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# Cyprus

## VET in Europe – Country report

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2013

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*This country report is part of a series of reports on vocational education and training produced for each EU Member State plus Norway and Iceland by members of ReferNet, a network established by Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training).*

*The opinions expressed in this report are not necessarily those of Cedefop.*

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# Foreword

This report was initiated by Cedefop, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, and has been prepared by the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus, HRDA, which is the nominated National Coordinator of the European network ReferNet in Cyprus.

Cedefop established ReferNet as the European network of reference and expertise in vocational education and training (VET). The aim of this network is to meet the growing demand for information on policies and developments in the area of VET in the European Union.

The report has been prepared as part of a series of reports on VET in European Union countries, Iceland and Norway. The reports follow a common structure, which has been provided in the form of guidelines by Cedefop. The reports are updated annually and reports from past years are available to the public through Cedefop's VET-Bib. They aim to provide stakeholders in Europe with a description of the national VET systems in Europe to feed into research work, policy initiatives, peer reviews, best practices and projects at national and European levels.

This report provides the readers with a concise, basic insight into the state of the VET system of Cyprus. It situates the Cyprus education and training system within a broad political, social, economic, and labour market framework.

ReferNet comprises 30 members, known as ReferNet national partners, from EU Member States, Iceland and Norway. ReferNet national partners are key organisations involved in VET in the country they represent. The HRDA, as the National Coordinator of ReferNet in Cyprus, wishes to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of the other members of the Cyprus consortium in the preparation of this report.

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# Cyprus



Capital: Nicosia

Government: Presidential Republic

Geographical position: North-eastern Mediterranean Sea

Area: 9 251 Km<sup>2</sup>

Population estimate: 865 900 in 2012

GDP per capita: EUR 20 000 in 2012

**Main dates:**

1960: Gained independence from the United Kingdom

1974: Turkey invaded the island occupying until today 37% of its territory

2004: Joined the EU

2008: Adopted the Euro

## CHAPTER 1.

# External factors influencing VET

### 1.1. Political and socioeconomic background

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. Turkey occupied the northern part of the island in 1974<sup>(1)</sup>.

Executive power is vested in the President of the Republic. The President exercises executive power through a Council of Ministers (Υπουργικό Συμβούλιο) appointed by him. The House of Representatives (Βουλή των Αντιπροσώπων) exercises legislative authority. Cyprus is divided into six administrative districts. Each district has a district officer, who is the local representative of the central government.

The Directorate General for European Programmes Coordination and Development (Γενική Διεύθυνση Ευρωπαϊκών Προγραμμάτων Συντονισμού και Ανάπτυξης), 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 (Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού) has overall responsibility for the development and implementation of educational policy. The Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, MLSI (Υπουργείο Εργασίας και Κοινωνικών Ασφαλίσεων) has overall responsibility for labour and social policy.

The Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (Αρχή Ανάπτυξης Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού) 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 open, free-market, flexible and predominantly service-based. Since gaining independence from the United Kingdom in 1960, Cyprus has experienced strong economic growth, full employment conditions with high employment and relatively low unemployment.

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<sup>(1)</sup> All the information and data contained in the report refer to the government-controlled area.

The Cypriot economy, was adversely affected by the world economic crisis and contracted by 1,9% in 2009, mainly due to the poor performance of the tourism, construction and manufacturing sectors. The persistent economic downturn continued in the period 2010-11, with moderate growth rates and a contraction of 2,4% in 2012, which resulted in further deterioration in the labour market, adversely affecting employment growth and increasing unemployment to exceptionally high levels. In April 2013, the Government of Cyprus signed an Economic Adjustment Programme with the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The objective of the programme is to address the financial, fiscal and structural challenges and return the economy to sustainable growth.

## 1.2. Population

Cyprus is an island located in the Eastern Mediterranean, covering a total area of 9 251 square kilometres. According to the Statistical Service of Cyprus (Στατιστική Υπηρεσία Κύπρου), the population of the area not occupied by Turkey (the government-controlled area) is 865 900 (end-2012) and it has increased by around 0,5% from the previous year. The Turkish-Cypriot population in the occupied area was estimated by the Statistical Service of Cyprus to be 90 600 (end-2012), representing 9,5% of the total population in 2012.

