



Cyprus

Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System

2008

eKnowVet – Thematic Overviews



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Abstract:

This is an overview of the VET system in Cyprus. Information is presented according to the following themes:

1. General policy context - framework for the knowledge society
2. Policy development - objectives, frameworks, mechanisms, priorities
3. Institutional framework - provision of learning opportunities
4. Initial vocational education and training
5. Continuing vocational education and training for adults
6. Training VET teachers and trainers
7. Skills and competence development and innovative pedagogy
8. Accumulating, transferring and validating learning
9. Guidance and counselling for learning, career and employment
10. Financing - investment in human resources
11. European and international dimensions, towards an open area of lifelong learning

This overview has been updated in 2008 and its reference year is 2007. The latest versions can be viewed from October 2009 onwards at:

http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Information_resources/NationalVet/Thematic/
where more detailed thematic information on the VET systems of the EU can also be found

Keywords:

training system; training policy, initial training, continuing vocational training, training of trainers, skill development, vocational guidance, recognition of competences, validation of non formal learning; financing of training

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0101 - POLITICAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL/ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Cyprus became an independent sovereign Republic in 1960 with a presidential system of government. The 1960 constitution institutionalised communal dualism between the Greek and Turkish communities on the island in all spheres of government activity. In 1974 a Turkish invasion of the island led to the occupation, until today, of 37% of the island's territory and the displacement of 200 000 Greek Cypriots.

Executive power is vested in the President of the Republic. The president exercises executive power through a Council of Ministers (*Ypourgiko Symvoulío*) appointed by him. The House of Representatives (*Vouli ton Antiprosopon*) exercises legislative authority. Cyprus is divided into six administrative districts. Each district is headed by a district officer, who is essentially the local representative of the central government.

The Planning Bureau, PB (*Grafeio Programmatismou, GP*), a coordinating and policy-making body, in cooperation with all Governmental Services, collects and analyses information on the economy and proposes measures for future action, including the overall planning of education.

The Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*) has the overall responsibility for the development and implementation of educational policy. The Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*) has overall responsibility for labour and social policy.

Finally, the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA, (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*) plays an important role in vocational training. The HRDA is a semi-government organisation whose mission is to create the necessary prerequisites for the planned and systematic training and development of the human resources of Cyprus.

Cyprus' economy is small, open and flexible. It is characterised by conditions of near full employment with high employment rate, relatively low unemployment rate and high economic growth (more information is provided in field 0102). Human resources are characterised by a high level of educational attainment (more information is provided in field 0104). Since the early 1990s, the labour market has been confronted with labour shortages mainly in low-skilled occupations. The low fertility rate is expected to gradually aggravate the problem. This has led to the need for employment of foreign workers. In 2007 foreign workers, including EU-27 nationals, represented around 21.7% of total employment. Thus there is significant potential for attracting inactive women into the labour market, though the possibilities are somewhat limited for middle-aged and older women.

0102 - POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Cyprus is an island located in the Eastern Mediterranean sea. It covers a total area of 9 250 square kilometres. According to the Statistical Service of Cyprus (*Statistiki Ypiresia Kyprou*), the population of the government-controlled area is 778 700 (end of 2006) and has risen by around 270 000 in the last 26 years (512 300 in 1980) or by 1.6% per year. The Turkish-Cypriot population is estimated to be 88 900 (end of 2006).

The low fertility rate (1.4 in 2006) is expected to gradually aggravate the existing labour shortages and bottlenecks. The population over 60 years of age, as shown in Table 1, is estimated to reach 25.8% in 2027 in comparison to 17.0% in 2006. In an effort to tackle pressing demand for labour, a policy for the employment on a temporary basis of foreigners was implemented since the early 1990s in specific occupations or economic sectors facing labour shortages.

The need to increase participation in the labour market, especially of target groups that are lagging behind such as women and older persons, is a central challenge for Cyprus. Moreover, further promotion and improvement of continuing training activities is expected to contribute to the adaptation and improvement of the knowledge and skills of the labour force and to productivity increases.

AGE GROUP	1995	2000	2005	2006	2027 (1)
0-24	39.3%	38.1%	34.2%	33.5%	24.3%
25-59	45.7%	46.5%	49.1%	49.5%	49.9%
60+	15.0%	15.4%	16.7%	17.0%	25.8%
TOTAL	656.3	697.5	766.4	778.7	845.5

Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus
(1) Projections

0103 - ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

Cyprus has experienced strong economic growth ever since independence in 1960. The average GDP growth rate in real terms, which was 3.8% during 1995-2000, fell to 3.5% during 2000-2007, reaching 4.4% in 2007, a result of the introduction of specific policy measures for increasing female participation. The importance of the tertiary sector has grown while the shares of the secondary and the primary sectors have declined.

SECTOR	1995	2000	2005	2007
PRIMARY ⁽¹⁾	4.8%	3.9%	3.4%	2.9%
SECONDARY ⁽²⁾	22.5%	18.8%	18.8%	18.3%
TERTIARY ⁽³⁾	72.7%	77.3%	77.8%	78.9%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

(¹) Primary sector: Agriculture, hunting and forestry, Fishing, Mining and quarrying.

(²) Secondary sector: Manufacturing, Electricity, gas and water supply, Construction

(³) Tertiary sector: Wholesale and retail trade, Hotels and restaurants, Transport, storage and communication, Financial intermediation, Real estate, renting and business activities, Public administration and defence, Education, Health and social work, Other community, social and personal service activities, Private households with employed persons, Extra-territorial organisations and bodies.

Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus

SECTOR	1995	2000	2005	2007
PRIMARY ⁽¹⁾	7.6%	6.0%	5.0%	4.7%
SECONDARY ⁽²⁾	24.6%	20.4%	20.0%	20.0%
TERTIARY ⁽³⁾	67.8%	73.6%	75.0%	75.3%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

(¹) Primary sector: Agriculture, hunting and forestry, Fishing, Mining and quarrying.

(²) Secondary sector: Manufacturing, Electricity, gas and water supply, Construction

(³) Tertiary sector: Wholesale and retail trade, Hotels and restaurants, Transport, storage and communication, Financial intermediation, Real estate, renting and business activities, Public administration and defence, Education, Health and social work, Other community, social and personal service activities, Private households with employed persons, Extra-territorial organisations and bodies.

Source: Employment Statistics, Statistical Service of Cyprus

The employment rate has shown a stable increase during the period 2000-2007, with the exception of 2005. The total employment rate of 71.2% in 2007 compares favourably with the EU-27 average (65.4% in 2007). During the period 2000-2007 the employment rate of men remained rather stable whereas the employment rate of women increased significantly from 53.0% in 2000 to 62.7% in 2007, a result of the introduction of specific policy measures for increasing female participation.

SEX	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
MEN	78.6%	79.4%	78.8%	78.8%	79.9%	79.5%	79.6%	80.1%
WOMEN	53.0%	57.1%	59.0%	60.2%	59.7%	58.5%	59.8%	62.7%
TOTAL	65.4%	67.9%	68.5%	69.2%	69.4%	68.7%	69.5%	71.2%

Source: Labour Force Survey 2nd quarter, Statistical Service of Cyprus

The unemployment rate, 3.4% in 2007, compares favourably with the EU-27 average (7.1% in 2007). The unemployment rate is higher for women compared to men. The unemployment rate for the young people under 25 was 9.1% in 2007 and compares favourably with the EU-27 average (15.4% in 2007).

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
TOTAL	5.0%	4.0%	3.3%	4.1%	4.3%	5.4%	4.1%	3.4%
MEN	3.2%	2.7%	2.6%	3.8%	3.5%	4.3%	3.4%	3.2%
WOMEN	7.3%	5.7%	4.2%	4.6%	5.4%	6.7%	5.0%	3.6%
<25	10.2%	8.4%	7.9%	8.9%	8.7%	12.7%	8.7%	9.1%

Source: Labour Force Survey 2nd quarter, Statistical Service of Cyprus

Public expenditure on education has increased considerably from 5.6% of the GDP in 1990 to 6.7% in 2007.

	2000	2005	2007
PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION (% OF BUDGET)	14.8%	16.0%	15.3%
PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION (% ON GDP)	5.6%	7.0%	6.7%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION (% ON GDP)	9.2%	8.8%	8.7%

Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus

0104 - EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF POPULATION

Human resources in Cyprus are characterised by a high level of educational attainment. There is one state university operating since 1992, while two other state universities have commenced their operations in 2006 and 2007. Three private universities started to operate in 2007 and there are also other public and private tertiary education colleges/institutions. The percentage of people aged 25-64 with tertiary education was 33% in 2007, while the corresponding EU-27 average amounted to only 23%.

There is a strong cultural trend among the Cypriot population in favour of general secondary education followed by higher education. Family plays a significant influence in encouraging and supporting young people to continue to higher education. A large proportion of young persons that continue to higher education are enrolled in education institutions abroad. High education attainment is also driven by economic reasons, as tertiary education graduates usually receive higher remuneration.

Table 1: Educational attainment of the population aged 25 to 64 by ISCED level		
	EU 27 2007	CYPRUS 2007
ISCED 0-2	29%	28%
ISCED 3-4	47%	39%
ISCED 5-6	23%	33%
TOTAL	99%	100%

ISCED 0-2: Pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education

ISCED 3-4: Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education

ISCED 5-6: Tertiary education

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey 2nd quarter, Statistical Service of Cyprus

The percentage of early school leavers has decreased from 18.5% in 2000 to 12.6% in 2007. During the period 2004-2007 it decreased from 20.6% to 12.6%. The EU-27 average in 2007 was 14.8% and the Lisbon target is 10% by 2010. However, Cypriot students abroad and soldiers aged 18-20 are not included in the LFS sample, while temporary foreign workers usually of low educational attainment are included. If students abroad, soldiers and foreign workers are taken into account the estimated percentage drops to 10%.

Table 2: Percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in education or training								
	2000 %	2001 %	2002 %	2003 %	2004 %	2005 %	2006 %	2007 %
EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS	18.5	17.9	15.9	17.4	20.6	18.1	16.0	12.6

Source: Labour Force Survey (2nd quarter) Statistical Service of Cyprus

02 - POLICY DEVELOPMENT - OBJECTIVES, FRAMEWORKS, MECHANISMS, PRIORITIES

0201 - OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

The main actors responsible for policy development and the implementation of measures in the field of education and training are:

- The Planning Bureau, PB (*Grafeio Programmatismou, GP*), responsible for the preparation of the Strategic Development Plan, SDP (*Stratigiko Schedio Anaptyksis, SSA*), the National Strategic Reference Framework for Cohesion Policy 2007-2013, NSRF (*Ethniko Stratigiko Plaisio Anaforas gia tin Politiki Synoxis, ESPA*), the National Lisbon Programme (*Ethniko Schedio Drasis gia ti Stratigiki tis Lissavonas*) and the Lifelong Learning Strategy, LLL Strategy (*Ethniki Stratigiki dia Viou Mathisis*);
- The Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*) has overall responsibility for labour and social policy. The Cyprus Productivity Centre, CPC (*Kentro Paragogikotitas Kyprou, KEPA*), a dedicated centre of the MLSI, is responsible for the implementation of the National Productivity Strategy (*Ethniki Stratigiki Paragogikotitas*);
- The Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC, (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*), responsible for the development and implementation of educational policy, including the Education Reform (*Ekpaideftiki Metarithmisi*);
- The Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*), a semi-government organisation whose mission is to create the necessary prerequisites for the planned and systematic training and development of the human resources of Cyprus.

The following policy initiatives are important in setting the objectives and priorities in the field of education and training in Cyprus:

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2007-2013

The Cyprus government through the SDP gives great emphasis on the development of human capital, the promotion of equal opportunities and the strengthening of social cohesion. The main priority areas for intervention in the field of human capital are:

- Promotion of the education reform in all stages of education, within the framework of the social dialogue;
- Elaboration of a comprehensive LLL Strategy;
- Modernisation and upgrading of the apprenticeship system;
- Upgrading of the infrastructure of education and training;
- Preparation and introduction of a System of Vocational Qualifications.

NATIONAL STRATEGIC REFERENCE FRAMEWORK FOR COHESION POLICY 2007-2013

The Cyprus NSRF, completed in March 2007, presents the development strategy framework for the utilisation of the resources of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund for the period 2007-2013. The thematic priority “Human Resources and Social Cohesion” features prominently in the NSRF under which the following four important interventions will be pursued:

- Attracting and keeping more people on the labour market;
- Promoting and improving lifelong learning;
- Improving social cohesion and integration;
- Improving the administrative capacity of the public sector.

NATIONAL LISBON PROGRAMME 2005-2008

The overall strategic approach focuses on the need to tackle effectively the challenges faced by Cyprus, such as sustainability of public finances, promotion of R&D, upgrading of basic infrastructures, further human capital development and further enhancement of the conditions of social cohesion. The main policy priorities related to the development of human capital and the progress made for each priority are:

- Continuous improvement of the quality and flexibility of the educational system

A programme, which aims at reforming the curricula of all subjects/courses of Secondary Schools with activities using modern technology and software over the period 2006-2009, has started to be implemented. Another action aims at ensuring that all secondary education teachers will become digitally literate until 2008.

- Increase opportunities for university studies in Cyprus

The University of Cyprus, UCY (*Panepistimio Kyprou, PK*) introduced the Department of Biological Science and has increased the student intake as of the academic year 2007-2008. The Open University of Cyprus, OUC (*Anikto Panepistimio Kyprou, APKy*) and the Cyprus University of Technology, TEPAK (*Technologiko Panepistimio Kyprou*) accepted their first students in September 2006 and September 2007 respectively. The first private universities have been approved by the Evaluation Committee for Private Universities and started to operate in the academic year 2007-2008.

- Continuous upgrading of skills to labour market needs

The implementation of actions aim at strengthening the quality and attractiveness of the Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, STVE

(*Defterovathmia Techniki kai Epangelmatiki Ekpaidefsi, DTEE*), improving its organisation and upgrading the Apprenticeship System.

A special study evaluating the impact of the existing HRDA's schemes to the labour market was completed in December 2006. Other actions have started to be implemented such as the HRDA and ESF co-financed schemes, further support to the training infrastructure of institutions and enterprises, introduction of an Appraisal and Certification System of Training Providers and introduction of a System of Vocational Qualifications.

DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

The LLL strategy has four priority pillars:

- Promoting access to lifelong learning for all;
- Enhancing lifelong learning infrastructure and systems;
- Promoting research and development to support lifelong learning;
- Effective governance of lifelong learning.

NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGY 2007-2013

The National Productivity Strategy covers the programming period 2007-2013. Its overarching strategic objective is the acceleration of the productivity growth rate so that total labour productivity reaches the EU-27 average by 2013. The human capital development will be pursued through specific interventions under the following measures:

- Improvement of the utilisation of Human Resources;
- Improvement of the quality of work;
- Transition from low productivity jobs to high productivity jobs;
- Productivity awards;
- Development of productivity culture in education.

EDUCATION REFORM PROCESS

The government is promoting major reforms at upper secondary education, including technical and vocational education. Measures will be implemented such as:

- Resetting the aims of the education systems and programmes of study;
- Incorporation of new technologies in education;

- Creation of modern infrastructure;
- Improvement of the system of the pre-service and the in-service education and training of educators;
- Reform of the structure of the education system.

Within the framework of the Education Reform Process, the Council of Ministers has approved the formation of various committees that deal with various issues relevant to the Educational System.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2007-2013

The main strategic objectives of the HRDA for the planning period 2007-2013 are:

- Upgrading the country's human resources, through the systematic lifelong training of the employees, the new entrants in the labour market, the unemployed, the inactive females and the low skilled and older age persons;
- Improving the productivity and strengthening the competitiveness of Cypriot enterprises through the better utilisation of their human resources and the improvement of their adaptability potential.

03 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK - PROVISION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

0301 - LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

All activities on the provision of vocational education and training are legitimised by decisions of the Council of Ministers (*Ypourgiko Symvoulío*) and/or Acts passed by the House of Representatives (*Vouli ton Antiprosopon*).

The main laws regulating the provision of VET covering both IVET and CVET are mentioned below.

In the field of secondary education the legislative provisions are, in effect, scattered through many pieces of legislation. The set of laws, which cover pre-primary, primary, secondary general and secondary technical and vocational institutions, are Nos: 5/71, 56/83, 123/85 and 154 (I)/99.

The Apprenticeship Law of 1966 (No 13/66) governs the operation of the Apprenticeship System (*Systima Mathitias, SM*). The Council of Ministers with decision 62.037 in May 2005, assigned the responsibility for the System to the Cyprus Productivity Centre, CPC (*Kentro Paragogikotitas Kyprou, KEPA*).

In 1963, a special agreement was made between the Government of Cyprus and the International Labour Office, regarding the establishment of the CPC aiming at the provision of initial and continuing technical and vocational training to adults. In 1974, the Council of Ministers decided on placing the CPC within the competence of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*).

The Human Resource Development Law of 1999 (No 125 (I)/99) replaced the Law of 1974 for the Industrial Training Authority, which was renamed to Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*). The HRDA is a semi-government organisation whose mission is to create the necessary prerequisites for the planned and systematic training and development of the human resources of Cyprus. Civil servants and the self-employed are excluded from the HRDA's sphere of competence. The HRDA's powers were broadened under this law and more precise responsibilities were assigned in respect of standards for vocational qualifications, vocational guidance, and cross-border activities.

In 1991, the Council of Ministers, with Decision No. 35.582 decided on the establishment of the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration, CAPA (*Kypriaki Akademia Demosias Dioikisis, KADD*), which operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Finance, MoF (*Ypourgeio Oikonomikon, YO*), and offers courses especially designed for civil servants.

The Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 11330 13 a-d governs the establishment of the Pedagogical Institute, PI (*Pedagogiko Instituto, PI*) which is supervised by the MoEC and offers training to secondary school teachers.

Higher education in Cyprus was mainly developed after independence in 1960. Law 1/1987 provided the basis for non-university higher education, both public and private. The Law was substituted by Law 67 (I) 1996 for the Establishment, Control and Operation of Institutions of Tertiary Education and amended by Law 67 (I) 1997.

