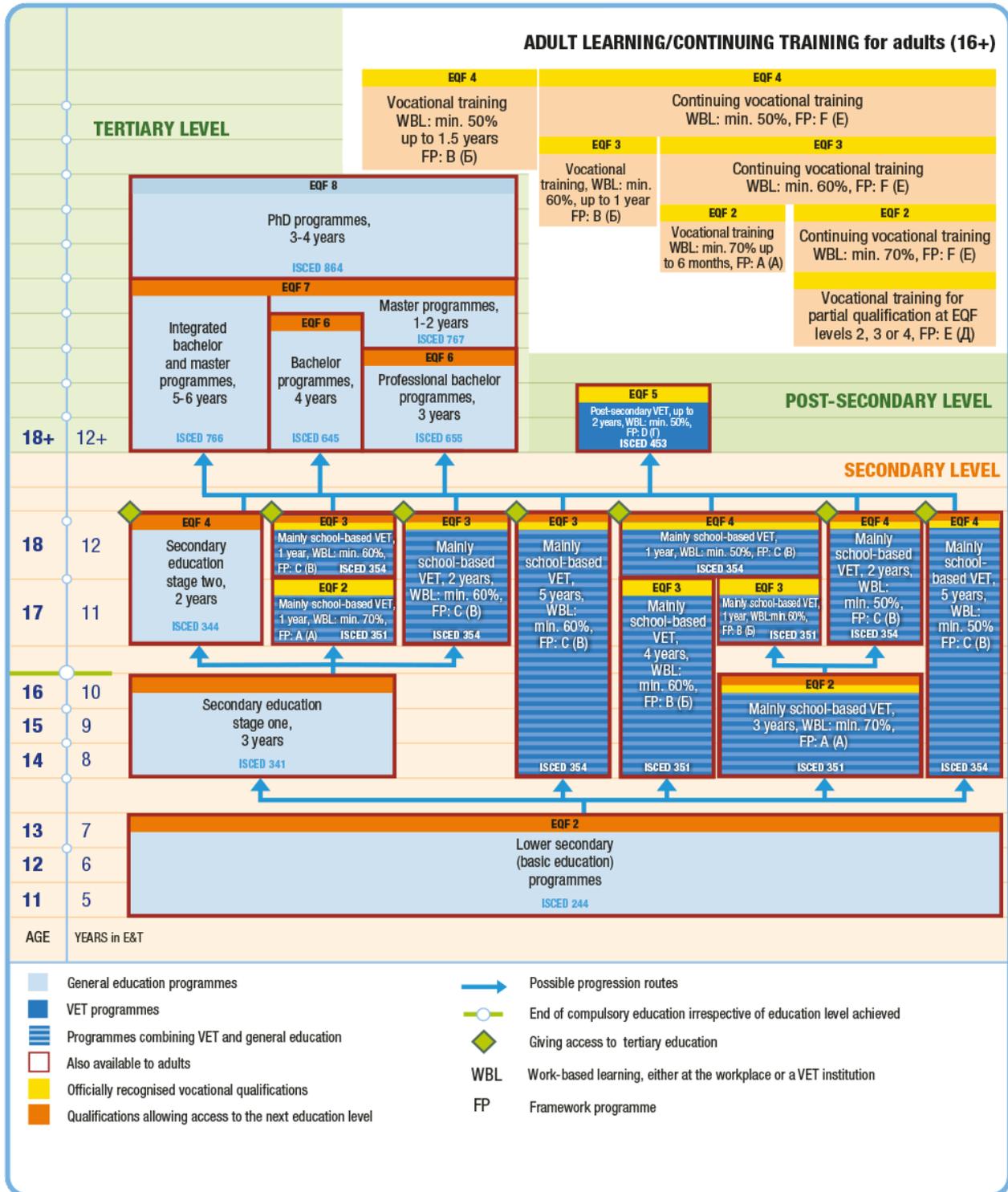
The main goals of these services are to support individuals in making the right choice in terms of entering the labour market or choosing a suitable VET programme, the level of vocational qualification – initial or continuous and the options for acquiring the desired qualification.

Please see:

- guidance and outreach Bulgaria national report [28];
- Cedefop's labour market intelligence toolkit [29];
- Cedefop's inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices ([A1]).

[29] <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 Bulgaria, 2019.

VET programme types

EQF 2
Mainly school-based VET, 3 years, WBL: min. 70%, FP: A (A)
ISCED 351

Initial VET programmes leading to EQF level 2, ISCED 351 (Рамкова програма А за начално професионално обучение с придобиване на първа степен на професионална квалификация)

EQF level	2	ISCED-P 2011 level	351
Usual entry grade	8	Usual completion grade	10
Usual entry age	13	Usual completion age	16
Length of a programme (years)	2		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✓ In Bulgaria education is mandatory till the age of 16.	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗ This framework programme is only for initial VET.
Is it offered free of charge?	✓ For State owned schools	Is it available for adults?	✓

ECVET or other credits Not applicable

- Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)**
- daily
 - evening
 - extramural
 - distance learning
 - work based training
 - individual
 - self-learning

The most common learning form is daily form.

- Main providers**
- schools
 - schools in partnership with enterprises.