The low fertility rate (1,39 in 2012) increases the old-age dependency ratio and leads to the ageing of the population. The population over 60 years of age, as shown in Table 1, is forecast to reach 24,0% in 2025 compared with 18,7% in 2012.

Table 1 **Age-specific demographic trends (end of year population estimates) (%)**

Age group	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2025
<b>0-24</b>	38,1	35,3	34,8	34,4	33,8	33,3	32,8	32,1	31,4	27,7
<b>25-59</b>	46,5	47,9	48,2	48,4	48,7	49,0	49,2	49,7	50,0	48,3
<b>60+</b>	15,4	16,7	17,0	17,2	17,5	17,7	18,0	18,2	18,7	24,0
<b>Total</b>	697,5	744,0	757,9	776,3	796,9	819,1	839,8	862,0	865,9	933,0

Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus, Eurostat

Table 2 presents the old-age dependency ratio projections (number of persons aged 65 and over expressed as a percentage of the number of persons aged between 15 and 64). This ratio is expected to increase from 18,6% in 2010 to 47,6% in 2060, which is still lower than the average EU27 ratio which is projected to be 52,6%.

Table 2 **Projected old-age dependency ratio (%)**

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	2055	2060
<b>EU27</b>	25,9	28,5	31,4	34,6	38,3	42,3	45,5	48,0	50,2	51,8	52,6
<b>Cyprus</b>	18,6	21,6	24,9	28,2	30,8	32,0	33,3	35,5	39,8	43,8	47,6

Source: Eurostat

The number of migrants (EU nationals and third country nationals), as shown in Table 3, has more than doubled since 2000. The percentage of migrants in the population increased from 8,6% in 2000 to 18,7% in 2012, due to the policy to employ foreigners in sectors facing labour shortages and the influx of EU nationals after Cyprus joined the EU in 2004. Consequently, according to Labour Force Survey, LFS (Έρευνα Εργατικού Δυναμικού) data, in 2012 foreign workers, including EU27 nationals, represented 22,7% of the total employment. This has led the government to implement an immigration strategy, which aims to integrate legal immigrants into the society (see Section 2.2.3.5).

Table 3 **Migrants (EU nationals, third countries' nationals)**

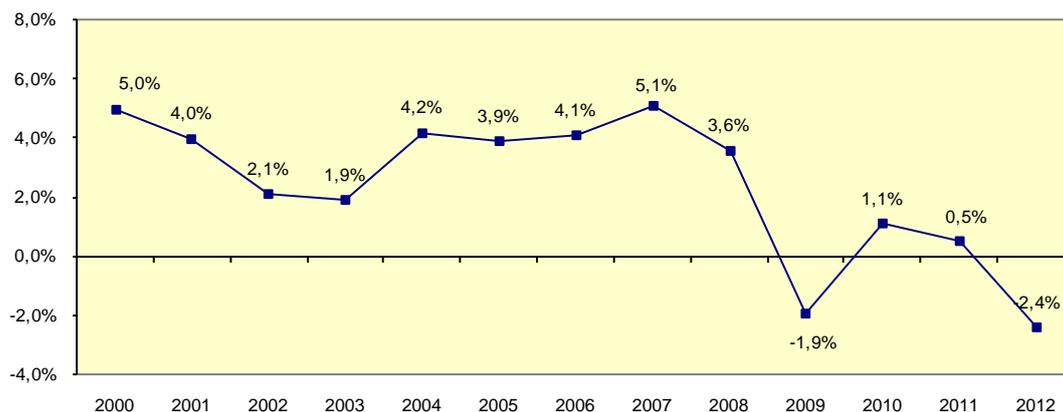
	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>EU nationals</b>	34 675	46 354	49 991	54 786	62 485	70 973	85 269	94 250	104 921
<b>Third country nationals</b>	23 061	35 619	34 952	38 578	45 007	46 605	52 613	54 907	51 967
<b>Total Migrants</b>	57 736	81 973	84 943	93 364	107 492	117 578	137 882	149 157	156 888
<b>% of Population</b>	8,6	11,3	11,5	12,4	14,2	15,2	17,3	18,2	18,7

Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus, LFS

### 1.3. **Economy**

The Cypriot economy grew by an average of 3,8% a year during the period 2000-08, prior to the outbreak of the world economic crisis. However, as shown in Figure 1, during the period 2009-12 the Cypriot economy experienced the negative effects of the economic crisis, as it contracted by 1,9% in 2009, grew only modestly by 1,1% and 0,5% in 2010 and 2011 respectively and contracted by 2,4% in 2012.