Two state universities have been established, namely the Open University, OUC (*Anikto Panepistimio, APKy*) by Law 234 (I)/2002 and the Cyprus University of Technology (*Technologiko Panepistimio Kyprou, TEPAK*) by Law No 198 (I)/2003.

Private universities have been established through law No 109 (I)/2005. The accreditation body is the Council for Educational Assessment and Accreditation, CEAA (*Kypriako Symvoulío Anagnorisis Titlon Spoudon – SEKAP*) whose powers derive from Law No 67 (I)/96.

0302 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK: IVET

Based on the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*) is responsible for managing the various levels of public education, while the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*) has overall responsibility for labour and social policy, including policies on training and human resource development. Other ministries also are active in the provision of education and training.

The roles of the European Union, the Central Government and the Social Partners in Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) are discussed below. It must be noted that regional/local government does not play any significant role in VET.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union has a role in policy making by setting relevant guidelines and policy priorities. Cyprus prepared the National Lisbon Programme (*Ethniko Schedio Drasis gia ti Stratigiki tis Lissavonas*), as envisaged by the European Council in order to advance the targets set out in the Lisbon strategy.

Additionally, the European Structural Funds finance projects relating to education and employment. The Cyprus National Strategic Reference Framework for Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 (NSRF) presents the development strategy framework for the utilisation of the resources of the Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund. More information is provided in field 0201.

The government has established the new independent Foundation for the Management of European Programmes for Lifelong Learning in order to promote the participation of Cypriot citizens and organisations in the European Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013.

The Foundation is governed by a Governing Board comprising of nine members, who serve a four year-term, appointed by the Council of Ministers: the Chairman who is a person of high integrity and professional status, a representative of the Planning Bureau, PB (*Grafeio Programmatismou, GP*), two representatives of the MoEC, a representative of the MLSI, a representative of the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*) and three representatives of social partners' organisations.

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT BODIES

The government plays an important role in the promotion and provision of IVET. The PB, a directorate under the authority of the Minister of Finance, is a coordinating and policy-making body responsible for the overall planning for education. All proposals for education reforms have to be endorsed by the PB in order to be considered for approval by the Council of Ministers (*Ypourgiko Symvoulío*) and the House Representatives (*Vouli ton Antiprosopon*).

The dominant actors responsible for governing IVET and implementing policy are the MoEC, the MLSI, the HRDA and public institutions of tertiary education.

The MoEC has the overall responsibility for the enforcement of education laws, the implementation of education policy and the administration of education.

Moreover, all private sector institutions, which offer school leaving or other certificates or diplomas are registered and approved by the MoEC. The authority of the MoEC is exercised through the various relevant decisions taken by the Council of Ministers and acts passed by the House of Representatives.

There are other ministries or departments, which are also active in the provision of education and training. The MLSI, as part of its responsibility to cater for labour, training and human resource development matters, has taken initiatives to set up professionally oriented education and training institutions. A small number of vocational and post-secondary institutions come under several other ministries. A list of these ministries is provided in field 0407.

Furthermore, the HRDA is a semi-government organisation whose mission is to create the necessary prerequisites for the planned and systematic training and development of the human resources. The HRDA refers to the government through the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance who is, by law, the competent Minister.

ROLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS

In Cyprus there has been a long-standing tradition of tripartite consultation (government, trade unions and employers associations) and social dialogue.

This is reflected in the active participation of social partners in the various bodies and committees.

The social partners also participate in an advisory and consultative capacity in the development planning process. Furthermore, the social partners as main stakeholders with a formal role usually participate on the Board of Governors of Institutions dealing with human resources. Finally, the social partners participate in consultative committees (Education Council, Consultative Committee of Technical and Vocational Education, ad hoc committees for curriculum development). Participation ranges from policy development to the design of training programmes curricula.

As a consequence of the size of the country all major VET related decisions are taken at national level. Thus it is at this level that the social partners have specific roles and responsibilities.

Table 1. Administrative Government Bodies and Social Partners' responsibilities in IVET	
BODIES	RESPONSIBILITIES
EUROPEAN UNION	Set guidelines and priorities
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT	
PLANNING BUREAU	Co-ordinating, policy-making body
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE	Overall responsibility for education
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL INSURANCE	Labour and human resource development matters
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	Planned and systematic training and development of the human resources
SOCIAL PARTNERS	Participation in the Strategic Development Plan
	Participation in the: National Lisbon Programme National Lifelong Learning Strategy National Strategic Reference Framework for Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 CIP 'EQUAL'
	Members of Board of Governors of: Human Resource Development Authority Cyprus Productivity Centre Higher Technical Institute Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus
	Consultative committees, board, councils

0303 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK: CVET

The roles of the European Union, the Central Government, the Social Partners and the Private Sector in Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) are discussed below. It must be noted that regional/local government does not play any significant role in CVET.

ROLE OF EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union has a role in policy making by setting relevant guidelines and policy priorities. Cyprus prepared the National Lisbon Programme (*Ethniko Schedio Drasis gia ti Stratigiki tis Lissavonas*), as envisaged by the European Council in order to advance the targets set out in the Lisbon strategy. The Lifelong Learning (LLL) Strategy for Cyprus, approved by the Council of Ministers in November 2007, was one of the prominent measures contained in the National Lisbon Program for Cyprus. Additionally, the European Structural Funds finance projects relating to education and employment. The European Programmes for Lifelong Learning support mobility and development projects in the vocational training sector.

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT BODIES

The dominant actor responsible for governing CVET is the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*) as it approves and subsidises training programmes implemented by public and private institutions and enterprises.

Other important actors are:

- The Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC, (Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP), which is responsible for the Evening Technical School (Esperini Techniki Scholi), the Afternoon and Evening Classes of Technical Schools (Ekpaideftika Programmata Apogevmatinon kai Vradinon Tmimatou Technikis Ekpaideftisis), the Adult Education Centres (Epimorfotika Kentra) and the Pedagogical Institute, PI (Paidagogiko Institutouto, PI);
- The Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YPP), which is responsible for public institutions of tertiary education and public training institutions;
- The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment, MoA (Ypourgeio Georgias, Fysikon Poron kai Perivallontos, YGFPP), which administers the Forestry College (Dasiko Kolegio) and organises seminars to farmers;
- Other ministries responsible for the training of employees in specific economic sectors such as health, public administration and defence;
- The Ministry of Finance, MoF (Ypourgeio Oikonomikon, YO), which has the responsibility for the training and development of civil servants.

ROLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS

The role of social partners in CVET is the same as in IVET. More information on the role of social partners in VET is provided in field 0302.

ROLE OF PRIVATE SECTOR

Apart from the above promoters of CVET in the broad public sector, there exists a large variety of private provision of CVET. It must be noted that most of this provision is directed towards the needs of both enterprises and individuals, mainly employees. The most prominent private providers of continuing training opportunities are:

- Private colleges;
- Private training institutions;
- Consultancy firms;
- Enterprises.

BODIES	RESPONSIBILITIES
EUROPEAN UNION	Set guidelines and priorities European Structural Funds European Programmes for Lifelong Learning
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT	
PLANNING BUREAU	Coordinating, policy-making body
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE	Overall responsibility for education
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL INSURANCE	Labour and human resource matters
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	Planned and systematic training and development of the human resources
SOCIAL PARTNERS	Participation in the Strategic Development Plan
	Participation in the: National Lisbon Programme National Lifelong Learning Programme National Strategic Reference Framework for Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 CIP "EQUAL"
	Members of Board of Governors of: Human Resource Development Authority Cyprus Productivity Centre Higher Technical Institute Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus
	Consultative committees, boards, councils
PRIVATE SECTOR	Provision of CVET directed towards the needs of both enterprises and individuals

04 - INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

0401 - BACKGROUND TO THE IVET SYSTEM AND DIAGRAM

Compulsory education lasts for ten years and covers pre-primary education, primary education, grades one to six, and lower secondary education in the gymnasium (*gymnasio*), grades seven to nine. Students are accepted at the pre-primary school at the age of four years and eight months. At the end of the gymnasium, they receive a certificate. Most students in primary and secondary education (89.5% in 2007, according to the Statistical Service of Cyprus) attend public-sector schools, which are set up and funded by the government. The rest attend private-sector schools, which are mainly self-funded.

Upper secondary education lasts for three years, grades 10 to 12. There are two types of upper secondary school, namely, the unified lyceum (*eniaio lykeio*) and technical and vocational schools (*technikes kai epaggelmatikes scholes*), respectively. The unified lyceum provides general upper secondary education. The new unified lyceum curricula aim to provide a wide knowledge base and greater flexibility in the selection of subjects. During the first year of studies, students follow a common core of subjects, while in the second and third year of their studies, students can select from a wide range of subjects. Technical Schools provide two major directions of upper secondary technical and vocational education, the Theoretical (*Theoritiki*) and the Practical (*Praktiki*). At the beginning of the first year of studies, students in both directions select the branch of their choice from a selection of thirteen branches. The first year of studies is common for the branch in each direction and students can select from a wide range of specialisations offered in the branch of their choice in the second and third year of their studies. More information is provided in field 0403.

General Education and Technical and Vocational Education share a number of common objectives, since both aim at providing all students with the opportunity to develop their individual skills, aptitudes and unique personalities. They also aim at assisting students to develop their communication and learning skills so as to enhance self-confidence and therefore empower them to deal successfully with the diverse roles they are expected to play in life.

The educational objectives of secondary general education aim to offer students the opportunity to develop all aspects of their capabilities through modern general, scientific and technological knowledge, methods and media, through the provision of links between the school and the outside world and by providing syllabus and programmes with diversity and flexibility incorporating the selection of individual subjects.

The main general objectives of the STVE are to help society achieve its goals for social, cultural and economic growth; to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of students; to enable society to utilise economic, scientific and technological advances; to provide students with better opportunities for

vertical and horizontal movement across the upper secondary educational system; to offer solid knowledge and broad technological training, thus contributing towards the development of students' talents, interests and skills; and finally to enhance the understanding of the technological dimensions of modern civilisation and their impact on the environment.

Upon completion all students receive an upper secondary school-leaving certificate, following the Pancyprian Examinations. The objective of the Pancyprian Examinations is twofold: the acquisition of the *Apolytirio*, and the acquisition of eligibility for admission to the Higher Education Institutions in Cyprus and Greece, based on the Average Allocating Score. Apart from the schools mentioned above, upper secondary education is also provided by the Evening Secondary General Schools and one Evening Technical School of the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*).

Formal education in the form of initial education and training is available through the Apprenticeship System (*Systima Mathiteias, SM*), which accepts students who leave formal education between grades eight and ten. More information is provided in field 0404. Responsibility is shared between the MoEC and the Cyprus Productivity Centre, CPC (*Kentro Paragogikotitas, KEPA*), a dedicated centre of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*).

Public tertiary education is provided at the University of Cyprus, UCY (*Panepistimio Kyprou, PK*), the Cyprus University of Technology (*Technologiko Panepistimio Kyprou, TEPAK*) and the Open University of Cyprus (*Anikto Panepistimio Kyprou, APKy*). In addition, there are three private universities that started to operate in the academic year 2007-2008 and several private institutions. IVET at tertiary level is provided at seven institutes/colleges, which come under the jurisdiction of various ministries.

Finally, the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*) approves and subsidises multi-company initial training programmes organised in cooperation with training institutions, enterprise-based initial training and the practical training of students of certain specialisations in public secondary and tertiary education institutions.

STATISTICAL DATA ON THE LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION IN IVET

According to the Statistical Service, during the school year 2006/2007, of the secondary school students, 85.7% were enrolled in public schools and the remaining 14.3% in private schools.

Statistics about public and private secondary schools, from the Statistical Service, indicate that of the students who enrol in grade I (around the age of twelve), 95.7% successfully complete grade III three years later, and 89.7% succeed in graduating six years later.

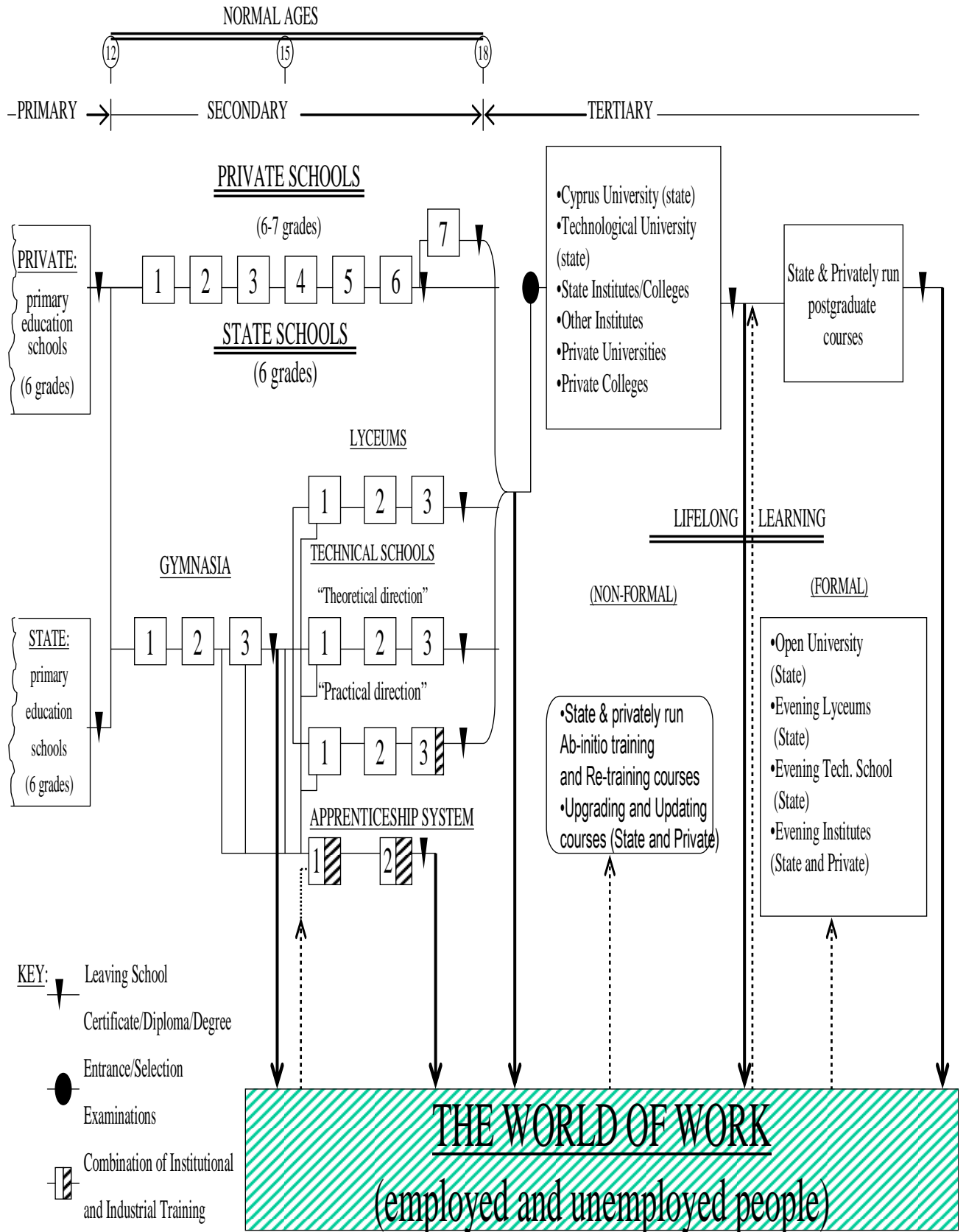
About 82% of the secondary school leavers continue their studies beyond the secondary level. About 45% pursue their studies at higher educational

institutions abroad and 37% attend higher educational institutions in Cyprus. In 2006/2007, there were 38 public and private tertiary education institutions in Cyprus. Of the tertiary education students 32.2% were enrolled in public and the remaining 67.8% in private institutions. Males accounted for 49.9% of the total and females for 50.1%.

According to the Labour Force Survey, in 2007 9.6% of the population 25-64 years of age participated in education and training programmes. In 2007 the percentage of the population 25-64 years of age who participated in education was 2.3% while the corresponding percentage that participated in training was 7.6%.

The structure of the formal and non-formal education and training system in Cyprus is illustrated in the below diagram.

TABLE 1: THE FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM OF CYPRUS



Note: Most of the Ab-initio, Re-training, Updating and Upgrading courses are subsidised by the Human Resource Development Authority.

0402 - IVET AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL

There is no initial vocational education and training provided in Cyprus at the lower secondary level.

0403 - IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL-BASED AND ALTERNANCE)

In Cyprus, Initial Vocational Education and Training programmes begin to be provided at the upper secondary level of the education system. Upon completion of their compulsory lower-secondary education, successful lower secondary education graduates are eligible to enrol either in the theoretical or in the practical direction offered by technical schools.

Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, STVE (*Defterovathmia Techniki kai Epaggelmatiki Ekpaidefsi, DTEE*) provides a broad range of technical/vocational education, initial training and re-training programmes to gymnasium leavers and adults. It is integrated into the national school system and maintains close links with industry and other training institutions.

Technical Schools (*Technikes Scholes, TS*) offer two distinct three-year secondary school programmes free of charge: the Theoretical Direction (*Theoritiki Katefthinsi*) and the Practical Direction (*Praktiki Katefthinsi*). The duration of studies is three years for each direction. The first year of studies is common for the branch in each direction and students select a specialisation offered in the branch of their choice in the second and third year of their studies. The Theoretical Direction is completely school-based and combines general education subjects with technological and workshop subjects. The first and second year of the Practical Direction are also completely school-based and combine general education subjects with technological and workshop subjects, while the third year of studies in the Practical Direction combines a school-based environment with a real workplace as final-year students are placed in industry for one day per week, where they follow a practical training programme.

The programmes provided include a variety of branches in both the Theoretical and Practical Directions. Examples of branches provided include mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, building and civil engineering, hotel and catering, fashion design, graphic arts and interior design and other branches. The great majority of programme branches are offered in both the Theoretical and Practical Directions.