Share of work-based >=70%

learning provided by schools and companies

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

- practical training at school – when the school uses its own base for practical training
 - in-company practice - when learners go to external companies for practical training
-

Main target groups

Programmes are available for young people and also for adults.

This VET programme is appropriate for those learners who wish an early entry to the labour market.

Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)

The requirements for enrolment in VET programmes are minimum age, health condition, previous education and qualification level.

The minimum required age is :

- 13 (in the year of application) for vocational gymnasiums and schools;
- 16 for vocational training centres.

The health condition of the applicant is certified by a medical certificate proving the fitness for the selected occupation.

Minimum entry requirements for VET learners:

- for current learners - grade 6;
- for newly enrolled learners (after 2016) -basic education, secondary education, stage 1, grade 7 for learners with special educational needs.

Minimum entry requirements for individuals above the age of 16:

- for current learners: primary education or literacy course, grade 7 for learners with special educational needs;
 - for newly enrolled learners (after 2016): primary education or literacy course, grade 7 for learners with special educational needs.
-

Assessment of learning outcomes

To complete this type of VET programme learners need to pass a State qualification examination: (for theory and practice of the occupation).

The education ministry develops and approves national examination programmes for the State qualification examinations. They include guidelines for content of the exam, task assignments and assessment criteria.

Diplomas/certificates provided

Graduates receive:

- certificate for completed first stage of secondary education (Удостоверение за завършен първи гимназиален етап на средно образование);
- certificate for vocational qualification for EQF level 2 (Свидетелство за професионална квалификация - 1 СПК). The learners may also ask to receive a Europass certificate supplement to the certificate;
- competence certificate (Свидетелство за правоспособност) – if applicable for the particular qualification.

All these documents are recognised by the education system and by the labour market.

Examples of Welder, turner, worker in the food industry [30].

qualifications	These three qualifications are included in the list of specialties from professions with expected shortage of specialists on the labour market, approved by the Council of Ministers in 2018.
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	The graduates may continue their studies to the second stage of secondary education and VET qualification at EQF level 3 or 4, or can enter the labour market. However progression in either VET or general education is subject to different prerequisites, rather than completion of this VET programme.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	<p>✓</p> <p>According to Art. 40, para 1 of the VET Act, 'Validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences is the identification and recognition of professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education or self-study and their compliance with the State educational requirements for acquiring qualification in professions'.</p> <p>The validation procedure is carried out for professions and specialties included in the list of professions for vocational education and training under Art. 6 of the VET Act. The validation procedure starts with an application submitted by the person to the director of the institution entitled to carry out the validation. In order to prove the acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences declared for validation, the person shall submit copies of documents held by him/her together with the originals for reconciliation - workbook, service book, social security book, education diploma, attestations, references, certificates from previous professional trainings, artefacts, photos of artefacts, etc.</p> <p>Validation procedure includes informing the person requesting validation about the purposes, validation procedures and their sequence, identifying the professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired by the person and recognition of a degree of professional qualification or of qualification for part of a profession.</p>
General education subjects	✓
Key competences	<p>✓</p> <p>This type of VET programme includes modules for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • entrepreneurship; • foreign language and communication; • ICT (digital competences).
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	<=5% [31]

EQF 3

Mainly school-based VET,
4 years,
WBL: min. 60%,
FP: B (Б)

ISCED 351

Initial/Continuing VET programmes leading to EQF level 3, ISCED 351 (Рамкова програма Б за начално и продължаващо професионално обучение с придобиване на втора степен на професионална квалификация)

EQF level	3	ISCED-P 2011 level	351
Usual entry grade	8	Usual completion grade	11
Usual entry age	13 - Minimum age of the candidate in the year of application	Usual completion age	17
Length of a programme (years)	4		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✓ In Bulgaria education till the age of 16 is mandatory.	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✓ This framework programme is applicable for both IVET and CVET.
Is it offered free of charge?	✓ For State owned schools	Is it available for adults?	✓ It is available for adult learners who cover minimum entry requirements.

ECVET or other credits Not applicable

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

- daily
- evening
- extramural
- distance learning
- work based training
- individual
- self-learning

The most common learning form is daily form.

- Apprenticeship is available after the age of 16 (grades 11-12).

Main providers

- schools;
- schools in partnership with enterprises.

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 – when the school uses its premises for practical training • in-company practice – when learners go to external companies for practical training
Main target groups	This VET programme is appropriate for learners who wish to enter the labour market holding a recognised professional qualification and also for those who wish to continue their studies at EQF level 4.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	<p>The requirements for enrolment in VET programmes are minimum age, health condition, previous education and qualification level.</p> <p>The minimum required age is 13 (in the year of application) for vocational gymnasiums and schools.</p> <p>The health condition of the applicant is certified by a medical certificate proving the fitness for the selected occupation.</p> <p>There is no limitation for maximum age.</p> <p>Completed basic education is also a prerequisite for this type of programme for current learners.</p>
Assessment of learning outcomes	<p>Vocational education finishes with State qualification examinations: for theory and practice of the occupation.</p> <p>The education ministry develops and approves national examination programmes for the State qualification examinations. They include guidelines for content of the exams, task assignments and assessment criteria.</p>
Diplomas/certificates provided	<p>Graduates receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • certificate for vocational qualification for EQF level 3 (Свидетелство за професионална квалификация - 2 СПК). The learners may also ask to receive a Europass certificate supplement to the certificate; • competence certificate (Свидетелство за правоспособност) – if applicable for the particular qualification. <p>All these documents are recognised by the education system and by the labour market.</p>
Examples of qualifications	Waiter, cook, hair dresser [32].
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	The graduates may continue their studies at second stage of secondary education and VET qualification at EQF level 4, or can enter the labour market. However progression in either VET or general education is subject to different prerequisites, rather than completion of this VET programme.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	<p>✓</p> <p>According to Art. 40, para 1 of the VET Act, 'Validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences is the identification and recognition of professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education or self-study and their</p>