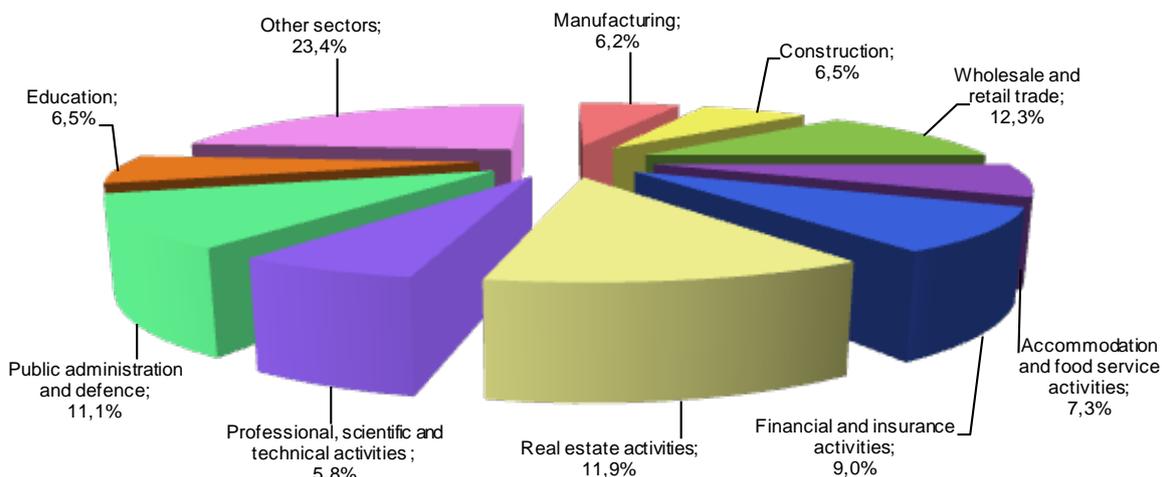
Figure 1 GDP growth



Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus

Figure 2 presents the distribution of GDP (Gross domestic product) by sector in 2012. The Cypriot economy is mainly service-based and the tertiary sector amounts to about 82% of GDP, while the secondary sector amounts to about 15% of GDP. More specifically, the five largest sectors in 2012 were the wholesale and retail trade (12,3% of GDP), real estate activities (11,9% of the GDP), public administration and defence (11,1% of GDP), financial and insurance activities (9,0% of GDP) and accommodation and food service activities (7,3% of GDP).

Figure 2 GDP by sector in 2012



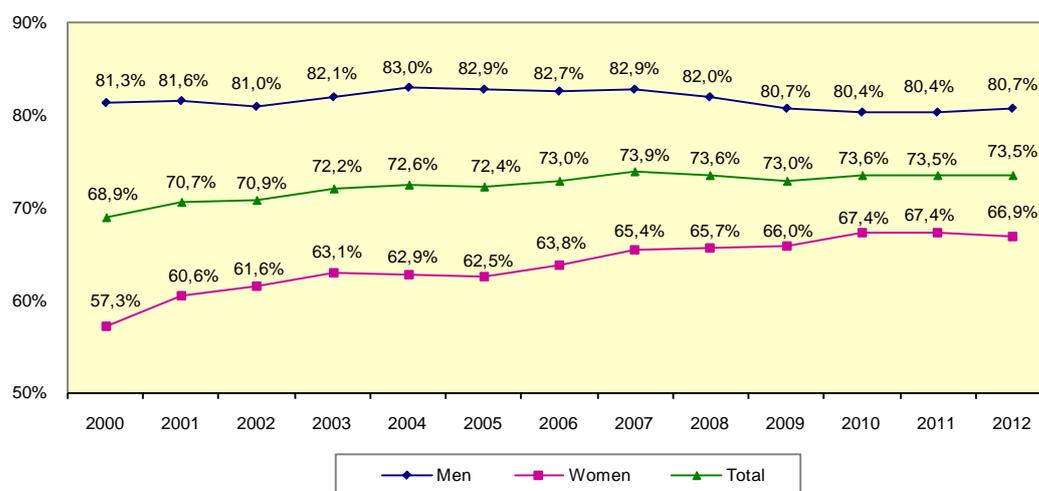
Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus

Most enterprises are very small. According to social insurance data for 2012, 93,4% of enterprises employed 1-9 persons, while 5,7% employed 10-49 persons and 1,0% employed over 50 persons.