The Theoretical Direction offers courses in a variety of specialisations with emphasis on general subjects and science, which take up 58% of the total programme. The rest of the time (42%) is allocated to technology and workshops.

In the Practical Direction courses, special emphasis is given to technology and workshop skills with a 57.5% time allocation. The remaining 42.5% is devoted to general education subjects. Following a supervised practical training programme, final-year students of the Practical Direction are placed in approved enterprises for one day a week throughout their final year.

Instructors who maintain continuous contact with the employers closely monitor their progress and performance.

Criteria to assess students include class participation, workshop and laboratory work, written assignments, projects, tests and a final examination.

School leaving certificates (apolytiria), equivalent to those of secondary general education schools, are awarded upon successful completion of either programme. Therefore, TVE school leavers are eligible for admission to universities and other tertiary education institutions in Cyprus and abroad. Qualifications provide access to regulated occupations. Each employer decides about the competence of the employees since there is not an official skill accreditation body.

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou - YPP*), about 53% of the graduates of the Theoretical Direction pursue successfully studies at Institutions of Higher and Tertiary Education, either in Cyprus or abroad. The vast majority of the graduates of the Practical Direction enter the labour market and only about 15% pursue successfully studies at Institutions of Higher and Tertiary Education, either in Cyprus or abroad.

The 2006/2007 enrolments in TVE include 959 students in the theoretical direction and 3 372 students in the practical direction including evening classes. The total number of students in upper secondary schools in 2006/2007 was 33 413. Thus only 13.0%, one of the lowest percentages among European countries, were students in technical/vocational schools. Cyprus has a low percentage of students in technical schools, as most students prefer to continue into higher education, and the path to follow for most tertiary education institutions is the general direction. In addition to this, the economy is characterised by a thriving services sector and a declining manufacturing sector. This has led to a decline, over the years, of the number of persons employed in technical occupations and consequently to a decline in the number of students in technical schools, which are mainly catering to those occupations.

An action aiming at strengthening the quality and attractiveness of STVE and improving the organisation of STVE was co-financed by the European Social Fund, ESF (*Evropaiko Koinoniko Tameio, EKT*) and the MoEC. The action involved a study focusing on the organisation of the STVE that was completed in July 2008. In addition, the MoEC is in the process of revising the curriculum of the STVE within the context of the Education Reform, taking into account the findings of the study. The revision of the curriculum of the STVE is expected to be completed in 2008.

Table 1: Students in upper secondary education by programme orientation (general/vocational), 2006/2007	
UPPER SECONDARY PUBLIC EDUCATION - TOTAL ENROLMENT	33 413
UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES (%)	13.0%
UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION GENERAL PROGRAMMES (%)	87.0%

Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus

0404 - APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

The Apprenticeship System (*Systima Mathiteias, SM*) is a two-year initial vocational education and training programme providing practical and theoretical training to young people who have not successfully completed their lower-secondary compulsory education and wish to be trained and employed in technical occupations. Students must be at least fourteen to be accepted in the Apprenticeship System and must not be over eighteen at the time of graduation.

Responsibility is shared between the Cyprus Productivity Centre, CPC (*Kentro Paragogikotitas, KEPA*), a dedicated centre of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*) and the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou - YPP*), while the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*) compensates employers for wages paid to apprentices while attending classes at technical schools. The Apprenticeship Board has a tripartite character with representation of the government, technical schools, employers' and employees' organisations, the CPC and the HRDA. This Board examines issues that arise concerning the System and consults the CPC.

An apprenticeship contract is signed between the employer, the apprentice and his/her parent/guardian where the employer is committed to provide practical experience and allow the apprentice to attend theoretical classes and workshops for two days a week at the premises of technical schools. During the two days spent at school apprentices take the following subjects for both years of their study: 1 period in Greek language, 2 periods in mathematics, 3 periods in technology, 2 periods in drawing and 5 periods in workshops/laboratory work.

Apprentices are trained in occupations such as: builders, plumbers/welders, auto mechanics, auto electricians, furniture makers / carpenters, electricians, domestic appliances repairers and sheet metal welders.

Assessment in technical schools follows the rules of the education system with regular tests and final examinations. In industry the apprentices are assessed by their supervisors and their grade appears on the certificate which is issued by the CPC, for the apprentices who successfully complete the course. According to the Statistical Service of Cyprus, in 2007 there were 196 participants in the Apprenticeship System.

The Apprenticeship Certificate allows access to a number of regulated occupations (e.g. building contractors, electricians), given that all the other provisions of the relevant legislation are being observed.

Participants who wish to enter the Labour Market may apply to the District Labour Offices, DLO (*Eparchiaka Grafeia Ergasias, EGE*) and co-operate with the competent Officers in order to find suitable employment. A significant proportion of the apprentices tend to stay with their employer, after completing their training.

The Apprenticeship System is not compulsory and attendance is free of charge. However, there are not, at present, any direct and visible academic progression routes from the System.

The Apprenticeship System is associated with the low educational attainment and with failure at school. In addition, a very low percentage of girls participate in the system (while girls constitute about 25% of dropouts, less than 1% registers with the system).

REDESIGN OF THE APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM

The Council of Ministers decided (May 2005) that the responsibility for the operation of the Apprenticeship System be undertaken by the CPC. The responsibility for training the apprentices remains with the MoEC. In this context, the System will be re-examined along two phases:

1. Short term improvements, through:
 - Upgrading the Apprenticeship System, with co-financing by the European Social Fund, by reviewing the analytical programmes, training the teaching staff, and by acquiring software and other support material, which is undertaken by the MoEC; and
 - Improving the administration and management of the system, including the monitoring and the supervision of both the in-class and the in-company training process, which is undertaken by the CPC.
2. Long term radical improvements, through the design of a New Modern Apprenticeship (NMA), with significant changes in the philosophy, the structures, systems and processes, in order to provide an alternative education and training pathway to young persons who reject / drop out of the formal education system, including the possibility of widening the coverage to accommodate possible needs of young people of wider age ranges. Also the NMA aims at attracting a greater number of girls and broadening the range of skills.

The proposal for the establishment of the NMA was approved by the Council of Ministers in November 2007. Following a transitional period of two years during which parts of the current apprenticeship scheme will coexist with parts of the new apprenticeship, it will become fully operational in 2010, and as from 2011 post secondary apprenticeship will be incorporated into the system.

The main strategic objectives of the NMA are:

- To provide a learning pathway for young persons who withdraw from the education system early, so that they are able to learn how to learn, acquire and/or upgrade their skills, and become more employable and more able to progress in their career;
- To increase the supply of labour with persons qualified to meet the needs of the economy, to ensure mobility between education, apprenticeship and employment, and to minimise the risk of social exclusion.

The NMA will embrace young people between 14 and 25 at three levels (preparatory apprenticeship, core apprenticeship and post-secondary apprenticeship), will be supported by an internal research and development centre, and will be linked to the national System of Vocational Qualifications established and implemented by the HRDA.

The proposal for a NMA is being promoted for inclusion in the programmes that are co-financed by the EU within the framework of the new programming period 2007-2013.

0405 - OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS

There is no initial vocational education and training provided in Cyprus under this category.

0406 - VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT POST-SECONDARY (NON TERTIARY) LEVEL

There are three types of initial training schemes that are financed by the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*) and refer mostly to upper secondary education graduates. These are the accelerated initial training scheme, the enterprise-based initial training and the schemes that are co-financed by the European Social Fund, ESF (*Evropaiko Koinoniko Tamio, EKT*).

ACCELERATED INITIAL TRAINING SCHEME

The Accelerated Initial Training Scheme is a multi-company initial training scheme operated by the HRDA and aims to train mainly new entrants into the labour market, unemployed school-leavers and also persons who wish to change their occupations through retraining. The aim of this scheme is to meet the needs in occupations where there are significant labour shortages. Training programmes are organised in cooperation with the Cyprus Productivity Centre, CPC (*Kentro Paragogikotitas, KEPA*), a dedicated centre of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*), the Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus, HHIC (*Anotero Xenodocheiako Institouto Kyprou, AXIK*) and other institutions.

The duration of this type of training programmes ranges from 12 to 24 weeks, depending on the requirements of each occupation. They include theoretical and workshop sessions at a training institution and practical training in industry.

During 2007, training programmes were implemented for Cooks, Construction Workers, Plumbers, Welders and Cabinet Makers/Carpenters, Taxi Drivers and Auto Body Fitters.

The HRDA covers all costs for the institutional training. In addition, trainees receive a weekly allowance. Enterprises employing these trainees receive subsidies for the duration of the practical training depending on the size of the enterprise and the salary of trainees.

The types of programmes that are offered are published in a prospectus twice a year for the technical occupations and once a year for other occupations. The occupations, the training centres, the districts, the number of trainees and other relevant information about the programme are provided together with application details and dates of selection interviews.

The number of programmes is limited due to limitations in the training facilities and the instructors. The number of places is also limited, usually ranging from 12 to 15 places.

Candidates must be at least 16 years of age. Candidates choose to apply to the specialisation they prefer. All candidates pass through a selection interview, which is carried out jointly by the HRDA and the relevant institution for each specialisation. Access to each programme is limited depending on the number of places available by district for each programme.

The access requirements or criteria for selecting trainees for these programmes are the following:

- Knowledge – It is preferable to have completed upper secondary education, although candidates with lower secondary education are not always excluded, especially if they attend Evening schools leading to upper secondary education;
- Abilities – Based on the requirements of each occupation, the physical and mental abilities of each candidate are assessed;
- Social and Economic status – Candidates are given priority if they are unemployed, if they do not have anyone to support them financially, if they have to support a family, if they belong to a divorced family, etc;
- Interest and level of commitment of the candidate - An important criterion is the interest of the candidate in the chosen specialisation.

After the completion of the practical training at the industry, the employer and the instructor assess the participants and the resulting assessment form is given to the HRDA together with the training logbook.

The participants who successfully complete the programme are granted a Training Certificate, which specifies the subject of specialisation, the duration and the content of the training and it certifies that the person who possesses the certificate has successfully completed the requirements of the training.

According to the HRDA, in 2007 146 persons participated in accelerated initial training programmes.

ENTERPRISE-BASED INITIAL TRAINING SCHEME

The Enterprise-Based Initial Training Scheme consists of single-company training programmes subsidised by the HRDA. It aims at the design, organisation and implementation of training programmes by the enterprises themselves for meeting their own training needs at all staff levels. These

programmes are mainly designed for meeting the needs for initial training of newly recruited employees. These training programmes can be conducted by trainers that are company employees or by other trainers from Cyprus or abroad. The subsidies granted by the HRDA are calculated according to the cost of the trainer, the duration of the programme and the number of participants.

The curricula and the duration of the programme vary according to the trainee, the occupation and the needs of the enterprise. The duration of programmes however usually ranges between 4-12 weeks.

During the execution of the course the trainer assesses the trainee and at the end the trainer performs a final evaluation to ensure that the programme has achieved its targets.

These programmes do not provide a certificate or a recognised qualification since the knowledge received is specific to the requirements of the trainee, the occupation and the needs of the enterprise concerned.

SCHEMES CO-FINANCED BY THE ESF

The HRDA implements three schemes that are co-financed by the ESF. Each of these schemes aims to promote the training and employability of Young Secondary School-leavers (with a priority given to general education graduates who are less than 25 years old and who have not gained work experience of more than 9 months after graduation), the Unemployed (with emphasis on women, the young unemployed persons of 15-24 years of age with no qualifications and on groups that are in danger of social exclusion) and the Economically Inactive Women. In 2007, 389 persons participated in these schemes.

In addition, a scheme for the enhancement of computer literacy of the unemployed (with priority attached to young unemployed, women unemployed as well as groups of unemployed threatened by social exclusion e.g. older aged unemployed), which was also co-financed by the ESF, was developed and implemented over the period November 2006-December 2007. In 2007, 460 persons participated in the scheme.

The schemes include the following operations:

- Organisation of vocational training programmes, covering subjects such as communication and interpersonal relations, group work, development of negotiating techniques, problem solving, digital literacy and learning of languages and training activities for the acquisition of specialised vocational skills. The duration of the programmes varies depending on the specialisation, the level and the subject;
- Programmes for the acquisition of work experience through their placement in enterprises. The duration of the placement/ training is about 3 months, according to the complexity of activities of the company.

0407 - VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT TERTIARY LEVEL

Public general tertiary education is provided at the University of Cyprus, UCY (*Panepistimio Kyprou, PK*), the Cyprus University of Technology (*Technologiko Panepistimio Kyprou, TEPAK*) and the Open University of Cyprus (*Anikto Panepistimio Kyprou, APKy*). In addition, there are three private universities that started to operate in the academic year 2007-2008 and several private institutions. IVET at tertiary level is provided at seven institutes/colleges, which come under the jurisdiction of various ministries.

All public education in Cyprus is free of charge, including studying at the University of Cyprus and public universities and institutes/colleges. Education in accredited private institutions is subsidised in the form of a grant, as is tertiary education abroad.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF TERTIARY EDUCATION

There are seven public tertiary level education institutions offering programmes in Engineering, Forestry, Hotel and Catering, Nursing and other vocations. These institutions by ministry are the following:

Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance:

- Higher Technical Institute;
- Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus.
- Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment:
 - Cyprus Forestry College.
- Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism:
 - Tourist Guides School.
- Ministry of Justice and Public Order:
 - Police Academy.
- Ministry of Health:
 - School of Nursing ;
 - School of Health Inspectors.

The main aim of these institutions is to provide tertiary education and produce high-calibre professionals in each field. The objective is to provide education and training according to the needs of the Cyprus labour market. The programmes are technically-professionally oriented, and they are designed to offer students the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes, which will enable them to work either in the public sector or in industry.

The basic admission requirement for public tertiary education institutions is the completion of 12 years of primary and secondary education, which is certified by the lyceum or technical school leaving certificate (*apolytirio*). The

selection of candidates is based on the applicants' success in the Pancyprian Examinations and in some cases, passing an oral interview is also required.

Studies are organised in diploma programmes, which include different specialisations. The competent ministry of each institution has to approve each programme, but, to a large extent, the institutions themselves design the curricula. The diploma programmes consist of basic professional studies and practical training. The academic year commences in mid-September or early October and ends in May/June. It often consists of two semesters, with significant time spent on practical training.

Students are assessed, by taking part in semester, and often mid-term, examinations. Workshop and laboratory assignments are marked individually, with this mark forming a percentage of the final mark in the given subject. Project work and industrial training are also assessed and taken into consideration when assigning final marks. Successful completion of the programme, which lasts 2-3 years, leads to the institution's diploma or higher diploma. Following law 68 (I)/96, which regulates the procedure for the recognition of higher education qualifications, the diplomas awarded by the public tertiary education institutions are recognised by the competent authorities of the state.

The Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*) subsidises the enterprise-based practical training of students of the Higher Technical Institute, HTI (*Anotero Technologiko Institutou, ATI*) and of the Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus, HHIC (*Anotero Xenodocheiako Institutou Kyprou, AXIK*). The selection of companies and the placement of students for practical training as well as the follow-up and evaluation of their progress are done by the organisers of the programmes, in consultation and with the HRDA's subsidisation. The means of financing the other HE institutions is described in field 1002.

Table 1: Number of students in public institutions of tertiary education by level of study and field of studies, 2006/2007		
FIELD OF STUDY	FIRST DEGREE/DIPLOMA	POSTGRADUATES
BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION	0	128
COMPUTING	77	0
ENGINEERING AND ENGINEERING TRADES	90	0
ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING	64	0
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERY	22	0
HEALTH	906	28
PERSONAL SERVICES	193	0
SECURITY SERVICES	304	0
TOTAL	1 656	156

Source: Education Statistics, Statistical Service of Cyprus

05 - CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR ADULTS

0501 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Adult Education and Training in Cyprus is provided by a variety of institutions and settings and can be classified into two broad categories:

- General Adult Education;
- Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET).

GENERAL ADULT EDUCATION

General Adult Education includes courses that are mainly promoted by the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*) and offered by the:

- State Institutes of Further Education (Kratika Kentra Epimorfosis), which aim at offering equal opportunities of education to students and adults;
- Secondary General Education Evening Schools, which offer full-time general education, that leads to the acquisition of a School Leaving Certificate;
- Open University of Cyprus, OUC (*Anikto Panepistimio Kyprou, APKy*).

CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (CVET)

CVET is highly developed in Cyprus and it is provided in a multitude of settings by public promoters and numerous public and private providers. The major influence in this development has been the establishment and operation of the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*), a semi-government organisation, which approves and subsidises training programmes implemented by public and private institutions and enterprises. Moreover, private institutions such as colleges, training institutions, consultancy firms and enterprises offer a variety of courses for adults, including many that are not subsidised by the HRDA. The private training market is complemented by traditional promoters of CVET such as the MoEC, which provides a variety of courses to adults, the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*) and other ministries and public institutions.

RECENT POLICY DEVELOPMENTS AND CHANGES CONCERN:

Lifelong Learning

A comprehensive Lifelong Learning (LLL) Strategy for Cyprus for 2007-2013 has been formulated and approved by the Council of Ministers in November 2007. Its priorities are enumerated in field 0201.

For the promotion of the implementation of the LLL strategy, a National Committee for Lifelong Learning was formed, consisting of representatives from all competent authorities (MoEC, MLSI, HRDA, Cyprus Pedagogical Institute and other) and key social partners (government, teacher organisations, employers' organisations and trade unions). The Committee will be responsible for following up the implementation of the strategy and making suggestions for its future adjustments.

In addition, the government has established the new independent Foundation for the Management of European Programmes for Lifelong Learning in order to promote the participation of Cypriot citizens and organisations in the European Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013.