compliance with the State educational requirements for acquiring qualification in professions’.

The validation procedure is carried out for professions and specialties included in the list of professions for vocational education and training under Art. 6 of the VET Act. The validation procedure starts with an application submitted by the person to the director of the institution entitled to carry out the validation. In order to prove the acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences declared for validation, the person shall submit copies of documents held by him/her together with the originals for reconciliation – workbook, service book, social security book, education diploma, attestations, references, certificates from previous professional trainings, artefacts, photos of artefacts, etc.

Validation procedure includes informing the person requesting validation about the purposes, validation procedures and their sequence, identifying the professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired by the person and recognition of a degree of professional qualification or of qualification for part of a profession.

General education subjects ✓

Key competences ✓

There are subjects for:

- entrepreneurship;
- foreign language and communication;
- ICT (digital 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 3

Mainly school-based VET,
1 year,
WBL: min. 60%,
FP:B (Б)

ISCED 351

Initial/Continuing VET programmes leading to EQF level 3, ISCED 351 (РАМКОВА ПРОГРАМА Б за начално и продължаващо професионално обучение с придобиване на втора степен на професионална квалификация)

EQF level	3	ISCED-P 2011 level	351
Usual entry grade	11	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	17	Usual completion age	17
Length of a programme (years)	1		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✓ In Bulgaria education is mandatory till the age of 16.	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓ It is part of formal education and training system.
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✓ This framework programme is applicable for both IVET and CVET.
Is it offered free of charge?	✓ For State owned schools	Is it available for adults?	✓

ECVET or other credits Not applicable

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

- daily
- evening
- extramural
- distance learning
- work based training
- individual
- self-learning

The most common learning form is daily form.

- Apprenticeship is available after the age of 16 (grades 11-12).

Main providers

- schools
- schools in partnership with enterprises
- vocational training centres

Share of work-based >=60% - Min 60% - The share of practical training for these

learning provided by schools and companies	qualifications that require the performance of a complex set of activities (NQF/ EQF level 3) is no less than 60%.
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practical training at school • in-company practice – when learners go to external companies for practical training • practical training at school – when the school uses its own premises for practical training
Main target groups	Programmes are available for individuals above the age 16.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	<p>The requirements for enrolment in VET programmes are minimum age, health condition, previous education and qualification level.</p> <p>The minimum required age is 13 (in the year of application) for vocational gymnasiums and schools.</p> <p>The health condition of the applicant is certified by a medical certificate proving the fitness for the selected occupation.</p> <p>Previous education requirements are at least a completed grade or stage from the basic or secondary education, completed initial stage of the lower secondary education or a successfully completed literacy course under the Employment Promotion Act.</p> <p>For the particular programme stage 1 of secondary education and VET qualification level 2 is a prerequisite for admission – for newly enrolled learners (after 2016).</p>
Assessment of learning outcomes	<p>Vocational education finishes with State qualification examination: The examination is both theoretical and practical and is relevant to the occupation.</p> <p>The education ministry develops and approves national examination programmes for the State qualification examination. They include guidelines for content of the exams, task assignments and assessment criteria.</p>
Diplomas/certificates provided	<p>Graduates receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • certificate for vocational qualification for EQF level 3 (Свидетелство за професионална квалификация - 2 СПК). The learners may also ask to receive a Europass certificate supplement to the certificate; • competence certificate (Свидетелство за правоспособност) - if applicable for the particular qualification. <p>All these documents are recognised by the education system and by the labour market.</p>
Examples of qualifications	Assistant trainer in sports, system programmer, tourist guide [33].
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	The graduates may continue their studies to the second stage of secondary education and VET qualification at EQF level 4, or can enter the labour market. However progression in either VET or general education is subject to different prerequisites rather than the completion of this VET programme.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	<p>✓</p> <p>According to Art. 40, para 1 of the VET Act, 'Validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences is the identification</p>

and recognition of professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education or self-study and their compliance with the State educational requirements for acquiring qualification in professions’.

The validation procedure is carried out for professions and specialties included in the list of professions for vocational education and training under Art. 6 of the VET Act. The validation procedure starts with an application submitted by the person to the director of the institution entitled to carry out the validation. In order to prove the acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences declared for validation, the person shall submit copies of documents held by him/her together with the originals for reconciliation – workbook, service book, social security book, education diploma, attestations, references, certificates from previous professional trainings, artefacts, photos of artefacts, etc.