## 1.4. Labour market

Increasing the level of labour market participation is a central challenge for Cyprus, given the ageing population. This is being addressed mainly by increasing women's participation, since men's participation is already quite high. The activity rate for the population 15-64 years, as presented in Figure 3, increased from 68,9% in 2000 to 73,9% in 2007, mainly driven by an increase in the activity rate of women as a result of the introduction of specific policy measures and has remained rather stable thereafter (73,5% in 2012).

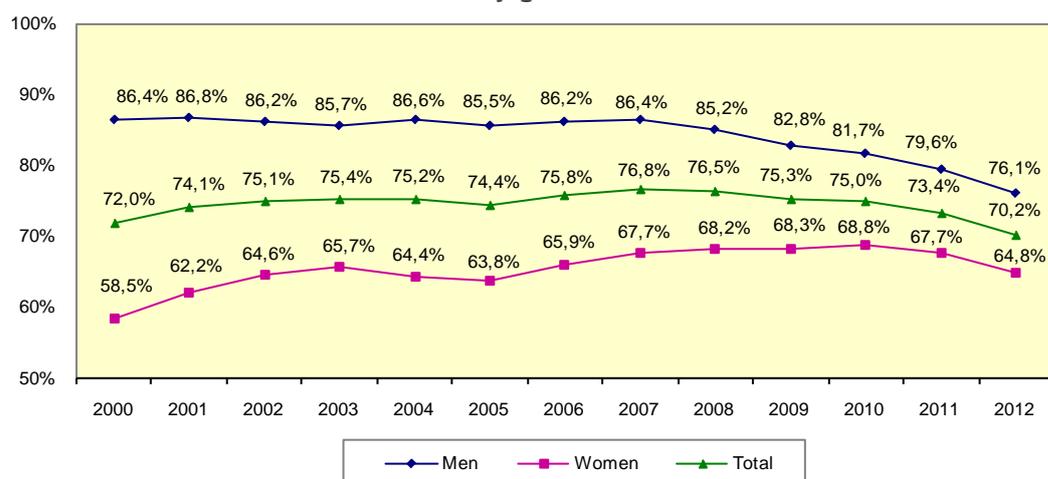
Figure 3 **Activity rates for population 15-64 years by gender**



Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus, LFS

The employment rate of the population 20-64 years, as presented in Figure 4, has also shown a stable increase during the period 2000-07, again as a result of the increase of the employment rate of females, while it has decreased considerably during the years 2008-12 as a consequence to the economic crisis. The employment rate (70,2% in 2012) still compares favourably with the EU average (68,5% in 2012) while the national target for 2020 is for this percentage to reach about 75-77%.

Figure 4 **Employment rates for the population 20-64 years by gender**



Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus, LFS

Table 4 shows employment rates by age group and Table 5 shows employment rates by highest level of education attained. The tables show that employment rates in Cyprus are highest for the age group 25-49 (79,0% in 2012) and increase as educational attainment increases.

The unemployment rate rose dramatically from 3,7% in 2008 to 11,8% in 2012, higher than the EU27 average for the first time (10,5% in 2012). Over the recent years, training provision for the unemployed has become vitally important for combating the effects of the economic crisis and resources have been redirected towards the prevention and reduction of unemployment (see Section 2.2.2). The unemployment rate in Cyprus has been higher for women than for men, although the gap has narrowed and since 2011 it is smaller, as shown in Figure 5.