In recent years, the number of participants in adult education and training has increased dramatically. Recent developments for lifelong learning include:

- The continuous upgrading and enrichment of the training and development schemes of the HRDA, which is the dominant actor in the field of vocational training and development. Its establishment and operations changed the training scene and greatly influenced the development of the training market in Cyprus. More information is provided in field 0502;
- The University of Cyprus, UCY (Panepistimio Kyprou, PK), which was established in 1992, offers limited adult education courses (such as an MBA course);
- The establishment of the Open University of Cyprus, which accepted the first students in September 2006;
- The public Technological University of Cyprus (Technologiko Panepistimio Kyprou, TEPAK) has been established and accepted its first students in September 2007;
- The first private universities in Cyprus have been approved and started to operate in the academic year 2007-2008;
- The establishment of Vocational Schools of Lifelong Learning (*Epaggelmatikes Scholes Dia Viou Ekpaidefsis, ESDE*) is being planned by the MoEC.

Access to Learning

Access to training is facilitated via certain schemes of the HRDA, such as the Training Infrastructure Support Scheme, which aims to strengthen the training infrastructure of companies, training institutions and organisations, as well as the continuous provision of information on training opportunities. In the case of the continuing training programmes, ICTs are used as a learning tool in numerous subjects while at the same time training is provided for specific ICT related subjects.

Additionally, initiatives related to VET with regard to new learning environments include research projects made under the Leonardo da Vinci Programme that promote new learning tools, websites and CD-Roms. Furthermore, educational leave schemes (paid and unpaid) are applied in the public sector, which have been adjusted to cater for distance learning, eLearning and the use of new technologies.

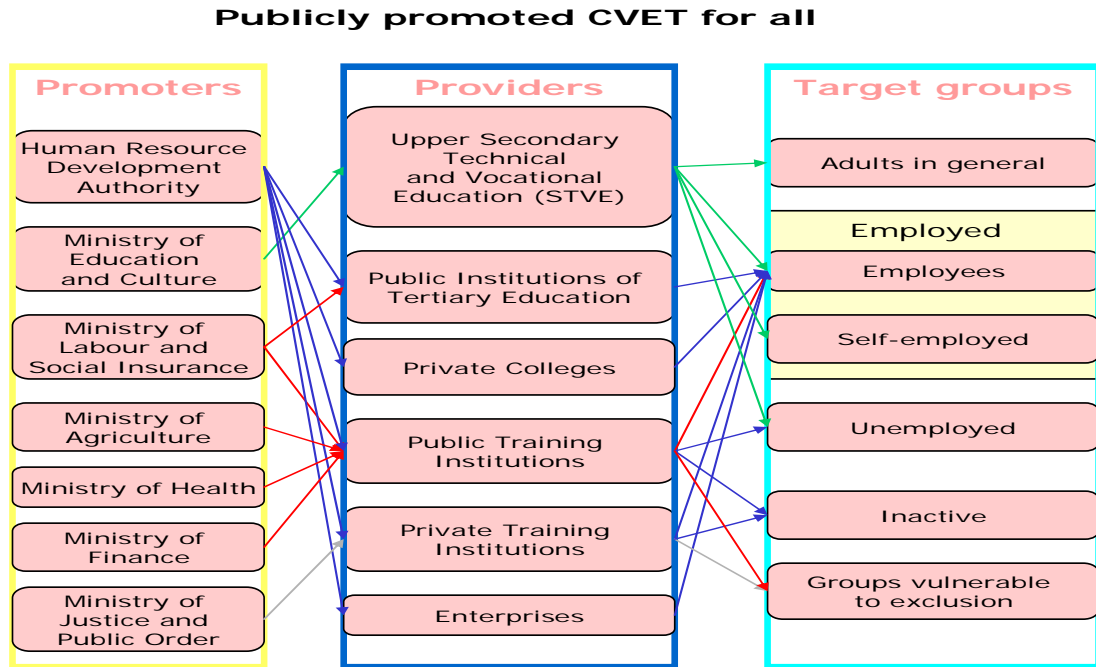
Efforts to introduce eLearning into the Cyprus Educational System have been already made. A more organised and comprehensive effort, which is co-funded by the European Social Fund, ESF (*Evropaiko Koinoniko Tamio, EKT*) is currently underway. The measure aims at reforming the curricula of all subjects with activities using ICT, providing schools with suitable ICT equipment and completing the infrastructure installations.

Planning and Forecasting Mechanisms

The main formal mechanism in place that identifies skill needs is operated by the HRDA, which provides employment forecasts in Cyprus. The Ministry of Finance, MoF (*Ypourgeio Oikonomikon, YO*) and the PB provide projections for the growth of the economy. The MoEC is, on the other hand, responsible for the identification of educational and special skill needs. More information is provided in field 0702.

0502 - PUBLICLY PROMOTED CVET FOR ALL

Diagram 1: Publicly promoted CVET for all



In publicly promoted CVET, as shown graphically in the above diagram, there is a plethora of providers, both public such as the Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, STVE (*Diefthinsi Mesis Technikis kai Epaggelmatikis Ekpaidefsis, DMTEE*) and public training institutions, and private such as colleges, training institutions and enterprises.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

A mix of public and private sector provision of continuing training exists which has been encouraged and strengthened primarily through the approval and consequent subsidisation of training activities provided by the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*). The HRDA's main source of income comes from the Human Resource Development levy paid by all companies in the private sector and semi-government organisations. The levy corresponds to 0.5% of the payroll of each contributing company. Civil servants and the self-employed are excluded from the HRDA's sphere of competence.

An important actor in the field of vocational education is the MoEC, which offers formal education programmes such as the Evening Technical School (*Esperini Techniki Scholi*) as well as non-formal education programmes.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*) is responsible for public institutions of tertiary education and public training institutions.

TARGET GROUPS

The courses offered by the MoEC are targeted to adults, while the HRDA subsidises training programmes of employees.

The only data available for the participation in education and training in Cyprus comes from the Labour Force Survey, LFS (*Erevna Ergatikou Dynamikou, EED*). According to the LFS, the proportion of population aged 25-64 participating in education and training was 5.6% in 2005 and increased to 9.6% in 2007.

TYPES OF PROVIDERS AND COURSES

The CVET activities that are subsidised by the HRDA include:

- Single-company Continuing Training Programmes in Cyprus;
- Single-company Continuing Training Programmes Abroad;
- Standard Multi-company Continuing Training Programmes;
- High-Priority Multi-company Continuing Training Programmes;
- Multi-company Continuing Training Programmes Abroad;
- Training programmes for newly employed tertiary education graduates;
- The continuing training programmes offer non-formal training to employees by various public and private training institutions and organisations. The training programmes for newly employed tertiary education graduates are aiming to meet the need for strengthening the management capacity of enterprises through the employment and training of unemployed university and other tertiary education graduates.

The MoEC is responsible for the:

- Evening Technical School (*Esperini Techniki Scholi*) which offers initial Technical and Vocational Education to individuals who are fifteen years old and over and have completed successfully Lower Secondary Education, and continuing Technical and Vocational Education to Technical School graduates who wish to follow a specialty other than their original one;
- Afternoon and Evening Classes of Technical Schools (*Ekpaideftika Programmata Apogevmatinon kai Vradinon Tmimatou Technikis Ekpaidefsis*), which offer continuing education and training to adults;

- Adult Education Centres ((Epimorfotika Kentra), which offer a wide range of short or medium length courses that cover several interest areas;
- Vocational Schools of Lifelong Learning, (*Epaggelmatikes Scholes Dia Viou Ekpaidefsis, ESDE*) currently being planned by the MoEC, which will offer all types of initial or continuing technical and vocational education and training;
- Pedagogical Institute, PI (Paidagogiko Institutouto, PI), which offers in-service training to secondary education teachers;
- The University of Cyprus, UCY (Panepistimio Kyprou, PK), which offers pre-service training to secondary education teachers.
- The MLSI is responsible for public institutions of tertiary education and public training institutions comprising:
 - Cyprus Productivity Centre, CPC (Kentro Paragogikotitas, KEPA), which offers short modular programmes for employees that focus on technical occupations and management;
 - Higher Technical Institute, HTI (Anotero Technologiko Institutouto, ATI) and Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus, HHIC (*Anotero Xenodocheiako Institutouto Kyprou, AXIK*), which offer upgrading courses for employees in their respective fields. Most of the courses are approved and subsidised by the HRDA.

QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS

The HRDA and the MoEC are responsible for the quality of the programmes provided.

Human Resource Development Authority

The HRDA ensures the quality of the programmes it subsidises by undertaking checks in the three following stages:

- The programme approval stage

The enterprise and/or training institution that wishes to organise a programme submit an application to the HRDA with the analytical training specifications in advance for approval of subsidisation. The checking at this stage is done on the basis of specific criteria that are mentioned in the Guide for policies and procedures of each scheme.

- The programme implementation stage

During the implementation of the programme the enterprise and/or training institution has to follow the approved specifications and ensure the correct filling in of the attendance form and the training logbook. The HRDA officers perform, on a sample basis, site inspections at the enterprise and/or training institution to ensure the quality of the programme.

- The payment of the subsidy stage

According to the applicable procedure, after the completion of the programme, an application should be submitted to the HRDA for payment of the subsidy. The Financial Services Directorate of the HRDA performs the necessary checks according to the checklist. Payment of the subsidy is made when it is verified that all the necessary criteria that are mentioned in the Guide for policies and procedures of each scheme are met.

Ministry of Education and Culture

The curricula that are created for the programmes offered by the Evening Technical School and the Afternoon and Evening Classes of Technical Schools are in line with the curricula that are implemented in mainstream IVET. The respective Inspector of each branch is responsible for the correct implementation of both IVET and CVET curricula.

Constant assessment of the progress of learners, in the form of tests carried out by the Schools and final examinations organised centrally by the MoEC, is instrumental in order for Inspectors to evaluate the outcome of the educators/work. In addition to the above, learners are asked to fill in questionnaires, in order to assess the content of the programmes they attended.

Finally, Inspectors of each branch are responsible for making sure that the infrastructure of Technical Schools that offer CVET programmes is used in the best possible and most effective way.

As far as the Adult Education Centres are concerned, the only form of evaluation of the content of the programmes that are offered is carried out through an analysis of the answers to the questionnaires that learners are asked to fill in at the end of each course.

0503 - TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHERS VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Training opportunities for the unemployed and other groups vulnerable to exclusion in the labour market are somewhat limited in Cyprus. It must be noted that two schemes aiming to promote the training and employability of the unemployed and of the inactive women have been developed and are implemented since October 2006 by the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*). In addition, a new scheme for the enhancement of computer literacy of the unemployed was developed and implemented over the period November 2006-December 2007. All three schemes are co-financed by the European Social Fund, ESF (*Evropaiko Koinoniko Tameio, EKT*). More information is provided in field 0406.

The full utilisation of human resources in conditions of social cohesion and equal opportunities is a priority as has been described in the National Strategic Reference Framework for Cohesion Policy 2007-2013, NSRF (*Ethniko Stratigiko Plaisio Anaforas gia tin Politiki Synoxis, ESPA*). Furthermore, specific measures for the unemployed and other groups vulnerable to exclusion in the labour market are described in the National

Lisbon Programme (*Ethniko Schedio Drasis gia ti Stratigiki tis Lissavonas*) and in the Community Initiative Programme 'EQUAL', CIP EQUAL.

The providers of training for the unemployed and other groups vulnerable to exclusion in the labour market, as depicted graphically in the Diagram 1 under 05.02, are found in both the public and private sectors:

- Private Colleges: They provide training programmes for the unemployed and the inactive women promoted by the HRDA;
- Public Training Institutions: They provide training programmes for the unemployed and the inactive women promoted by the HRDA;
- Private Training Institutions: They provide training programmes for the unemployed and the inactive women as well as the prisoners promoted by the HRDA and the Ministry of Justice and Public Order, MJPO (*Ypourgeio Dikaiosynis kai Dimosias Taxis, YDDT*);
- The Upper Secondary General and Vocational Education, STVE (*Defterovathmia Techniki kai Epaggelmatiki Ekpaidefsi, DTEE*) of the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*): It provides programmes open to all adults, included the unemployed;
- Non-government organisations: They provide programmes for the inactive women promoted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*);
- The Centre for the Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled: It provides specialised programmes for acquisition of professional skills for disabled persons promoted by the MLSI;
- The Department of Social Welfare Services with the collaboration of the Public Employment Services, PES (*Dimosies Ypiresies Apascholis*) and the Cyprus Productivity Centre, CPC (*Kentro Paragogikotitas, KEPA*) of the MLSI: They provide vocational training programmes for individuals that belong to the vulnerable social groups of public assistance recipients, older persons and asylum seekers.

QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS

The promoters of the programmes for the unemployed and other groups vulnerable to exclusion in the labour market are responsible for setting the quality standards and for checking that the standards of the different programmes are met.

The following organisations are responsible for the quality of the programmes provided:

1. The HRDA is in the process of determining the quality standards of the new schemes aiming to promote the training and employability of the

unemployed and the inactive. The HRDA in general ensures the quality of the programmes it subsidises by undertaking checks in the three following stages:

- The programme approval stage;
 - The programme implementation stage;
 - The payment of the subsidy stage.
2. The MLSI is responsible for setting the quality standards for the programmes that are offered to groups vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market.
 3. The MoEC is responsible for setting the quality standards for the programmes that are offered to all adults, including the unemployed and other groups vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market.

STATISTICAL DATA

The source of the following data regarding participation in adult learning is the Labour Force Survey, LFS (*Erevna Ergatikou Dynamikou, EED*) conducted by the Statistical Service of Cyprus since 2000. However, the Labour Force Survey since 2003 does not distinguish between initial education and training and adult learning. Therefore, the 2003 to 2007 data have been adjusted by applying the proportion of adult learning from the 2002 figures to the figures for the years 2003 to 2007 in order to have an estimate of adult learning for these years.

From the tables, it can be seen that the participation rates in CVET have remained relatively stable during the last five years for the unemployed 15-64 years of age, showing a small increase during 2007 (5.4%). Participation rates of the inactive 15-64 years of age have remained relatively stable, although a noticeable increase has been observed in the participation rates of the age group 25-64 during 2007. It must be noted that the numbers especially for the unemployed are quite small and the figures should be viewed with caution.

Table 1: Participation rates (%) of the unemployed in CVET by age group in 2001-2007							
AGE GROUP	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
15-24	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
25-34	3.2	3.9	6.3	10.2	10.7	9.4	4.7
35-49	3.0	2.1	8.6	7.9	2.6	4.4	6.9
50-64	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
15-64	2.1	1.6	4.1	3.7	3.6	4.0	5.4
25-64	2.1	1.6	5.6	6.9	5.6	6.2	4.3

Source: Labour Force Survey 2001-2007

AGE GROUP	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
15-24	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
25-34	2.9	3.7	5.9	6.7	4.7	7.8	13.2
35-49	0.7	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
50-64	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
15-64	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8
25-64	0.8	1.0	2.8	4.3	2.4	4.0	7.4

Source: Labour Force Survey 2001-2007

0504 - CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF ENTERPRISES OR SOCIAL PARTNERS

CVET at the initiative of enterprises or social partners involves mainly:

- Measures to support training in SMEs;
- Measures to support training for civil servants and for employees in specific economic sectors;
- Social partner based schemes to support non-job related training;
- Leave of absence for education and training purposes.

MEASURES TO SUPPORT TRAINING IN SMEs

The Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*) contributes towards the training and development of managers in Small and Medium Enterprises, SMEs (*Mikromesaies Epichiriseis, MME*) mainly through the pursuit of the following activities:

- Management and Entrepreneurship Training Programmes for SMEs, provided by private training institutions;
- Business Development Programme (BDP) for managers/owners of SMEs;
- Programmes for the reinforcement of female and youth entrepreneurship, in co-operation with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, MCIT (*Ypourgeio Emporiou, Viomichanias kai Tourismou, YEVT*).

MEASURES TO SUPPORT TRAINING FOR CIVIL SERVANTS AND FOR ENTERPRISES IN SPECIFIC ECONOMIC SECTORS

Continuous training and development of the civil servants is offered through the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration, CAPA (*Kypriaki Akadimia Dimosias Dioikisis, KADD*) of the Ministry of Finance, MoF (*Ypourgeio Oikonomikon, YO*). Continuous training for civil servants is also being

promoted by the Public Administration and Personnel Service, PAPS (*Ypiresia Dimosias Dioikisis kai Prosopikou*).

There are specific training programmes and seminars offered by public authorities to specific groups of civil servants:

- Public sector teachers

The Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*) is responsible for the pre-service training of public sector teachers provided by the University of Cyprus, UCY (*Panepistimio Kyprou, PK*) as well as the in-service training provided by the Pedagogical Institute, PI (*Pedagogiko Institutouto, PI*).

- Public sector nurses

The Ministry of Health, MoH (*Ypourgeio Ygeias*) is responsible for the training of public sector nurses provided by the School of Nursing (*Nosileftiki Scholi*).

- Police officers and sergeants

The Ministry of Justice and Public Order, MJPO (*Ypourgeio Dikaiosynis kai Dimosias Taxis, YDDT*) promotes the training of police officers and sergeants provided by the Cyprus Police Academy (*Astynomiki Akadimia Kyprou*).

- Foresters and forestry graduates

The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment, MoA (*Ypourgeio Georgias, Fysikon Poron kai Perivallontos, YGFPP*) is responsible for the training of foresters and forestry graduates provided by the Forestry College (*Dasiko Kolegio*).

SOCIAL PARTNER BASED SCHEMES TO SUPPORT NON-JOB RELATED TRAINING

The Social partners organisations as well as certain ministries are involved in supporting non-job related training:

1. Employers' organisations

- The Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation, CEIF (Omospondia Ergodoton kai Viomichanon Kyprou, OEB);
- The Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry, CCCI (Kypriako Emporiko kai Viomichaniko *Epimelitirio*, KEVE).

2. The main trade unions

- The Cyprus Workers' Confederation (Synomospondia Ergazomenon Kyprou, SEK);
- The Pancyprian Federation of Labour, (Pankypria Ergatiki Omospondia, PEO);
- Democratic Labour Federation of Cyprus, (Demokratiki Ergatiki Omospondia Kyprou, DEOK);
- Cyprus Union of Bank Employees (*Enosi Trapezikon Ypallilon Kyprou*, ETYK).