Validation procedure includes informing the person requesting validation about the purposes, validation procedures and their sequence, identifying the professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired by the person and recognition of a degree of professional qualification or of qualification for part of a profession.

General education subjects ✓

Key competences ✓

There are modules for:

- entrepreneurship;
- foreign language and communication;
- ICT (digital 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 3

Mainly school-based VET,
5 years,
WBL: min. 60%,
FP: C (B)

ISCED 354

Initial/Continuing VET programmes leading to EQF level 3, ISCED 354 (РАМКОВА ПРОГРАМА В за професионално образование с придобиване на втора степен на професионална квалификация)

EQF level	3	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	8	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	14	Usual completion age	18
Length of a programme (years)	5		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✓ <small>In Bulgaria education is mandatory till the age of 16.</small>	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✓
Is it offered free of charge?	✓ <small>For State owned schools</small>	Is it available for adults?	✗

ECVET or other credits Not applicable

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

- school-based learning (contact studies, including virtual communication with the teacher/trainer);
- work practice (practical training at school and in-company practice);
- apprenticeships after the age of 16 (grades 11-12).

Main providers Schools

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

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

- practical training at school
- in-company practice

Main target groups Programmes are available for young people.

Based on the type and school curriculum for students with sensory disabilities, special curricula are developed. Typical curricula for framework programmes C apply depending on the student's

specific abilities to reach the learning outcomes that are included in the State Educational Standard for acquiring a qualification in the respective profession. For imprisoned learners vocational education is organised for the acquisition of the second degree of professional qualification (EQF 3) in the first and second stage of secondary education.

Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Learners must be at least 13 years old in order to apply. Basic education is a prerequisite for admission at this VET programme.
Assessment of learning outcomes	To complete a VET programme learners need to pass a State matriculation examination in 'Bulgarian language and literature' and a State qualification examination.
Diplomas/certificates provided	<p>Graduates receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diploma for secondary education (Диплома за средно образование); • certificate for vocational qualification for EQF level 3 (Свидетелство за професионална квалификация - 2 СПК). The learners may also ask to receive a Europass certificate supplement to the certificate; • competence certificate (Свидетелство за правоспособност) - if applicable for the particular qualification. <p>All these documents are recognised by the education system and by the labour market.</p>
Examples of qualifications	Electric fitter, cook, wood processing operator [34].
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	<p>The graduates may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue their studies at tertiary education; • continue their VET qualification at EQF Level 5; • enter the labour market.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	<p>✓</p> <p>According to Art. 40, para 1 of the VET Act, 'Validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences is the identification and recognition of professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education or self-study and their compliance with the State educational requirements for acquiring qualification in professions'.</p> <p>The validation procedure is carried out for professions and specialties included in the list of professions for vocational education and training under Art. 6 of the VET Act. The validation procedure starts with an application submitted by the person to the director of the institution entitled to carry out the validation. In order to prove the acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences declared for validation, the person shall submit copies of documents held by him/her together with the originals for reconciliation - workbook, service book, social security book, education diploma, attestations, references, certificates from previous professional trainings, artefacts, photos of artefacts, etc.</p> <p>Validation procedure includes informing the person requesting validation about the purposes, validation procedures and their sequence, identifying the professional knowledge, skills and</p>

competences acquired by the person and recognition of a degree of professional qualification or of qualification for part of a profession.

General education subjects	✓
Key competences	Information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	=20% [35]

EQF 4
Mainly school-based VET, 2 years, WBL: min. 50%, FP: C (B)
ISCED 354

Initial/Continuing VET programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (РАМКОВА ПРОГРАМА В за професионално образование с придобиване на трета степен на професионална квалификация)

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	11	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	17	Usual completion age	18
Length of a programme (years)	2		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 In Bulgaria education is mandatory till the age of 16.	Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	
Is it offered free of charge?	 For State owned schools	Is it available for adults?	

ECVET or other credits Not applicable

- Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)**
- school-based learning (contact studies, including virtual communication with the teacher/trainer);
 - work practice (practical training at school and in-company practice);
 - apprenticeships after the age of 16 (grades 11-12)

Main providers Schools

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies >=50%

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

Main target groups Programmes are available for young people.

Based on the type and school curriculum for students with sensory disabilities, special curricula are developed. Typical curricula for

framework programmes C apply depend on the learner's specific abilities to acquire the learning outcomes that are included in the State educational standard for acquiring a qualification in the respective profession. For imprisoned learners, vocational education is organised for the acquisition of the second degree of professional qualification (EQF 3) in the first and second stage of secondary education.

Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	<p>Learners must be at least 13 years old to apply.</p> <p>Basic education is a prerequisite for admission to this VET programme.</p> <p>For the particular VET programme completion of secondary education stage 1 and VET qualification level 2 are prerequisites for admission.</p>
Assessment of learning outcomes	<p>To complete this type of VET programme learners need to pass a State matriculation examination in 'Bulgarian language and literature' and a State qualification examination.</p>
Diplomas/certificates provided	<p>Graduates receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diploma for secondary education (Диплома за средно образование); • certificate for vocational qualification for EQF level 4 (Свидетелство за професионална квалификация - 3 СПК). The learners may also ask to receive a Europass certificate supplement to the certificate; • competence certificate (Свидетелство за правоспособност) - if applicable for the particular qualification. <p>All these documents are recognised by the education system and by the labour market.</p>
Examples of qualifications	<p>Electro-technician, restaurant keeper, wood-processing technician-technologist [36].</p>
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	<p>The graduates may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continue their studies at tertiary education; - continue their VET qualification at EQF Level 5; - enter the labour market.
Destination of graduates	<p>Information not available</p>
Awards through validation of prior learning	<p>✓</p>
General education subjects	<p>✓</p> <p>According to Art. 40, para 1 of the VET Act, 'Validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences is the identification and recognition of professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education or self-study and their compliance with the State educational requirements for acquiring qualification in professions'.</p> <p>The validation procedure is carried out for professions and specialties included in the list of professions for vocational education and training under Art. 6 of the VET Act. The validation procedure starts with an application submitted by the person to the director of the institution entitled to carry out the validation. In</p>

order to prove the acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences declared for validation, the person shall submit copies of documents held by him/her together with the originals for reconciliation – workbook, service book, social security book, education diploma, attestations, references, certificates from previous professional trainings, artefacts, photos of artefacts, etc.

Validation procedure includes informing the person requesting validation about the purposes, validation procedures and their sequence, identifying the professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired by the person and recognition of a degree of professional qualification or of qualification for part of a profession.

Key competences	Information not available
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Application of learning outcomes approach	✓
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Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available
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EQF 4
Mainly school-based VET, 5 years, WBL: min. 50%, FP: C (B)
ISCED 354

Initial/Continuing VET programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (РАМКОВА ПРОГРАМА В за професионално образование с придобиване на трета степен на професионална квалификация)

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	8	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	14	Usual completion age	18
Length of a programme (years)	5		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✓ <small>In Bulgaria education is mandatory till the age of 16.</small>	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✓
Is it offered free of charge?	✓ <small>For State owned schools</small>	Is it available for adults?	✗

ECVET or other credits Not applicable

- Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)**
- school-based learning (contact studies, including virtual communication with the teacher/trainer);
 - work practice (practical training at school and in-company practice);
 - apprenticeships after the age of 16 (grades 11-12)

Main providers Schools

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies >=50%

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

Main target groups Programmes are available for young people.

Based on the type and school curriculum for learners with sensory disabilities, special curricula are developed. Typical curricula for framework programmes C apply depending on the student's

specific abilities to acquire the learning outcomes that are included in the State educational standard for acquiring a qualification in the respective profession. For imprisoned learners vocational education is organised for the acquisition of the third degree of professional qualification (EQF 4) in the first and second stage of secondary education.

Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Learners must be at least 13 years old (when they apply) to enrol. For this type of VET programme the completion of basic education is a prerequisite for admission.
Assessment of learning outcomes	The secondary VET is completed with State matriculation examinations in 'Bulgarian language and literature' and a State qualification examination.
Diplomas/certificates provided	<p>Graduates receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diploma for secondary education (Диплома за средно образование); • certificate for vocational qualification for EQF level 4 (Свидетелство за професионална квалификация - 3 СПК). The learners may also ask to receive a Europass certificate supplement to the certificate; • competence certificate (Свидетелство за правоспособност) – if applicable for the particular qualification. <p>All these documents are recognised by the education system and by the labour market.</p>
Examples of qualifications	Electro-technician, restaurant keeper, wood-processing technician-technologist [37].
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	<p>The graduates may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue their studies at tertiary education; • continue their VET qualification at EQF Level 5; • enter the labour market.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	<p>✓</p> <p>According to Art. 40, para 1 of the VET Act, 'Validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences is the identification and recognition of professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education or self-study and their compliance with the State educational requirements for acquiring qualification in professions'.</p> <p>The validation procedure is carried out for professions and specialties included in the list of professions for vocational education and training under Art. 6 of the VET Act. The validation procedure starts with an application submitted by the person to the director of the institution entitled to carry out the validation. In order to prove the acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences declared for validation, the person shall submit copies of documents held by him/her together with the originals for reconciliation – workbook, service book, social security book, education diploma, attestations, references, certificates from previous professional trainings, artefacts, photos of artefacts, etc.</p> <p>Validation procedure includes informing the person requesting validation about the purposes, validation procedures and their sequence, identifying the professional knowledge, skills and</p>

competences acquired by the person and recognition of a degree of professional qualification or of qualification for part of a profession.

General education subjects	✓
Key competences	Information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	>=75% [38]

EQF 4

Mainly school-based VET,
1 year,
WBL: min. 50%,
FP: C (B)

ISCED 354

**Initial VET programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354
(РАМКОВА ПРОГРАМА В за професионално образование с придобиване на трета степен на професионална квалификация)**

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	12	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	17	Usual completion age	18
Length of a programme (years)	1		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	Information not available	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	Information not available
Is it offered free of charge?	✓ For State owned schools	Is it available for adults?	✓

ECVET or other credits Not applicable

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

- school-based learning (contact studies, including virtual communication with the teacher/trainer);
- work practice (practical training at school and in-company practice);
- apprenticeships after the age of 16 (grades 11-12).