3. The Ministry of Health, MoH (Ypourgeio Ygeias)

The MoH organises seminars to the public on health issues.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING PURPOSES

In certain sectors, leave of absence for education and training purposes is stated formally in the collective agreements. Such sectors are the Hotel Industry, Banking Sector, Cabinet making and Carpentry Industry and Private Clinics. This is another measure that guarantees a certain level of education and training.

Also in the collective agreements of specific sectors (Hotel Industry, Textile Industry, Footwear Industry, Luggage and Handbags Industry, Publishing, Banking Sector, Cabinet making and Carpentry Industry, Construction Industry and Printing Industry, Private Clinics) leave of absence for trade unionists for trade union matters is mentioned explicitly and this includes the participation in relevant training programmes.

STATISTICAL DATA

According to the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS3) results for 2005, shown in Table 1, 51% of enterprises in Cyprus provided training to their employees. This is slightly less than the EU27 average of 60%.

By size group the percentage of enterprises in Cyprus which provided training in 2005 was less than the EU27 average for enterprises employing 10-49 persons (45% compared to 55%), almost the same for enterprises employing 50-249 persons (80% compared to 78%), and higher for enterprises employing 250 or more persons (100% compared to 91%).

		SIZE CLASS (NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES)		
	TOTAL	10-49 (%)	50-249 (%)	250 OR MORE (%)
EU27	60	55	78	91
CYPRUS	51	45	80	100

Source: Eurostat, Continuing Vocational Training Survey CVTS3, 2005

0505 - CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

The only source of data regarding participation in education and training at the initiative of the individual is the 'Lifelong Learning in Cyprus 2003' survey. This is the first survey on lifelong learning in Cyprus. It was conducted as part of the Labour Force Survey, LFS (*Erevna Ergatikou Dynamikou, EED*) of 2003. The results of the survey refer to the participation of the population of Cyprus aged 15 and over in non-formal education or informal learning activities.

The participation rates in non-formal education, as can be seen in Table 1, are higher for women and for the age group 15-19 (68.9%).

Furthermore, as it is shown in Table 2, the participation rates in non-formal education are higher for people with tertiary and doctoral education (43.3%).

The participation rates in informal learning activities, as shown in Table 3, are higher in the age groups 20-29 (37.4%) and 30-39 (36.6%), while the use of printed materials (19.4%) and computer based online learning (13.6%) are the most common methods used.

Table 1: Participation rates of population aged 15 and over in non-formal education by age group and sex in 2003

AGE GROUP	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
15-19	66.1%	71.3%	68.9%
20-29	20.1%	29.7%	25.1%
30-39	27.6%	26.3%	26.9%
40-49	19.7%	22.9%	21.3%
50-59	14.1%	13.3%	13.7%
60 +	2.9%	1.2%	2.9%
25-64	20.1%	21.3%	20.7%
TOTAL	20.5%	22.5%	21.6%

Source: Lifelong Learning in Cyprus, 2003

Table 2: Participation rates of population aged 15 and over in non-formal education by educational attainment level and sex in 2003

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
LESS THAN UPPER SECONDARY	12.9%	12.7%	12.8%
UPPER SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY NOT-TERTIARY	17.0%	19.6%	18.3%
TERTIARY AND DOCTORAL	38.3%	48.4%	43.3%
TOTAL	20.5%	22.5%	21.6%

Source: Lifelong Learning in Cyprus, 2003

Table 3: Participation rates of population aged 15 and over in informal learning activities by type of activity and age group in 2003

AGE GROUP	USE OF AT LEAST ONE METHOD	PRINTED MATERIALS	COMPUTER BASED ONLINE LEARNING	EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTING OR OFFLINE COMPUTER	VISITING FACILITIES
15-19	23.1%	7.7%	16.9%	2.0%	3.6%
20-29	37.4%	25.6%	25.0%	17.7%	7.5%
30-39	36.6%	28.6%	19.3%	16.5%	6.3%
40-49	28.9%	22.6%	13.9%	11.1%	5.8%
50-59	23.2%	19.9%	7.9%	9.1%	4.8%
60-64	13.4%	11.4%	3.0%	3.5%	2.2%
65 +	6.7%	5.6%	1.1%	1.5%	1.4%
25-64	30.3%	23.8%	15.0%	12.7%	5.7%
TOTAL	26.2%	19.4%	13.6%	11.1%	5.0%

Source: Lifelong Learning in Cyprus, 2003

06 - TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

0601 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN VET

There has not been a clear distinction between teachers and trainers in VET in Cyprus. Usually the term 'teacher' refers to educators at all levels of the formal educational system whereas the term 'trainer' refers to persons providing training in the well-established training system in Cyprus. The term 'teacher' is used to denote persons working mainly in the formal part of the VET system, while the term 'trainer' is used to denote persons working mainly in the non-formal part of the VET system.

Apart from being responsible for teaching their subject and ensuring the progression of their learners, teachers of public secondary education play a very significant role in VET, since they are also responsible for carrying out the following tasks:

- Draw up the analytical programmes of the curricula and also the profiles of the graduates, under the supervision of the respective inspector of each of the branches offered by Secondary Technical and Vocational Education;
- Write and/or revise textbooks;
- Develop audiovisual aids for the classroom;
- Develop and implement modern methods of teaching and learning;
- Assess their learners' coursework and prepare and mark final exam papers;
- Participate in the planning of the annual budget for their specialty. Teachers also undertake to draw up the specifications of the equipment for their specialty and evaluate the tenders for the purchase of that equipment.

The distinctions amongst teachers and trainers in IVET and CVET are shown in table 1 and are graphically depicted in diagram below.

Diagram 1: Types of teachers and trainers in IVET and CVET in Cyprus

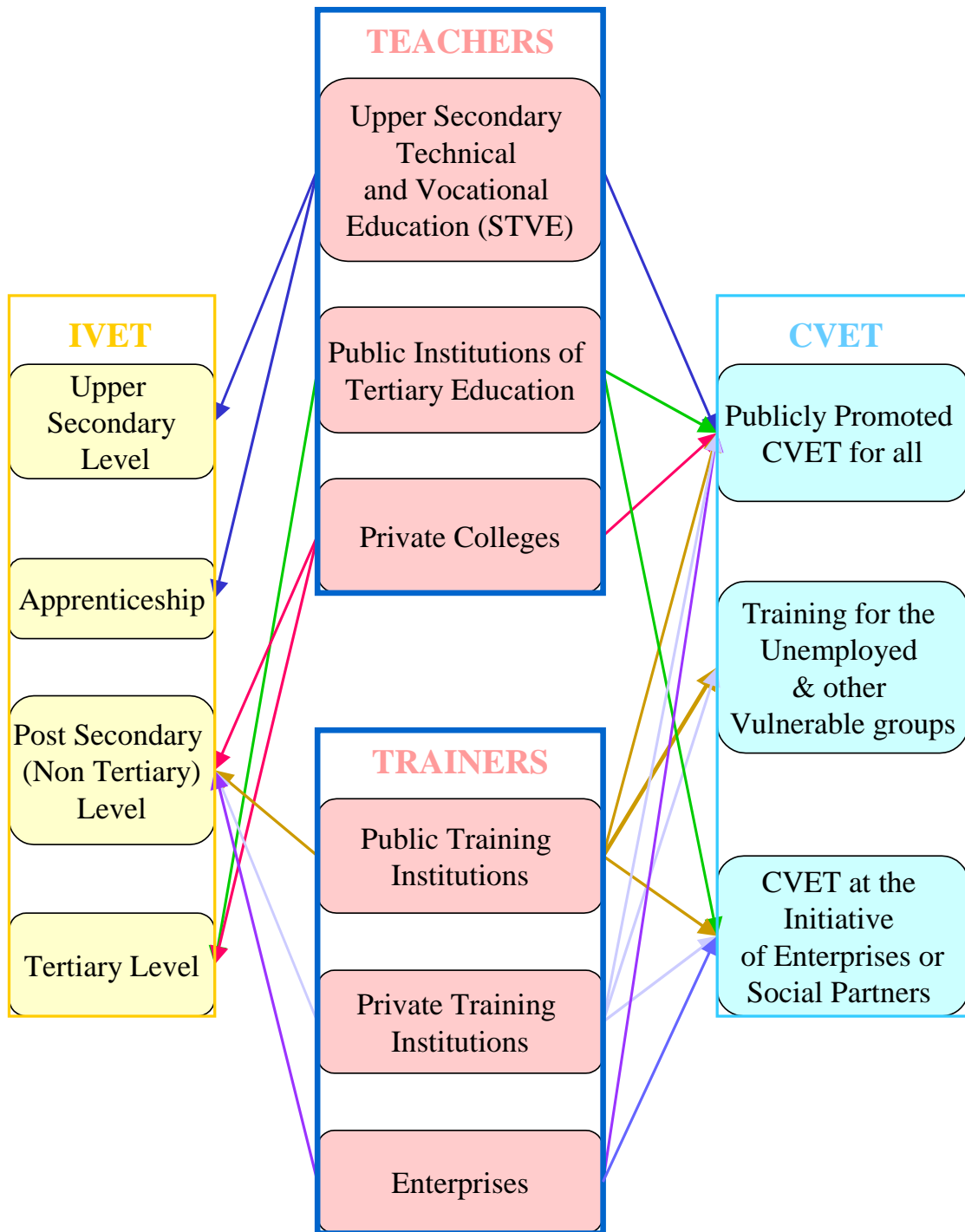


Table 1. VET Teachers and trainers by type of occupation and place of work

TEACHERS/TRAINERS	TYPE OF OCCUPATION	VET	PLACE OF WORK
TEACHERS	Teachers in Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education (STVE)	IVET	Public Vocational and Technical Secondary Schools
			Apprenticeship System
		CVET	Evening Technical School
			Afternoon and Evening Classes of Technical Schools
			Adult Education Centres
	Teachers in Public Institutions of Tertiary Education	IVET	Public Institutions of Tertiary Education
		CVET	
	Teachers in Private Colleges	IVET	Private Colleges
		CVET	
TRAINERS	Trainers in Public Training Institutions	IVET	Cyprus Productivity Centre
		CVET	
		CVET	Cyprus Academy of Public Administration
	Trainers in Private Training Institutions	IVET	Private Training Institutions and Enterprises
		CVET	
	Trainers in Enterprises	IVET	Enterprises
		CVET	

TEACHERS AND TRAINERS QUALIFICATIONS

Teachers, according to the job specifications, must hold an appropriate diploma in their subject area or a degree relevant to the subject they will teach. In the case of the teachers in public institutions of tertiary education and teachers of technological or workshop practice subjects in STVE, work experience in their area of specialisation is also required.

Trainers in the Cyprus Productivity Centre, CPC (*Kentro Paragogikotitas, KEPA*), a dedicated centre of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon*), according to job

specifications, must hold either a diploma from a tertiary institution or a degree relevant to the subject they will teach. Additionally, they must have work experience, the length of which varies according to the position.

There are no set requirements for trainers in private training institutions or enterprises but each training institution or enterprise sets these on an individual basis. In case the private training institutions or enterprises wish to submit training programmes to be approved and subsidised by the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*), through its initial training schemes, then their trainers need to conform to the HRDA pre-set criteria concerning their educational background, their work experience as well as their teaching experience.

The most common training programme trainers attend regardless of the subject they teach is the 'Training of Trainers'. This programme is organised by HRDA with the assistance of overseas collaborators and it is also provided by private training institutions. The body that defines the curricula of the 'Training of Trainers' for IVET trainers is the training institution itself that provides the training programme.

BODIES THAT REGULATE TEACHER AND TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS

As far as the Pre-service Training Programme, PTP (*Programma Proypiresiakis Katartisis*) for teachers is concerned (more information is provided in field 0602), the bodies, which define the curricula are:

- The Coordinating Committee (Epitropi Syntonismou), comprising the Director of Secondary General Education, the Director of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, the Director of the PI, two representatives from the University of Cyprus, UCY (Panepistimio Kyprou, PK), one representative from the Association of Secondary School Teachers of Cyprus, (Organosi Ellinon Leitourgon Mesis Ekpaidefsis Kyprou, OELMEK) and one representative from the Association of Teachers of Technical Education in Cyprus, (Organosi Leitourgon Technikis Ekpaidefsis Kyprou, OLTEK). This committee observes and assesses the PTP and submits suggestions on its structure, content and operation to the MoEC and the UCY;
- The Teaching Practice Committee (*Epitropi Scholikis Empirias*), comprising four officers of the MoEC and one representative from the UCY. In this committee one representative from the Association of Secondary School Teachers of Cyprus and one representative from the Association of Teachers of Technical Education in Cyprus participate as observers. This committee coordinates and promotes necessary actions for the implementation of the teaching practice experience programme in schools and approves the coordinators and mentors in each school, based on suggestions from the Headmasters of schools involved.

A very important part of the programme is the Teaching Practice Experience, TPE (*Scholiki Embiria*). Trainees are obliged to participate in a number of

lessons and are also required to teach in a real school environment. Essential and indispensable parts of the TPE are school involvement and the assignment of a mentor for each trainee. Therefore, trainees are encouraged to participate in all school activities and have to keep a portfolio of their teaching practice experience, according to the directions of their assigned mentor.

The UCY is responsible for the assessment and quality of the programme, while the PI is responsible for the in-service training of teachers in STVE.

Concerning the Cyprus Police Academy (*Astynomiki Akadimia Kyprou*) the assessment and quality monitoring of teachers pre-service training is the sole responsibility of the Cyprus Police Academy.

The HRDA examines and approves the 'Training of Trainers' programmes that are developed by the training institutions and submitted to the HRDA for subsidisation.

IMPORTANT REFORMS TO VET TEACHER/TRAINER TRAINING

The dominant players in the development of policies for VET teachers and trainers are the public STVE and the HRDA.

The most recent and significant development in teacher training has been the introduction of the PTP in 2000, which is an obligatory requirement for all new appointments to the Educational Service. This programme provides the opportunity to prospective teachers to acquire psycho-pedagogical knowledge, develop teaching skills and enhance their personal development.

An important development with regard to trainers is the gradual introduction of a system for the assessment and certification of training providers including trainers, which is one of the strategic objectives of the HRDA. Following a tender procedure, the project was assigned to the consortium of the National Accreditation Centre of Continuing Vocational Training (*EKEPIS*) and ICAP Business Information and Consulting Firm that are located in Athens. The implementation of the project started in October 2006. The project is expected to be completed in 5 stages over a period of thirty-six months. In August 2007 a draft paper of the system was extensively discussed with key stakeholders in VET and interested bodies, in an effort to have the highest possible level of consensus. In July 2008 the Board of Governors of the HRDA decided to accept the proposed system and proceed with the next stage of the project, which is the preparation of a specification for the computerisation of the system.

0602 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN IVET

The different types of teachers and trainers in IVET and their place of work are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Teachers and trainers in IVET by type of occupation and place of work		
TEACHERS/TRAINERS	TYPE OF OCCUPATION	PLACE OF WORK
TEACHERS	Teachers in Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education (STVE)	Public Vocational and Technical Secondary Schools
		Apprenticeship System
	Teachers in Public Institutions of Tertiary Education	Public Institutions of Tertiary Education
	Teachers in Private Colleges	Private Colleges
TRAINERS	Trainers in Public Training Institutions	Public Training Institutions
	Trainers in Private Training Institutions	Private Training Institutions and Enterprises
	Trainers in Enterprises	Enterprises

TEACHERS IN PUBLIC UPPER STVE

Pre-Service Training

In 2000 the Pre-service Training Programme, PTP (*Programma Proypiresiakis Katartisis*) was introduced and was made an obligatory requirement for all new appointments of teachers in the public Educational Service. Candidate teachers are required to attend a series of pedagogical lessons, participate in the prescribed and specified teaching practice and succeed in the systematic evaluation which incorporates a final written examination, coursework in the form of papers and projects and the appraisal of the trainees/ performance during their practical training at school. The general performance of the trainees is assessed through both written examinations and project assignments. Upon successful completion of the programme, participants are issued with a certificate of attendance.

In-Service Training

Continuing training for public upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education STVE (*Defterovathmia Techniki kai Epaggelmatiki Ekpaidefsi, DTEE*) teachers consists of the following training programmes and developmental activities:

- Compulsory training of Deputy Headmasters and Headmasters of Technical and Vocational Education Schools, organised by the Pedagogical Institute, PI (Paidagogiko Institutouto, PI);
- Optional continuing training and development programmes for teachers;
- Special developmental activity: Change agent teams, which organised extensive in-service training workshops focused on student-centred teaching approaches to support the implementation of the new curricula in their own schools.

All these series of courses include sessions dealing with EU priority issues as, for example, new technologies in education, intercultural education, the European dimension in education and action research.

TEACHERS IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF TERTIARY EDUCATION

Pre-Service Training

Only in two of these institutions, the Police Academy (*Astynomiki Akadimia Kyprou*) and the School of Nursing (*Nosileftiki Scholi*), pre-service training is a requirement. The teachers in the Police Academy are police officers with work experience in the police force who are transferred from their post in order to teach. Police officers who want to teach must at least have the position of sergeant. Usually teachers in the Police Academy are sergeants and inspectors. In order to be able to teach they must attend the course 'Train of Trainers' which is organised by the Police Academy. Teachers in the School of Nursing need to attend the same pre-service training programme which the secondary education teachers must attend upon appointment.

In-Service Training

In-service, continuing training of IVET teachers in public institutions is common practice. It is voluntary in almost all public institutions and incentives to attend continuing training programmes have still to be introduced to increase participation. The only institution where in-service, continuing training is compulsory is the School of Nursing. The majority of in-service training programmes attended by the teachers in the public institutions are related to the institutions' areas of interest as well as to the teachers' training needs. The teachers in the Higher Technical Institute, HTI (*Anotero Technologiko Institutouto, ATI*) and in the Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus, HHIC (*Anotero Xenodocheiako Institutouto Kyprou, AXIK*) tend to participate in the training programme 'Training of Trainers'. All public institutions participate in multinational exchange programmes for IVET teachers.

TEACHERS IN PRIVATE COLLEGES

Pre-Service Training

Previous work experience and pre-service training are not usually required although colleges will consider them as an advantage when hiring teachers.