Main providers

- schools
- enterprises

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies <=70%

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

- practical training at school
- in-company practice

Main target groups Programmes are available for young people and also for adults.

Entry requirements for The requirements for enrolment in VET programmes are minimum

**learners
(qualification/education
level, age)**

age, health condition, previous education and qualification level.

The minimum required age is 13 (in the year of application) for vocational gymnasiums and schools and 16 for vocational training centres (initial and continuous VET providers for employees and unemployed, without acquisition of an education level). The health condition of the applicant is certified by a medical certificate proving the fitness for the selected occupation. Previous education requirements are at least a completed grade or stage from the basic or secondary education, completed initial stage of the lower secondary education or a successfully completed literacy course under the Employment Promotion Act.

For the particular VET programme completion of grade 11 and VET qualification level 2 or 3 are prerequisites for admission.

**Assessment of learning
outcomes**

To complete the program learners need to pass a matriculation exam and a State qualification examination.

**Diplomas/certificates
provided**

Graduates receive:

- diploma for secondary education (Диплома за средно образование);
- certificate for vocational qualification for EQF level 4 (Свидетелство за професионална квалификация - 3 СПК). The learners may also ask to receive a Europass certificate supplement to the certificate;
- competence certificate (Свидетелство за правоспособност) - if applicable for the particular qualification.

All these documents are recognised by the education system and by the labour market.

**Examples of
qualifications**

Builder, electro technician, electronic equipment technician, cook, waiter, assistant trainer in sports and system programmer [39].

**Progression
opportunities for
learners after
graduation**

The graduates may:

- continue their studies at tertiary education;
- continue their VET qualification at EQF Level 5;
- enter the labour market.

**Destination of
graduates**

Information not available

**Awards through
validation of prior
learning**



According to Art. 40, para 1 of the VET Act, 'Validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences is the identification and recognition of professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education or self-study and their compliance with the State educational requirements for acquiring qualification in professions'.

The validation procedure is carried out for professions and specialties included in the list of professions for vocational education and training under Art. 6 of the VET Act. The validation procedure starts with an application submitted by the person to the director of the institution entitled to carry out the validation. In order to prove the acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences declared for validation, the person shall submit copies of documents held by him/her together with the originals for reconciliation – workbook, service book, social security book, education diploma, attestations, references, certificates from previous professional trainings, artefacts, photos of artefacts, etc.

Validation procedure includes informing the person requesting validation about the purposes, validation procedures and their sequence, identifying the professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired by the person and recognition of a degree of professional qualification or of qualification for part of a profession.

General education subjects	✓
Key competences	Information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

EQF 2

Mainly school-based VET,
1 year,
WBL: min. 70%,
FP: A (A)

ISCED 351

**Initial VET programmes leading to EQF level 2, ISCED 351
(РАМКОВА ПРОГРАМА А за начално професионално обучение с придобиване на първа степен на професионална квалификация)**

EQF level	2	ISCED-P 2011 level	351
Usual entry grade	11	Usual completion grade	11
Usual entry age	16	Usual completion age	17
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?	✓
	For State owned schools		

ECVET or other credits Not applicable

- Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)**
- school-based learning (contact studies, including virtual communication with the teacher/trainer);
 - work practice (practical training at school and in-company practice);
 - apprenticeships after the age of 16 (grades 11-12).

- Main providers**
- schools
 - enterprises

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies >=70%

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

Main target groups Programmes are available for young people and also for adults.

Entry requirements for The requirements for enrolment in VET programmes are minimum

learners (qualification/education level, age) age, health condition, previous education and qualification level.

The minimum required age is 13 (in the year of application) for vocational gymnasiums and schools and 16 for vocational training centres (initial and continuous VET providers for employees and unemployed, without acquisition of an education level). The health condition of the applicant is certified by a medical certificate proving the fitness for the selected occupation. Previous education requirements are at least a completed grade or stage from the basic or secondary education, completed initial stage of the lower secondary education or a successfully completed literacy course under the Employment Promotion Act.

For this type of programme the completion of secondary education, stage 1 is a prerequisite for admission.

Assessment of learning outcomes Information not available

Diplomas/certificates provided Graduates receive:

- certificate for vocational qualification for EQF level 2 (Свидетелство за професионална квалификация - 1 СПК). The students may also ask for receiving Europass certificate supplement to the certificate;
- competence certificate (Свидетелство за правоспособност) - if applicable for the particular qualification.

All these documents are recognised by the education system and by the labour market.

Examples of qualifications Builder, electro technician, electronic equipment technician, cook, waiter, assistant trainer in sports and system programmer [40].

Progression opportunities for learners after graduation Those who complete VET can enter the labour market or continue their studies at EQF level 3 (VET) or in general education stage 2. However, progression in either VET or general education is subject to different prerequisites rather than the completion of this VET programme.

Destination of graduates Information not available

Awards through validation of prior learning ✓

According to Art. 40, para 1 of the VET Act, 'Validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences is the identification and recognition of professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education or self-study and their compliance with the State educational requirements for acquiring qualification in professions'.