In-Service Training

In-service, continuing training of teachers in private colleges is voluntary. The majority of in-service training programmes attended by the teachers in private colleges are related to the colleges' areas of interest as well as to the teachers' training needs. Private colleges participate in multinational exchange programmes for IVET teachers.

TRAINERS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TRAINING INSTITUTIONS AND IN ENTERPRISES

Pre-Service Training

There is no pre-service training requirement for trainers in public and private training institutions and in enterprises but each training institution sets these on an individual basis. In case the training institutions wish to submit training programmes to be approved and subsidised by the HRDA, through its initial training schemes, then their trainers need to conform to the HRDA pre-set criteria concerning their educational background, their work experience as well as their teaching experience. Pre-service training of IVET trainers is mandatory only in cases where they do not have any previous teaching experience.

In-Service Training

In-service, continuing training for trainers is voluntary and therefore it is up to the training institutions and the enterprises and their trainers to invest in upgrading their knowledge and skills. The HRDA implements and funds specialised training programmes for trainers aimed at:

- Trainers with little or no experience;
- Upgrading trainers/ competencies to support the implementation of the training programmes which the HRDA approves and funds;
- Managing of training centres.

On completion of the programmes, either organised by HRDA or private training providers, participants are issued with a certificate of attainment. An incentive to participate in such training programmes is the upgrading of knowledge and skills to provide a more competitive product in a highly competitive training market.

0603 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN CVET

The different types of teachers and trainers in CVET and their place of work are shown in Table 1. The pre-service and in-service training requirements for CVET teachers and trainers are the same as those that apply for IVET teachers and trainers and are described in section 0602.

TEACHERS/TRAINERS	TYPE OF OCCUPATION	PLACE OF WORK
TEACHERS	Teachers in Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education (STVE)	Evening Technical School
		Afternoon and Evening Classes of Technical Schools
		Adult Education Centres
	Teachers in Public Institutions of Tertiary Education	Public Institutions of Tertiary Education
	Teachers in Private Colleges	Private Colleges
TRAINERS	Trainers in Public Training Institutions	Cyprus Productivity Centre
		Cyprus Academy of Public Administration
	Trainers in Private Training Institutions	Private Training Institutions and Enterprises
	Trainers in Enterprises	Enterprises

07 - SKILLS AND COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGY

0701 - MECHANISMS FOR THE ANTICIPATION OF SKILL NEEDS

Cyprus is at the forefront of countries providing forecasts for skills needs with a long experience in this field. Employment forecasts in economic sectors and occupations are provided at a detailed level of analysis, including both expansion and replacement demand.

The main formal mechanism in place for the assessment of skill needs is operated by the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA, (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*). The Ministry of Finance, MoF (*Ypourgeio Oikonomikon, YO*) and the Planning Bureau, PB (*Grafeio Programmatismou, GP*) provide projections for the growth of the economy, which include forecasts for different sectors. The Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*) is responsible for the identification of educational and special skill needs.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

For the systematic employment forecasting and the identification of skills gaps, the HRDA conducts the following research studies, which can be found in the webpage www.hrdauth.org.cy/dep/index.htm:

- Long term employment trends and forecasting in Cyprus

The provision of long-term employment forecasts in sectors of economic activity and occupations has become an established activity of the HRDA. The Research and Planning Directorate of the HRDA provides 10-year employment forecasts on a regular basis every 2 to 3 years. The HRDA has just completed and published a new set of employment forecasts for Cyprus for the period 2008-2018 whereas the previous employment forecasts completed in 2004 covered the period 2005-2015 and the next ones will be carried out in 2009 covering the period 2010-2020. Thus, forecasts of employment, expansion and replacement demand are provided for 43 sectors of economic activity and for around 200 occupations, which cover the whole spectrum of the Cyprus labour market.

- Short term employment forecasts

Additionally, short-term employment forecasts covering a two to four year period are provided occasionally as the need arises.

- Annual investigations for the identification of skill needs with the involvement of the Social Partners

This study provides annual estimates for the number of persons required for specific occupations by district. On the basis of these estimates suggestions are put forward for the implementation of Multicompany Initial Training Programmes. In the study, the views of Employers/organisations, Trade Unions, District Labour Offices of the Ministry of Labour and Social

Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*) and the Cyprus Tourism Organisation, CTO (*Kypriakos Organismos Tourismou, KOT*) are collected and analysed through a specially designed questionnaire.

- Employment forecasts for specific groups;
- Forecasts of Employment Needs for Nurses: The study provided forecasts for both expansion and replacement demand for Nursing Staff during the period 2005-2015;
- Forecasts of Employment Needs for Foreign Labour: This study provided employment forecasts of foreign labour in Cyprus for the period 2004-2007.

In addition to employment forecasts, the HRDA also carries out:

- Human resource studies focusing on the characteristics of selected groups such as the employed, the unemployed, the economically inactive, women, foreign workers, education and training and lifelong learning;
- Evaluation studies on the effectiveness and impact of the HRDA's training and development activities;
- Thematic Priorities setting. The HRDA prepares on an annual basis a document that contains next year's thematic priorities for multi-company programmes. This document is communicated to all training institutions/providers. The HRDA examines various programmes submitted by organisations, which follow the thematic priorities, and subsidises the provision of continuing training.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND PLANNING BUREAU

The MoF and the PB provide projections for the growth of the economy, which include forecasts of value added, productivity and employment for different sectors, and submit proposals for the required policy changes.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

The MoEC and more specifically the Directorate of the Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, STVE (*Diefthinsi Defterovathmias Technikis kai Epaggelmatikis Ekpaidefsis, DTEE*) is responsible for the introduction of new branches and specialisations, the determination of the numbers of students who will be enrolled in each branch and specialisation, the design of curricula and the identification of special skills needed with the participation of the social partners.

The subjects that are included in the revised curricula can be classified into the following six categories:

- Common Core Subjects;
- Related Subjects;
- Elective Subjects;
- Technological and Workshop Practice Subjects for the Branch;
- Technological and Workshop Practice Subjects for the Specialisation;

- Industrial Placement.

0702 - BRIDGING PATHWAYS AND NEW EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The Lifelong Learning Strategy, completed in November 2007, provides appropriate links between initial and continuing education and training.

The new unified lyceum aimed at integrating the general education programme and the technical/vocational branch. The integration of secondary education is intended to render lyceum education consistent with current trends and to broaden curricula in order to enhance the relevance of education to the real world. The new unified lyceum (upper secondary schools) offers a mixture of obligatory core subjects, specialisation subjects and subjects of personal interest.

Cooperation between general and vocational education takes the form of guidance by career counselling which is provided throughout the student's attendance in the lower secondary education and mostly in upper secondary education (general and technical/ vocational) both in class sessions and on a personal basis. The final year students of general upper secondary education are also given the opportunity for one-week workplace guidance as part of voluntary work.

In addition, the students of certain public institutions of tertiary education are given the opportunity for practical training in industry. The Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA, (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*) subsidises the practical training of students of the Higher Technical Institute, HTI (*Anotero Technologiko Institouto, ATI*) and of the Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus, HHIC (*Anotero Xenodocheiako Institouto Kyprou, AXIK*). The selection of companies and the placement of these students for practical training as well as the follow-up and evaluation of their progress are done by the organisers of the programmes, in consultation with the HRDA.

The development of a Competence-Based System of Vocational Qualifications is a high priority objective. The System is being established and implemented in two phases. During the 1st phase in the period 2006-2008, 5 Standards of Vocational Qualifications at level 2 have been developed in 3 economic sectors for the occupations of waiter, cook, receptionist, construction mason and sales person. Opportunities for access were provided to employees. During the 2nd phase, which covers the period 2007 – 2013, the development of 67 new standards in priority occupations at various levels is envisaged and opportunities for access are expected to be provided to employees, unemployed and economically inactive persons. The standards will cover a broader range of occupations in the sectors of Retail and Wholesale Trade, Repairs of Motor Vehicles, Hotels and Restaurants, Construction, Manufacturing, Systems and Networks of Communication and Computers and Hairdressing as well as the occupation of Trainer of Vocational Training. Furthermore, it will be examined how the System will incorporate the branches / specialisations of Technical and Vocational Schools and the Apprenticeship System as well as other initial vocational

training programmes and thus is expected to bridge the various qualifications acquired via formal, non-formal and informal learning and strengthen the ties between initial and continuing vocational education. The 2nd phase of the System of Vocational Qualifications is included in the projects to be co-financed by the European Social Fund, ESF (*Evropaiko Koinoniko Tameio, EKT*) during the period 2007-2013.

The future development of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that will incorporate the System of Vocational Qualifications is expected to contribute to the further improvement of knowledge, skills and competences through lifelong learning. The transparency of Vocational Qualifications, that is an important part of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is expected to improve the vocational education and training systems. As a result, the persons involved will acquire the knowledge, skills and competences that are needed in the labour market both at National and European level.

The New Modern Apprenticeship, that will become fully operational in 2010, aims to ensure the employability of young people of ages 14-25 and their participation as active citizens in society, while, at the same time to meet the labour market needs. It will consist of a preparatory, a core and a post-secondary level. It will be supported by a research and development centre and will be linked to the System of Vocational Qualifications.

0703 - RENEWAL OF CURRICULA

For the renewal of curricula of vocational education and training, there are two important actors: The Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*), which is responsible for the overall administration of education, and the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*), which sets annual priorities for the continuing training programmes that are approved and subsidised.

Efforts to introduce eLearning into the Cyprus Educational System have been already made. An organised and comprehensive effort, which is co-funded by the European Social Fund, ESF (*Evropaiko Koinoniko Tamio, EKT*) is currently underway. One action aims at introducing modern technology in education and another aims at ensuring that all secondary education teachers will become digitally literate and will acquire skills to implement the new, ICT oriented curricula.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

In secondary technical and vocational education, Directorate of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, STVE (*Diefthinsi Defterovathmias Technikis kai Epangelmatikis Ekpaidefsis, DTEE*) of the MoEC is the main body involved in the renewal of curricula. The Directorate of STVE has approached curricula design systematically, with the participation of practically all stakeholders, including representatives of the social partners,

teachers/instructors and their unions, representatives of the Pedagogical Institute, PI (*Pedagogiko Institutouto, PI*) and the University of Cyprus, UCY (*Panepistimio Kyprou, PK*). Moreover, it maintains close links with the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*) in order to promote flexibility in the programmes offered based on the needs and demands of local industries.

The MoEC has completed in 2004 the reform of secondary Technical and Vocational Education (*Techniki kai Epaggelmatiki Ekpaidefsi*). Some of the major improvements include the provision of a broad knowledge base and the introduction on new specialisations related to the service sector. The curricula focus on core skills, and emphasis is placed on information and communication technology as a skill (more information is provided in field 0701). New teaching/learning methods favouring student initiative are encouraged as well as action learning in the form of project work.

The government is promoting major reforms at upper secondary education, including technical and vocational education. In the context of the Education Reform (*Ekpaideftiki Metarithmisi*), a public dialogue was held and the main priorities identified include:

- Resetting the aims of the education systems and programmes of study from pre-primary education through to upper secondary education;
- Differentiation of the teaching in class, in order to give emphasis in cooperative, team, experiential and exploratory teaching methods;
- Incorporation of new technologies in the education and training systems.

Within the framework of the Education Reform, the Council of Ministers has approved the formation of various committees that deal with various issues relevant to the Educational System.

Additionally, within the context of the Education Reform, the MoEC is currently preparing a full restructuring of the National Curriculum, in cooperation with the UCY.

A comprehensive and scientific external evaluation of the curricula offered by STVE was completed in July 2008. The external evaluation of the STVE curricula was co-financed by the European Social Fund, ESF (*Evropaiko Koinoniko Tameio, EKT*). The current revision of the curricula, according to the conclusions reached by the external evaluation, is expected to be completed in 2008.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF TERTIARY EDUCATION

As far as the public institutions of tertiary education are concerned, the ministry under which each institution is operating has to approve each programme, but, to a large extent, the institutions themselves design the curricula.

Teachers are involved in the design of the curricula of the programmes of their institutions based on their experience, regular contacts with enterprises and knowledge of relevant research. The curricula have to be approved by the Board of Governors of each institution, in which the social partners usually participate.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The continuing training programmes that are approved and subsidised by the HRDA should be designed on the basis of the HRDA's annual priority setting, which is communicated to all training institutions/providers. The submitted programmes are required to be prepared in accordance with the HRDA's specifications.

The HRDA in the last few years has increased the number of training courses in the field of ICT that receive a subsidy and has further promoted the adoption of eLearning methods and techniques.

The HRDA is implementing three schemes that are co-financed by the ESF. Each of these schemes aims to promote the training and employability of Young Secondary School-leavers, the Unemployed and Economically Inactive Women. In addition, a scheme for the enhancement of computer literacy of the unemployed, which was also co-financed by the ESF, was developed and implemented over the period November 2006-December 2007.

08 - ACCUMULATING, TRANSFERRING AND VALIDATING LEARNING

0801 - ACCUMULATING, ACCREDITING AND VALIDATING FORMAL LEARNING

BACKGROUND

The Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*) is responsible for the validation of formal education. Two other independent bodies are important in the assessment of tertiary education institutions and the recognition of tertiary education qualifications: the Council for Educational Assessment and Accreditation, SEKAP (*Symvoulío Ekpaideftikis Axiologisis kai Pistopoiisis*) and the Cyprus Council for the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications, KYSATS (*Kypriako Symvoulío Anagnorisis Titlon Spoudon*). As far as the regulated professions are concerned, Cyprus has introduced relevant national legislation in order to transpose the European Union Directives for the free pursuit of professions, which are regulated by a specific law in member states.

MECHANISMS

The MoEC is responsible for the delivery, assessment and certification mechanisms for programmes offered in public schools. The School Leaving Certificate (*apolytirio*) is awarded by each school on the authorisation of the MoEC.

The establishment and operation of private secondary schools comes under the jurisdiction of the MoEC too. Private schools decide on syllabus, methods of teaching, assessment as well as certification. These may be reflected in the school leaving certificates they issue.

The new unified lyceum aimed at integrating the general education programme and the technical/vocational branch. The integration of secondary education is intended to render lyceum education consistent with current trends and to broaden curricula in order to enhance the relevance of education to the real world. The new unified lyceum (upper secondary schools) offers a mixture of obligatory core subjects, specialisation subjects and subjects of personal interest.

Course content, delivery, assessment and certification in institutions of tertiary education are the responsibility of the institutions themselves. Public Institutions of Tertiary Education (such as the Higher Technical Institute, HTI (*Anotero Technologiko Institouto, ATI*) and the Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus, HHIC (*Anotero Xenodocheiako Institouto Kyprou, AXIK*) determine these matters internally.

Most private institutions of tertiary education use as their reference point information and procedures used by colleges and universities abroad with

which they have some form of association. For programmes that have been accredited by the *SEKAP*, the institutions issue certificates in their own right.

The *SEKAP* is an independent body that advises the Minister of Education and Culture on issues concerning the establishment, control and operation of tertiary institutions in Cyprus. According to Law 67(I)/96, that regulates the establishment of *SEKAP*, all private tertiary institutions have to register with the MoEC. Some tertiary education institutions are registered with the MoEC and offer specific courses leading to the award of a certificate/diploma/degree. Some of these schools have registered to offer post-graduate programmes as well. It should be noted, however, that registration of a private institution does not imply recognition of the degrees awarded by these institutions. Recognition is possible only after the successful accreditation of the programmes of study offered.

As far as accreditation of studies is concerned, in the sense that a student can be exempted for some subjects for a given qualification with studies acquired elsewhere, there is no formal legislation but each institution examines each case separately and may give exemptions. Specifically, the universities and other tertiary education institutions internally examine the courses and subjects taken by a student for a given qualification in other institutions in order to give credits and be exempted for some subjects and avoid overlap of studies. The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the Diploma Supplement (DS) are already being applied to the courses of the universities and some public and private institutions of higher education.

The *KYSATS*, an independent body, is the competent authority responsible for the recognition of titles (or degrees), which were awarded from institutions of higher education, recognised in the country they operate. It serves the role of the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) for Cyprus. The recognition of academic titles (or degrees) is based on the directives of UNESCO and the Council of Europe. The laws of Cyprus, which concern the 'Recognition of Titles of Higher Education and Provision of Relevant Information', are Laws 68(I) of 1996 and 48(I) of 1998. The regulations concerning the recognition of titles (or degrees) of higher education and the provision of relevant information were promulgated by the Council of Ministers and approved by the House of Parliament.

A proposal has been put forward regarding the establishment of the Cyprus Quality Assurance and Accreditation (CQAA) Board which will be responsible for the external evaluation of all tertiary education institutions. The CQAA Board is going to replace the existing separate evaluation and accreditation bodies by integrating their responsibilities into one sole body. The CQAA Board will also incorporate the functions that are currently performed by *KYSATS*.

The European Union adopted a series of Directives in order to overcome the obstacles in the free access and pursuit of professions, which are regulated by specific laws in member states. Cyprus has introduced relevant national legislation in order to transpose these Directives.

Seven other sectoral directives were adopted by the EU and transposed to the Cyprus law by the relevant competent bodies. These sectoral directives include the professions of nurse responsible for general care, dental practitioner, veterinary surgeon, midwife, architect, pharmacist and doctor.

IMPACT OF POLICY

The policies on accumulating, accrediting and validating learning do not have a clear impact on other parts of the training system. However, the teachers need to conform to the pre-set criteria in order to teach academic courses that lead to recognised academic titles (or degrees). The guidance counsellors must also be informed of the recognised academic titles (or degrees) as well as the accreditation of studies in order to give proper guidance to their students.

0802 - ACCUMULATING, ACCREDITING AND VALIDATING NON-FORMAL/INFORMAL LEARNING

BACKGROUND

In Cyprus frameworks and bodies validating non-formal and informal learning have not been established yet. However, various efforts are made towards that broad direction. The EU developments in the field of validation of non-formal and informal learning are being closely observed and this will become an important issue in the near future. Specifically, the Copenhagen Declaration (30 November 2002) and the Council Resolution (19 December 2002) on the promotion of enhanced European co-operation in vocational education and training acknowledged that priority should be given to developing a set of common principles regarding validation of non-formal and informal learning with the aim of ensuring greater comparability between approaches in different countries at all levels.

The main initiatives towards the broad direction of accumulating, accrediting and validating non/formal and informal learning are:

- The Cyprus Productivity Centre, CPC (Kentro Paragogikotitas, KEPA), a dedicated centre of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA) was set in 2005 as the National Europass Center (NEC);
- The Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD) has responsibility for the establishment and operation of a System of Vocational Qualifications;
- Cyprus also supported the initiative for establishing a European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and a national committee has been set up for the establishment of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

MECHANISMS

Following the decision of the Cyprus Council of Ministers of the 27th April 2005, the CPC was set as the National Europass Center. Europass records the skills and competences in a clear and easy to understand way, to help persons find a job, get experience abroad or enroll in an education or training program.

The CPC as the National Europass Centre:

- Is responsible for the coordination, management and promotion of all the activities related to Europass and its documents;
- Provides information to individuals, education and training providers, guidance operators, employers and anybody requiring information and guidance on Europass and any of its documents;
- Assures cooperation with other related organisations that operate in the same field of mobility and qualification transparency and also background information relating to the Europass initiative.

The new website of the Cyprus NEC is available since February 2008 (www.kepa.gov.cy/Europass) and it is hosted in a dedicated Web Server on which the newly developed Online Mobility Tool will be also hosted.

The development of a Competence-based System of Vocational Qualifications is a high priority objective. The Board of Governors of the HRDA in May 2005 and subsequently the Council of Ministers in November 2005 approved a detailed proposal, for the establishment and implementation of a System of Vocational Qualifications in 2 phases (1st phase: 2006 - 2008 and 2nd phase: 2007-2013).

During the 1st phase of the System of Vocational Qualifications, which covers the period 2006-2008, 5 Standards of Vocational Qualifications at level 2 have been developed in 3 economic sectors for the occupations of waiter, cook, receptionist, construction mason and sales person. During the 1st phase and up to June 2008, 390 persons applied to participate in the System and 132 persons were awarded the certificate.

The 2nd phase of the System of Vocational Qualifications is included in the activities to be co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) during the period 2007-2013. The future development of the system will be decided, based on the evaluation of results after the implementation of the 1st and 2nd phases of the System, the overall aim being to cover the main occupations in all economic sectors.

IMPACT OF POLICY

The policies mentioned above on accumulating, accrediting and validating learning have not had a clear impact on other parts of the training system yet. However, once the standards of vocational qualifications are set, the content

and the quality of vocational training programmes will have to be enriched in order to comply with the standards. Those trainers / assessors that will be involved with the implementation of the System of Vocational Qualifications will be required to attend specially designed training programmes. Moreover, in the future, relevant standards for the training of trainers will have to be set.

0803 - IMPACT OF EU POLICY COOPERATION

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) are two initiatives that are contributing towards validating and identifying non-formal and informal learning.

EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

The EQF is a common European reference framework, which links countries' qualifications systems together, acting as a translation device to make qualifications more readable and understandable across different countries and systems in Europe.

Following discussions amongst government departments in October 2005, Cyprus has initiated a debate amongst numerous public and private stakeholders in the field of learning, including the social partners for contributing towards the development of Cyprus position on the EQF initiative. The EQF initiative was presented, analysed and discussed in early January 2006 and the participants were then asked to prepare and submit their proposals, on the basis of which, Cyprus developed and submitted its position to the EU, thus contributing to the shaping and introduction of the EQF. The European Commission amended its proposal, drawing from the input of all the countries. The European Parliament and Council successfully negotiated the proposal during 2007, leading to the EQF's formal adoption in February 2008.

The same stakeholders in Cyprus have started discussing and debating about the development of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and a national committee has been set up for the establishment of a NQF.

EUROPEAN CREDIT TRANSFER SYSTEM FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The ECVET is designed to facilitate the transfer, accumulation and recognition of people's learning outcomes. ECVET is part of the overall project for developing European cooperation in the field of vocational education and training and constitutes one of its operational tools. In this regard, ECVET complements the EQF.

The European Commission has prepared a document to serve as a basis for consultation, which involves, in particular the policy-makers, the social partners, the stakeholders and experts in qualifications systems and vocational education and training in Europe. As decided by the European Commission, the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*) in Cyprus initiated a process of national

consultation with all VET stakeholders and has submitted to the EU the outcome of the national consultation.

0804 - FACILITATING EU MOBILITY

The European Union, in order to overcome the obstacles in the free access and pursuit of professions, which are regulated by a specific law in member states, adopted a series of Directives. For the harmonisation with the three Directives on the General System for the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (Directives 89/48/EEC, 92/51/EEC and 99/42/EC), Cyprus has introduced relevant national legislation in order to apply the General System. This system grants the citizens of the European Union and the countries of the European Economic Area, who can pursue a regulated profession in their country of origin, or the country they come from, the freedom to pursue, in a self-employed capacity or as employed persons, the same regulated profession in Cyprus. This freedom and this system exist for Cypriot nationals as well who wish to pursue a regulated profession in any of the countries mentioned above.

Seven other sectoral directives were adopted by the EU and transposed to the Cyprus law by the relevant competent bodies. These sectoral directives refer to the professions of nurse responsible for general care, dental practitioner, veterinary surgeon, midwife, architect, pharmacist and doctor.

Furthermore, directive 2005/36/EC, adopted on 7 September 2005, consolidates and modernises the rules currently regulating the recognition of professional qualifications of both the General System and Sectoral. On 20 October 2007, at the end of the transposition period, this Directive will replace fifteen existing Directives in the field of the recognition of professional qualifications. Cyprus has introduced the law 31 (I)/2008 for partly transposing the directive 2005/36/EC (with regard to the General Provisions and the General System) and is at the final stages of introducing seven new sectoral laws in order to fully transpose this directive.

09 - GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING FOR LEARNING, CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT

0901 - STRATEGY AND PROVISION

The main actors for guidance and counselling in Cyprus are the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*), the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*) and the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*).

The Counselling and Career Education Service, CCES (*Ypiresia Symvouleftikis kai Epaggelmatikis Agogis, YSEA*) of the MoEC offers students of public secondary general and technical schools assistance in developing personal awareness as regards their interests, needs and skills and in making suitable decisions about their education and career. Academic and vocational guidance is provided throughout the student's attendance in upper secondary education both in class sessions and on a personal basis upon request. The services are provided by qualified guidance counsellors, who have gone through specialised post-graduate education. The counsellors are placed in schools and at the central offices of the MoEC.

The Vocational Guidance Service of the MLSI delivered through the Public Employment Service, PES (*Dimosies Ypiresies Apascholis, DYA*) provides information on employment prospects and opportunities or on skills-training possibilities. Furthermore, the PES provide assistance to employers, job-seekers and those in employment who wish to change jobs, through registration and placement services, provision of information on training opportunities and job vacancies. A nationwide candidate placement system is installed to which all PES counsellors have access. The candidate placement system performs a wide range of functions, including: registration and updating of clients history; registration of employers and vacancies; and monitoring clients interviews with employers. A facility for matching candidates against training programmes is currently being developed and a self-service Internet-based facility for clients is planned to become available to the public. Social partner involvement in the PES is well established. Each district labour office maintains a tripartite advisory committee.

The National Resource Centre for Guidance Cyprus (NRCG-CY) of the Department of Labour of the MLSI, in accordance with the Euroguidance initiative, provides information about private and public education and training opportunities that exist in Cyprus, through publications, the website, seminars to counsellors, participation in education fairs and the provision of counselling services.

In addition to the above, the HRDA presents the results of studies and information on its schemes and the options available to parents and to secondary school students through presentations and through its website.

Furthermore, the Cyprus Youth Board (*Organismos Neoleas Kyprou, ONEK*), in cooperation with local youth organisations has developed similar information facilities. Private Counselling and Guidance Services are also expanding their activities.

0902 - TARGET GROUPS AND MODES OF DELIVERY

Guidance is directed mainly to students, to the unemployed as well as the employed and the economically inactive. The main bodies of delivering guidance and counselling in Cyprus are the guidance and counselling services of the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*), the Public Employment Services, PES (*Dimosies Ypiresies Apascholisis, DYA*) and the National Resource Centre for Guidance Cyprus of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA*), the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*) and certain private organisations.

STUDENTS AND YOUNG PERSONS

Guidance and counselling to students is provided mainly by the MoEC, the National Resource Centre for Guidance Cyprus of the MLSI and the HRDA.

Ministry of Education and Culture

Guidance and counselling services are provided by the MoEC to young people at grade nine of their education, before leaving lower secondary education to progress to upper secondary education, either to general or technical and vocational.

Counsellors inform students in their final year of lower secondary education of the courses and options offered at upper secondary education, both general and technical/ vocational. Students can also receive information about the future prospects of graduates from the various options in terms of employment and further study possibilities. Aptitude and psychological testing may occasionally be part of the guidance and counselling process.

Recent innovative methods used by the CCES for the development of guidance and counselling mechanisms/practices involve the use of a psychometric interest test (Career Gate Test k.17). This test was acquired in 2006 through funding from the MoEC and the European Social Fund, ESF (*Evropaiko Koinoniko Tamio, EKT*). The test helps the students / other interested persons to explore their interests and personality types and, as a result, make an effective vocational choice (suggests to them 33 occupations to explore further, based on their interests and personality). The counsellors use the test during counselling intervention, as an additional scientific tool for the effective provision of help to interested persons.

The CCES has also prepared a special educational film on different job profiles (vocational jobs included) and qualifications needed to enter them.

In upper secondary education counselling takes place in the schools upon enrolment to advise students on the various study options available. Academic and vocational guidance is then provided by counsellors throughout the student's attendance in upper secondary education (general and technical/ vocational) both in class sessions and on a personal basis upon request.

At the MoEC there is a separate service, which provides information to students on further study opportunities particularly in higher education institutions in Cyprus and Greece as well as about the requirements necessary to gain access to these institutions.

A parallel information source about opportunities and requirements for studies at tertiary education institutions, private and public, and about studying abroad is made available during the 'Annual International Education Fair' which takes place in early spring each year. There are over 200 Higher Education Institutions and Universities from 35 countries participating. The two Guidance Counsellors Associations also organise the 'Annual Careers Fair' in collaboration with the Bank of Cyprus. More than 150 organised professional bodies and organisations take part.

Finally, the British Council and the Fulbright Commission organise fairs with visiting universities and colleges from the UK and the USA respectively in order to provide information to prospective students for further studies in these countries.

Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance - National Resource Centre for Guidance Cyprus

A website has been set up by the National Resource Centre for Guidance Cyprus (NRCG-CY), in accordance with the Euroguidance initiative. The website will undergo a revision and will be updated in 2007. It provides information about education and training opportunities that exist in Cyprus, private and public, for the benefit of interested people in the EU countries, including expatriate Cypriots as well as local people (early school leavers, workers, unemployed and adult learners).

The Euroguidance network currently includes 65 centres that are co-financed by the European Commission and by the relevant National Authorities. In Cyprus, the National Authority is the Department of Labour of the MLSI. Other activities of the NRCG-CY include:

- Publications containing information of the Euroguidance network, NRCG-CY and PLOTEUS;
- Organisation of seminars and workshops for guidance counsellors;
- Participation in education and career fairs in Cyprus;
- Provision of counselling services to citizens about career options.

The target groups of the NRCG-CY are guidance counsellors, individuals and organisations in need of counselling and guidance, especially students and parents seeking information on tertiary education.

Human Resource Development Authority

The HRDA maintains a web page with information and advice on approved training opportunities. The HRDA also displays its research studies in a downloadable form. A special section in the web page contains occupational employment forecasts in all the occupations of the labour market in Cyprus. Another section contains the latest available trends of human resources indicators for the labour market and education and training in Cyprus.

The HRDA presents such studies and information on its schemes and the different options available by lectures to parents and students, as well as during the 'Annual International Education Fair' and the 'Annual Careers Fair'. Special lectures are also organised to guidance and employment counsellors.

ADULTS: EMPLOYED, UNEMPLOYED AND INACTIVE

Guidance to adults is provided by the MLSI through the PES and certain private organisations. Furthermore, the CCES of the MoEC is promoting the issue of lifelong guidance.

Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance - Public Employment Services

The Vocational Guidance Service of the PES of the MLSI provides information to adults and secondary-school graduates on employment prospects and opportunities or on skills-training possibilities. These services also cater for school dropouts, who may be interested in joining the apprenticeship system.

Furthermore, the PES provide assistance to employers, job-seekers and those in employment who wish to change jobs, through registration and placement services, provision of information on training opportunities and job vacancies.

A nationwide candidate placement system is installed to which all PES counsellors have access. The candidate placement system performs a wide range of functions, including: registration and updating of clients history; registration of employers and vacancies; and monitoring clients interviews with employers. A facility for matching candidates against training programmes is currently being developed and a self-service Internet-based facility for clients is planned to become available to the public.

The enhancement and modernisation of the PES is one of the priorities of the National Lisbon Programme (*Ethniko Schedio Drasis gia ti Stratigiki tis Lissavonas*). The implementation of this measure over the period 2005-2008 is co-financed by the ESF. It is expected that the enhancement and modernisation of the PES will pave the way for a preventive deal towards unemployment and better utilisation of the labour force as well as increasing

access to training through an individualised approach. This provision of individualised supportive and monitoring services consists of counselling, identification of skills, training, adaptation and integration to the working environment. This individualised guidance will be especially targeted towards the unemployed, the economically inactive women and young secondary education graduates within the framework of the four schemes co-financed by the HRDA and the ESF.

Private

Private employment services and consultancy organisations in Cyprus have expanded in recent years, particularly in the recruitment of managerial or highly qualified specialised staff and in the recruitment of foreign workers. Private employment services act as human resource advisers to firms that do not have their own human resource department. It can be expected that, in the future, the role of private employment services will be very significant.

Through the enactment and application of the Law providing for the Establishment and operation of Private Employment Offices, 1997, and the relevant regulations, every such office, existing or new, is required to apply and obtain a licence from the MLSI. The licence is issued to eligible physical or legal entities under certain conditions and for a specified period of time.

Ministry of Education and Culture, as promoter of lifelong guidance

The CCES of the MoEC is promoting the issue of lifelong guidance, which is also promoted at European level through the newly established European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). The CCES has already designated the priority areas in order to better promote the goal of lifelong guidance.

Specifically, the CCES has already proposed the operation of regional Centres of Counselling and Guidance, which will operate at convenient to the general public hours. The Centres will provide counselling / guidance to all citizens, irrespective of age, gender, religion, race, ethnicity and disability.

Furthermore, the CCES currently promotes the goal of the establishment of a National Forum on Lifelong Guidance, which is considered as a basic immediate goal for the upgrading of all guidance and counselling services in Cyprus.

0903 - GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PERSONNEL

The Counselling and Career Education Service is part of the Department of Secondary Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*). The central office is run by a chief education officer and is staffed with qualified counsellors who have gone through specialised post-graduate education. Initial teacher training is compulsory for all new teachers, including counsellors. All new appointees are required by law to have proof of the Pre-service Training Programme, PTP

(*Programma Proypiresiakis Katartisis*). In-service training of counsellors is voluntary.

There are also qualified guidance counsellors, appointed in each upper secondary school, that provide vocational guidance to students both in class sessions and on a personal basis upon request.

The Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*) organises seminars and lectures for the counsellors, to provide them mainly with the results of the studies providing forecasts for the labour market.

The Vocational Guidance Service of the Public Employment Services, PES (*Dimosies Ypiresies Apascholisis, DYA*) provides information to adults and secondary-school graduates on employment prospects and opportunities or on skills-training possibilities. The PES functions from labour offices in all districts in Cyprus. The development of PES network during the period 2005-2008 is a measure that is co-financed by the European Social Fund, ESF (*Evropaiko Koinoniko Tamio, EKT*) and is currently under process. According to the measure ten new Local Labour Offices will be developed by 2008. By July 2008, nine new Local Employment Offices have been developed and four existing district labour offices have been upgraded, while qualified personnel was recruited and trained as counsellors to provide active support to vulnerable groups including young unemployed, women wishing to enter the labour market, public assistance recipients and persons with disabilities through an individualised approach.

The National Resource Centre for Guidance Cyprus (NRCG-CY) has been involved in the initial training of the 18 newly appointed PES counsellors, in order to be able to provide information mostly to the unemployed on the training and employment opportunities through the individualised approach. The NRCG has also prepared a Handbook for trainers/guidance counsellors for this matter, which has been disseminated through the guidance community.

10 - FINANCING - INVESTMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES

1001 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION CONCERNING FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING

The main policy priorities in Cyprus that have an influence on VET funding are:

- Continuous improvement of the quality of education at all levels;
- Increase opportunities for university education level studies in Cyprus;
- Continuous upgrading of skills to labour market needs, in particular through reforming and making more attractive vocational education and training systems, including the apprenticeship scheme and upgrading of training and retraining programmes, via also supporting training infrastructure;
- Implementation of a national lifelong learning strategy.

1002 - FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Funding for initial vocational education and training (IVET) is grouped into the following categories: Upper secondary level, the Apprenticeship System (*Systima Mathiteias, SM*), Post-secondary (non-tertiary level) and Tertiary level.

IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL (SCHOOL-BASED AND ALTERNANCE)

The total public expenditure for Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, STVE (*Techniki kai Epaggelmatiki Ekpaidefsi, TEE*) was estimated to be EUR 42.4m in 2007 (Statistical Service of Cyprus). The share of secondary technical and vocational public expenditure was estimated to be 4.1% of the total public expenditure on education in 2007.

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Attendance at technical schools is free of charge provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*), while the Human Resource Development Authority HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*) compensates employers for wages paid to apprentices who attend classes in technical schools.

Subsidies are paid by the HRDA to employers in relation to the wages of apprentices for the days the latter attend technical schools. Under this scheme, subsidies were paid to companies employing 196 apprentices in 2007. According to the HRDA, expenditure amounted to the sum of EUR 258 173. Training allowances are calculated on the basis of collective agreements by occupation.