The validation procedure is carried out for professions and specialties included in the list of professions for vocational education and training under Art. 6 of the VET Act. The validation procedure starts with an application submitted by the person to the director of the institution entitled to carry out the validation. In order to prove the acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences declared for validation, the person shall submit copies of documents held by him/her together with the originals for reconciliation - workbook, service book, social security book, education diploma, attestations, references, certificates from previous professional trainings, artefacts, photos of artefacts, etc.

Validation procedure includes informing the person requesting validation about the purposes, validation procedures and their sequence, identifying the professional knowledge, skills and

competences acquired by the person and recognition of a degree of professional qualification or of qualification for part of a profession.

General education subjects	✓
Key competences	Information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

EQF 3

Mainly school-based VET,
1 year,
WBL: min. 60%,
FP: C (B)

ISCED 354

Initial/Continuing VET programmes leading to EQF level 3, ISCED 354 (РАМКОВА ПРОГРАМА В за професионално образование с придобиване на втора степен на професионална квалификация)

EQF level	3	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	11	Usual completion grade	11
Usual entry age	17	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?	✓
	For State owned schools		

ECVET or other credits Not applicable

- Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)**
- school-based learning (contact studies, including virtual communication with the teacher/trainer);
 - work practice (practical training at school and in-company practice);
 - apprenticeships after the age of 16 (grades 11-12).

- Main providers**
- schools
 - enterprises

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

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

Main target groups Programmes are available for young people and also for adults.

Entry requirements for The requirements for enrolment in VET programmes are minimum

learners (qualification/education level, age)	<p>age, health condition, previous education and qualification level.</p> <p>The minimum required age is 13 (in the year of application) for vocational gymnasiums and schools and 16 for vocational training centres (initial and continuous VET providers for employees and unemployed, without acquisition of an education level). The health condition of the applicant is certified by a medical certificate proving the fitness for the selected occupation. Previous education requirements are at least a completed grade or stage from the basic or secondary education, completed initial stage of the lower secondary education or a successfully completed literacy course under the Employment Promotion Act.</p> <p>For this type of VET programme completion of upper secondary stage 1 and VET qualification level 2 are prerequisites for admission.</p>
Assessment of learning outcomes	<p>To complete this type of VET programme learners need to pass a State matriculation examination and a State qualification examination.</p>
Diplomas/certificates provided	<p>Graduates receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diploma for secondary education (Диплома за средно образование); • certificate for vocational qualification for EQF level 3 (Свидетелство за професионална квалификация - 2 СПК). The learners may also ask to receive a Europass certificate supplement to the certificate; • competence certificate (Свидетелство за правоспособност) - if applicable for the particular qualification. <p>All these documents are recognised by the education system and by the labour market.</p>
Examples of qualifications	<p>Builder, electro technician, electronic equipment technician, cook, waiter, assistant trainer in sports and system programme [41].</p>
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	<p>The graduates may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue their studies at tertiary education; • continue their VET qualification at EQF Level 5; • enter the labour market.
Destination of graduates	<p>Information not available</p>
Awards through validation of prior learning	<p>✓</p> <p>According to Art. 40, para 1 of the VET Act, 'Validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences is the identification and recognition of professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education or self-study and their compliance with the State educational requirements for acquiring qualification in professions'.</p> <p>The validation procedure is carried out for professions and specialties included in the list of professions for vocational education and training under Art. 6 of the VET Act. The validation procedure starts with an application submitted by the person to the director of the institution entitled to carry out the validation. In order to prove the acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences declared for validation, the person shall submit copies of documents held by him/her together with the originals for reconciliation - workbook, service book, social security book, education diploma, attestations, references, certificates from</p>

previous professional trainings, artefacts, photos of artefacts, etc.

Validation procedure includes informing the person requesting validation about the purposes, validation procedures and their sequence, identifying the professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired by the person and recognition of a degree of professional qualification or of qualification for part of a profession.

General education subjects	✓
Key competences	Information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

EQF 3

Mainly school-based VET,
2 years,
WBL: min. 60%,
FP: C (B)

ISCED 354

Initial/continuing VET programmes leading to EQF level 3, ISCED 354 (РАМКОВА ПРОГРАМА В за професионално образование с придобиване на втора степен на професионална квалификация)

EQF level	3	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	11	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	16	Usual completion age	18
Length of a programme (years)	2		
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?	✓ For State owned schools	Is it available for adults?	✓
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school-based learning (contact studies, including virtual communication with the teacher/trainer); • work practice (practical training at school and in-company practice); • apprenticeships for ages after 16 (grades 11-12). 		
Main providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schools • enterprises 		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	<=70%		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practical training at school • in-company practice 		
Main target groups	Programmes are available for young people and also for adults.		
Entry requirements for	The requirements for enrolment in VET programmes are minimum		