POST-SECONDARY (NON-TERTIARY LEVEL)

There are three types of initial training schemes that are financed by the HRDA, and mainly target upper secondary education graduates.

During 2007, accelerated training programmes were implemented for Cooks, Construction Workers, Plumbers, Welders, Cabinet Makers/Carpenters, Taxi Drivers and Auto Body Fitters. In 2007, 146 persons participated in accelerated initial training programmes. According to the HRDA, expenditure in 2007 amounted to the sum of EUR 904 053.

The subsidies granted by the HRDA for the single-company training programmes are calculated according to the level and duration of the programme, as well as the place of origin of trainers (i.e. from Cyprus or abroad). In 2007, the HRDA subsidised the training of 238 persons and expenditure amounted to EUR 60 314.

The HRDA has also put in operation schemes that are co-financed by the European Social Fund, ESF (*Evropaiko Koinoniko Tamio, EKT*). Each of these schemes aims to promote the training and employability of Young School-leavers, the Unemployed and the Economically Inactive Women. The estimated number of participants in these schemes will be around 2 000 persons with a total expenditure of EUR 4.4 million. During 2007, 389 persons participated in the schemes and total expenditure amounted to EUR 2.1m. In addition, a scheme, also co-financed by the ESF, was implemented over the period November 2006-December 2007 for the enhancement of computer literacy of the unemployed. During 2007, 460 persons participated in the scheme and total expenditure amounted to EUR 932 820.

TERTIARY LEVEL

A government grant is paid to the parents with a child in tertiary education. For each academic year, the grant is EUR 1 708.6 for all full-time students who complete one academic year, an additional amount of 50% of fees (with a maximum of EUR 854.3) if the family of the student pays for those and an additional EUR 854.3 if the family of the student has 3 or more children.

There are seven public tertiary education institutions, which come under the jurisdiction of various ministries, offering associate professional level programmes. The student tuition fees range from about EUR 3 759 to EUR 8 543 per year. Cypriot and EU students pay no fees.

During 2007 the HRDA subsidised the practical training of 57 Higher Technical Institute, HTI (*Anotero Technologiko Institouto, ATI*) students and 196 Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus, HHIC (*Anotero Xenodocheiako Institouto Kyprou, AXIK*) students. According to the HRDA, the expenditure in 2007 for the practical training of the HHIC students was EUR 83 089, while for the HTI students it was EUR 37 061.

1003 - FUNDING FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND ADULT LEARNING

The Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*) subsidises training programmes implemented by public and private institutions, such as colleges and training institutions, and enterprises. There are more than 160 training providers, which operate primarily within the HRDA's open multi-company training programmes framework. These training providers in general also offer courses to employers and individuals that are not subsidised by the HRDA.

The HRDA activities are financed by a levy amounting to 0.5% of the payroll of eligible employers. In addition to the levy paid to the HRDA, it is estimated that the employers in the private sector spend an additional 1-1.5% of payroll on training measures for their staff.

The Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*) is responsible for the administration of funds of institutions, which cater for adult education.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment, MoA (*Ypourgeio Georgias, Fysikon Poron kai Perivallontos, YGFPP*) funds the training of farmers provided by the Department of Agriculture Training Centres and the training foresters and forestry graduates provided by the Forestry College (*Dasiko Kolegio*).

Finally, the government as an employer finances the training and development of civil servants.

PUBLICLY PROMOTED CVET FOR ALL

The two main institutions for publicly promoted CVET for all are the HRDA, which subsidises training programmes and the MoEC, which is responsible for the administration of funds of institutions for adult education.

Human Resource Development Authority

The budgeted amount of funding by the HRDA for training and development actions in the period 2007-2013 is EUR 131.6 million compared to EUR 57.6 million in the period 2000-2006, while for the schemes that are co-financed by the ESF the HRDA's budgeted amount is EUR 65.1 million compared to EUR 1.4 million in 2000-2006.

The HRDA subsidises single-company training programmes and multi-company training programmes as well as training abroad. In general, for the enterprises with more than 250 employees, the subsidisation by the HRDA covers 50% of the eligible total cost of the proposed training programmes, whereas for enterprises that employ up to 249 persons the subsidisation is 70%. An additional 5% subsidisation is provided to enterprises established in rural areas.

According to the HRDA, during 2007, 34 474 employees were trained in single-company programmes, by Cypriot trainers or trainers from abroad and total expenditure amounted to EUR 3 495 062. Also, during 2007, 20 092 persons were trained on multi-company (institutional) programmes and total expenditure amounted to the sum of EUR 4 805 132.

The HRDA subsidises employers for the costs of participation of the employees to training programmes abroad, both single-company and multi-company programmes. During 2007, the HRDA subsidised the participation of 694 persons in training programmes abroad and total expenditure amounted to the sum of EUR 1 267 943.

The HRDA also promotes training programmes in enterprises for newly employed tertiary-education graduates. Monthly subsidies are paid to enterprises in relation to the training costs, including the salaries of graduates during training. In 2007, the HRDA subsidised the training of 67 graduates. Total expenditure amounted to the sum of EUR 186 395.

Ministry of Education and Culture

The MoEC is responsible for the administration of funds of institutions for adult education. In 2007 public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP was 6.7%. It is worth noting that the share of technical and vocational school expenditure was estimated to be 4.1% of the total public expenditure in 2007.

The Evening Secondary General Schools and the Evening Technical School (*Esperini Techniki Scholi*) of the MoEC provide opportunities for acquiring a recognised Leaving School Certificate. Students pay limited fees ranging from EUR 100-200. In 2007 current expenditure was EUR 3.6 million, excluding teacher salaries.

The Afternoon and Evening Classes of Technical Schools (*Ekpaideftika Programmata Apogevmatinon/Vradinon Tmimatou Technikon Scholon*) offer Technical and Vocational Education Programmes as well as preparatory classes for various examinations. Individuals attending the above programmes, pay limited fees, which are approved by the Council of Ministers. In 2007 current expenditure was EUR 885 000, including teacher salaries.

The Adult Education Centres (*Epimorfotika Kentra*) offer, for a small fee, a wide range of short or medium length courses that cover several interest areas. The special classes, which are tailored specifically to meet the needs of various disadvantaged groups of people such as illiterate people, prisoners, senior citizens and people with disabilities such as the deaf, are offered for free.

CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF ENTERPRISES OR SOCIAL PARTNER

CVET at the initiative of enterprises or social partners involves mainly:

- Measures to support training in SMEs;

- Measures to support training for civil servants and for employees in specific economic sectors;
- Social partner based schemes to support non-job related training.

Measures to Support Training in SMEs

The HRDA contributes towards the training and development of managers in SMEs mainly through the pursuit of the following activities:

- Consultancy Services and Training to Microenterprises (MEs) employing 1-4 persons. This Scheme is co-financed by the ESF and is being implemented during October 2006-March 2008;
- Management and Entrepreneurship Training Programmes for SMEs, provided by private training institutions and subsidised by the HRDA;
- Business Development Programme (BDP) for managers/owners of SMEs;
- Programmes for the reinforcement of female and youth entrepreneurship, in co-operation with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, MCIT (*Ypourgeio Emporiou, Viomichanias kai Tourismou, YEVT*). The MCIT selects candidates for grants given to start up new businesses, while the HRDA organises and subsidises training programmes provided by private training institutions.

Measures to Support Training for Civil Servants and for Enterprises in Specific Economic Sectors

Continuous training and development of the civil servants is offered through the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration, CAPA (*Kypriaki Akadimia Dimosias Dioikisis, KADD*) of the Ministry of Finance, MoF (*Ypourgeio Oikonomikon, YO*). The CAPA budgeted amount for 2007 was EUR 1 057 412. Continuous training for civil servants is also being promoted by the Public Administration and Personnel Service, PAPS (*Ypiresia Dimosias Dioikisis kai Prosopikou*).

There are specific training programmes and seminars offered by public authorities to specific groups of civil servants such as public sector teachers, public sector nurses, police officers and sergeants as well as foresters are funded by the ministry responsible.

- Public sector teachers

The MoEC is responsible for funding the training of public sector teachers provided by the Pedagogical Institute, PI (*Pedagogiko Institutouto, PI*).

- Public sector nurses

The Ministry of Health, MoH (*Ypourgeio Ygeias*) funds the training of public sector nurses provided by the School of Nursing (*Nosileftiki Scholi*).

- Police officers and sergeants

The Ministry of Justice and Public Order, MJPO (Ypourgeio Dikaiosynis kai Dimosias Taxis, YDDT) funds the training of police officers and sergeants provided by the Cyprus Police Academy (Astynomiki Akadimia Kyprou).

- Foresters and forestry graduates

The MoA funds the training foresters and forestry graduates provided by the Forestry College.

Social Partner Based Schemes to Support Non-Job Related Training

The Social partners organisations (employers organisations and trade unions) as well as certain ministries (such as the Ministry of Health, MoH (*Ypourgeio Ygeias*)) are involved in supporting non-job related training. Most of the training courses provided are funded by the HRDA.

STATISTICAL DATA

According to Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS3) results of 2005, the total cost of CVT courses was 1.3% of total labour cost of all enterprises. This is slightly less than the EU27 average of 1.6%.

By size group, the total cost of CVT courses as a percentage of total labour cost was about the same as the EU27 average for enterprises employing 10-49 persons (1.0% compared to 1.1%), the same for enterprises employing 50-249 persons (1.4%) and lower for enterprises employing 250 or more (1.6% compared to 1.9%).

Table 1: Total cost of CVT courses as % of total labour cost (all enterprises)				
	SIZE CLASS (NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES)			
	TOTAL	10-49 (%)	50-249 (%)	250 OR MORE (%)
EU27	1.6	1.1	1.4	1.9
CYPRUS	1.3	1.0	1.4	1.6

Source: Eurostat, Continuing Vocational Training Survey CVTS3, 2005

1004 - FUNDING FOR TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHER GROUPS EXCLUDED FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

Given the low unemployment tradition in the Cyprus economy, there was a tendency for the training system to be oriented mainly towards the lack of skills rather than towards strengthening the employability of the unemployed and the inactive. Training opportunities for the unemployed and other groups vulnerable to exclusion in the labour market are somewhat limited in Cyprus.

The main promoters of training for the unemployed and other groups vulnerable to exclusion in the labour market are:

1. **Human Resource Development Authority**, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*), which is operating schemes aiming to promote the training and employability of the unemployed and of the inactive women which are co-financed by the European Social Fund, ESF (*Evropaiko Koinoniko Tamio, EKT*).

2. **Ministry of Education and Culture**, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*), which promotes the following programmes for the unemployed, that are provided by the STVE and were described in section 1003:

- The Evening Technical School (Esperini Techniki Scholi);
- The Afternoon and the Afternoon and Evening classes of Technical Schools (Ekpaideftika Programmata Apogevmatinon kai Vradinon Tmimatou Technikis Ekpaidefsis);
- The Adult Education Centres (Epimorfotika Kentra);
- Vocational Schools of Lifelong Learning (Epaggelmatikes Scholes Dia Viou Ekpaidefsis, ESDE).
- Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA), which promotes programmes for groups vulnerable to exclusion in the labour market which are provided by:
- Non-government organisations, which provide programmes for the inactive women that are co-financed by the ESF;
- The Centre for the Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled, which provides vocational training programmes for the disabled;
- The Department of Social Welfare Services, which provides training programmes for public assistance recipients and asylum seekers. An amount of €1 079 may be granted to recipients who wish to enrol in vocational training or buy necessary equipment for their occupation.

3. **Ministry of Justice and Public Order**, MJPO (*Ypourgeio Dikaiosynis kai Dimosias Taxis, YDDT*) in cooperation with the MoEC, which promote classes to prisoners and other programmes of professional training.

1005 - PERSPECTIVES AND ISSUES: FROM FUNDING TO INVESTING IN HUMAN RESOURCES

In Cyprus, vocational education and training is primarily financed through public funds, administered mainly by the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*), the funds of the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (*Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD*), which come from the human resource development levy of 0.5% on the payroll of eligible employers, as well as directly from employers. These will continue to be the main forms of financing in the future, coupled, however, with specific co-financing by the European Social Fund, ESF (*Evropaiko Koinoniko Tamio, EKT*).

11 - EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS, TOWARDS AN OPEN AREA OF LIFELONG LEARNING

1101 - NATIONAL STRATEGIES RELATED TO POLICY PRIORITIES, PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES AT EU LEVEL

For a small and open economy with limited natural resources such as Cyprus, human resources constitute the most important factor of production and its development is of high priority. National strategies pertinent to policy priorities at EU level are stated in the National Lisbon Programme (*Ethniko Schedio Drasis gia ti Stratigiki tis Lissavonas*).

NATIONAL LISBON PROGRAMME

Cyprus prepared in 2005 the National Lisbon Programme, as envisaged by the European Council in order to advance the targets set out in the Lisbon strategy and prepares and submits to the European Commission progress reports.

The overall strategic approach focuses on the need to tackle effectively the challenges faced by Cyprus. The overriding objective is to enhance the growth potential of the economy and raise the standards of living and hence achieve real convergence with the EU.

The main policy priorities for Cyprus, as stated in the National Lisbon Programme related to the development of human capital are:

- Continuous improvement of the quality and flexibility of the educational system;
- Increase opportunities for university studies in Cyprus;
- Continuous upgrading of skills to labour market needs;
- Implementation of the national lifelong learning strategy.

EUROPEAN COOPERATION

The 'Education and Training 2010 Coordination Group', ETCG (*Syntonistiki Omada gia tin Ekpaidefsi kai Katartisi, SOEK*), set up by the European Commission with the participating countries and the European Social Partners, has established the priority fields of action to enable the education and training sectors to contribute to the success of the Lisbon Strategy by 2010. Cyprus is represented by the HRDA and the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*).

European cooperation in the field of education and training is also promoted by the representation of Cyprus in various working groups and by participating in European programmes. Cyprus is represented in the Objectives Process Technical Working groups mainly by the MoEC. The objective of this process

is to strengthen political cooperation between Member States in the field of education and training through the open method of coordination.

Following the decision of the Council of Ministers of the 27th April 2005, the Cyprus Productivity Centre, CPC (*Kentro Paragogikotitas, KEPA*), a dedicated centre of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (*Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon*) was set as the National Europass Centre (NEC).

All EU developments in the field of validation of non-formal and informal learning are being closely observed and this will become an important issue in the near future.

1102 - IMPACT OF EUROPEANISATION/INTERNATIONALISATION ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Participation of Cyprus in European programmes promotes the European dimension in education and training. The National Lisbon Programme (*Ethniko Schedio Drasis gia ti Stratigiki tis Lissavonas*) includes policies to enhance investment in physical and human capital, research and development, and the country's infrastructures. Furthermore, measures and actions incorporated in the National Strategic Reference Framework for Cohesion Policy 2007-2013, NSRF (*Ethniko Stratigiko Plaisio Anaforas gia tin Politiki Synoxis, ESPA*) utilise the resources of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund.

For the participation of the citizens of Cyprus in the European Programme for Lifelong Learning for the period 2007-2013, an institution has been established, the Foundation for the Management of European Lifelong Learning Programmes. Through the Institution the horizontal programmes financed by the European Union in the field of education and training are implemented. To this end, this institution finances, with funds that are provided by the European Commission, educational and other institutions and organisations that are active in the field of education and training, as well as teachers, students, trainers and trainees.

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) are two initiatives that will contribute to shaping the policies in Cyprus on skills and competences development and to helping the mobility of European citizens.

Following discussions amongst government departments in October 2005, Cyprus has initiated a debate amongst numerous public and private stakeholders in the field of learning, including the social partners, for contributing towards the development of Cyprus position on the EQF initiative. Cyprus developed and submitted its position to the European Commission. The European Commission amended its proposal, drawing from the input of all the countries. The European Parliament and Council successfully negotiated the proposal during 2007, leading to the EQF's formal adoption in February 2008.

The ECVET is part of the overall project for developing European cooperation in the field of vocational education and training and constitutes one of its operational tools. The ECVET is designed to facilitate the transfer, accumulation and recognition of people's learning outcomes. The European Commission has prepared a document to serve as a basis for consultation, which involves, in particular the policy-makers, the social partners, the stakeholders and experts in qualifications systems and vocational education and training in Europe. As decided by the European Commission, the Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (*Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP*) in Cyprus initiated a process of national consultation with all VET stakeholders and has submitted to the EU the outcome of the national consultation.

The MoEC is the agency responsible for promoting and putting the European dimension in education into practice. The MoEC exhibits particular sensitivity as regards the European Dimension of Education and takes measures to ensure that students will have by the end of their secondary education the knowledge and competences they need to play their role as active citizens of their country, as well as of Europe and the rest of the world. The European dimension is promoted at school level through an interdisciplinary approach, by a series of activities, such as:

- Establishing European clubs;
- Encouraging activities with regard to the Europe Day;
- Connecting Cyprus schools abroad;
- Encouraging students to undertake interdisciplinary projects.

A major development towards the promotion of the European dimension of education in the formal school curriculum is the re-writing of the textbooks of Civics with the new sections on EU themes being included.

The acquisition of the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) certificate is also being promoted. In lower secondary education information technology (IT) is an obligatory subject provided for 2 periods per week and the curricula are geared towards covering the same areas as the ECDL exams. Since the school year 2006-2007 the ICT skills of third grade students in lower secondary education are certified according to European standards (ECDL). Secondary education teachers are also obliged to pass the first four core modules of the ECDL, and they have the option to continue with the other three modules required for obtaining the ECDL certificate. By July 2008, 4 306 secondary education teachers (42% of the total) have attended attend the training for the first four core modules of the ECDL.

Furthermore, Cyprus participation in Leonardo da Vinci, the European Community's vocational training action programme has also helped develop and re-examine approaches to learning. More specifically, it encourages collaboration between organisations involved in the vocational training, aiming to improve the quality of the training provision, develop the skills and mobility of the workforce, stimulate innovation and enhance the competitiveness of European enterprises.

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