learners (qualification/education level, age)	<p>age, health condition, previous education and qualification level.</p> <p>The minimum required age is 13 (in the year of application) for vocational gymnasiums and schools and 16 for vocational training centres (initial and continuous VET providers for employees and unemployed, without acquisition of an education level). The health condition of the applicant is certified by a medical certificate proving the fitness for the selected occupation. Previous education requirements are at least a completed grade or stage from the basic or secondary education, completed initial stage of the lower secondary education or a successfully completed literacy course under the Employment Promotion Act.</p> <p>For this type of VET programme completion of grade 11 and VET qualification level 2 or 3 are prerequisites for admission.</p>
Assessment of learning outcomes	<p>To complete this type of VET programme learners need to pass a matriculation examination and a State qualification examination.</p>
Diplomas/certificates provided	<p>Graduates receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diploma for secondary education (Диплома за средно образование); • certificate for vocational qualification for EQF level 3 (Свидетелство за професионална квалификация - 2 СПК). The learners may also ask to receive a Europass certificate supplement to the certificate; • competence certificate (Свидетелство за правоспособност) – if applicable for the particular qualification. <p>All these documents are recognised by the education system (for continuation of the education) and by the labour market.</p>
Examples of qualifications	<p>Builder, electro technician, electronic equipment technician, cook, waiter, assistant trainer in sports and system programmer [42].</p>
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	<p>The graduates may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue their studies at tertiary education; • continue their VET qualification at EQF Level 5; • enter the labour market.
Destination of graduates	<p>Information not available</p>
Awards through validation of prior learning	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>According to Art. 40, para 1 of the VET Act, 'Validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences is the identification and recognition of professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education or self-study and their compliance with the State educational requirements for acquiring qualification in professions'.</p> <p>The validation procedure is carried out for professions and specialties included in the list of professions for vocational education and training under Art. 6 of the VET Act. The validation procedure starts with an application submitted by the person to the director of the institution entitled to carry out the validation. In order to prove the acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences declared for validation, the person shall submit copies of documents held by him/her together with the originals for reconciliation – workbook, service book, social security book, education diploma, attestations, references, certificates from previous professional trainings, artefacts, photos of artefacts, etc.</p>

Validation procedure includes informing the person requesting validation about the purposes, validation procedures and their sequence, identifying the professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired by the person and recognition of a degree of professional qualification or of qualification for part of a profession.

General education subjects	✓
Key competences	Information not available
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,
up to 2 years,
WBL: min. 50%,
FP: D (Г)

ISCED 453

Initial/Continuing VET programmes leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 453 (РАМКОВА ПРОГРАМА Г за професионално обучение с придобиване на четвърта степен на професионална квалификация)

EQF level	5	ISCED-P 2011 level	453
Usual entry grade	12	Usual completion grade	12+
Usual entry age	18+	Usual completion age	18+
Length of a programme (years)	2		
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?	✓ For State owned schools	Is it available for adults?	✓

ECVET or other credits Not applicable

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

- school-based learning (contact studies, including virtual communication with the teacher/trainer);
- work practice (practical training at school and in-company practice);
- apprenticeships.

Main providers

- Schools
- Enterprises

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies

<=70%

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

- practical training at school
- in-company practice

Main target groups

Programmes are available for people who have completed upper secondary education.

Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	This type of VET is available only for people who have completed secondary education.
Assessment of learning outcomes	Learners need to pass a vocational qualification examination.
Diplomas/certificates provided	<p>Graduates receive certificate for vocational qualification for EQF level 4 (Свидетелство за професионална квалификация - 4 СПК).</p> <p>The learners may also ask to receive a Europass certificate supplement to the certificate.</p> <p>The document is recognised by the labour market.</p>
Examples of qualifications	Company manager, hotel manager, restaurant manager as well as sports and military/defence qualifications [43].
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Those who complete VET can enter the labour market.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	<p>✓</p> <p>According to Art. 40, para 1 of the VET Act, 'Validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences is the identification and recognition of professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education or self-study and their compliance with the State educational requirements for acquiring qualification in professions'.</p> <p>The validation procedure is carried out for professions and specialties included in the list of professions for vocational education and training under Art. 6 of the VET Act. The validation procedure starts with an application submitted by the person to the director of the institution entitled to carry out the validation. In order to prove the acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences declared for validation, the person shall submit copies of documents held by him/her together with the originals for reconciliation - workbook, service book, social security book, education diploma, attestations, references, certificates from previous professional trainings, artefacts, photos of artefacts, etc.</p> <p>Validation procedure includes informing the person requesting validation about the purposes, validation procedures and their sequence, identifying the professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired by the person and recognition of a degree of professional qualification or of qualification for part of a profession.</p>
General education subjects	✓
Key competences	Information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET	Information not available

References

- [20] <http://www.mon.bg> and <http://www.navet.government.bg>
- [25] <https://www.mon.bg/bg/100305>
- [28] Krasteva L. (2018). *Guidance and outreach for inactive and unemployed – Bulgaria*. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series: <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/guidance-and-outreach-inactive-and-unemployed-bulgaria>
- [30] As described in national context
- [31] 2018/19. Share of learners compared to the total number of secondary VET learners.
- [32] As described in national context.
- [33] As described in national context.
- [34] As described in national context.
- [35] 2018/19. Share of learners compared with the total number of secondary VET learners.
- [36] As described in national context
- [37] As described in national context
- [38] 2018/19. Share of learners compared to the total number of secondary VET learners.
- [39] As described in national context
- [40] As described in national context
- [41] As described in national context.
- [42] As described in national context.
- [43] As described in national context.