Table 4 **Employment rates by age group (%)**

Age group	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
15-24	36,7	36,7	37,4	37,4	38,0	34,8	33,8	30,1	28,1
25-49	77,9	81,8	82,6	83,8	83,7	83,2	83,3	82,1	79,0
50-64	49,5	50,6	53,6	55,9	54,8	63,7	63,8	62,9	59,6

Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus, LFS

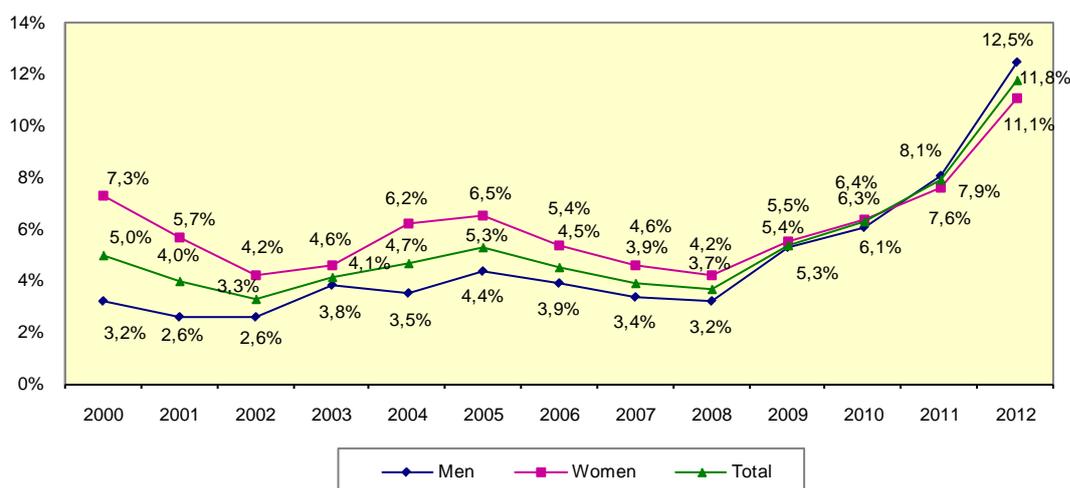
Table 5 **Employment rates for the population 20-64 years by educational attainment (%)**

	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>ISCED 0-2</b>	62,6	64,8	66,6	66,4	64,1	64,9	66,8	65,1	57,8
<b>ISCED 3-4</b>	72,4	74,6	75,1	75,8	76,1	74,3	73,2	71,0	68,7
<b>ISCED 5-6</b>	85,6	85,0	85,6	86,5	86,5	84,5	82,7	81,2	78,8
<b>Total</b>	72,0	74,4	75,8	76,8	76,5	75,3	75,0	73,4	70,2

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: Statistical Service of Cyprus, LFS

Figure 5 **Unemployment rates for the population 15+ by gender**



Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus, LFS

From Table 6, which presents unemployment rates by age group, it can be seen that the unemployment rate for young people under 25 increased from 13,8% in 2009 to 27,8% in 2012, higher than the EU27 average which was 22,8% in 2012. As a result, increased emphasis has been placed in introducing measures combating youth unemployment, most of which are included under the Youth Guarantee Initiative.

Table 6 **Unemployment rates by age group (%)**

Age group	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
15-24	10,2	13,9	10,0	10,2	9,0	13,8	16,6	22,4	27,8
25-54	4,5	4,5	4,1	3,4	3,2	4,6	5,4	6,8	10,5
55-64	3,5	3,5	3,3	3,1	3,2	4,3	4,7	4,9	9,7
65+	0,0	0,5	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,6	0,2	0,6	1,1
15+	5,0	5,3	4,5	3,9	3,7	5,4	6,3	7,9	11,8

Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus, LFS

From Table 7, which shows unemployment rates by highest level of education attained, it can be seen that unemployment rates usually decrease with higher educational attainment. Unemployment rates for 2012 range between 10,2% for persons with tertiary education to 13,2% for persons with pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education.

Table 7 **Unemployment rates for the population 15+ by educational attainment (%)**

	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
ISCED 0-2	6,2	6,0	4,8	4,7	4,8	6,0	7,0	7,4	13,2
ISCED 3-4	5,4	5,5	4,5	3,9	3,6	5,7	6,4	8,8	12,8
ISCED 5-6	2,9	4,4	4,4	3,4	3,0	4,6	5,7	7,2	10,2
Total	5,0	5,3	4,5	3,9	3,7	5,4	6,3	7,9	11,8

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: Statistical Service of Cyprus, LFS

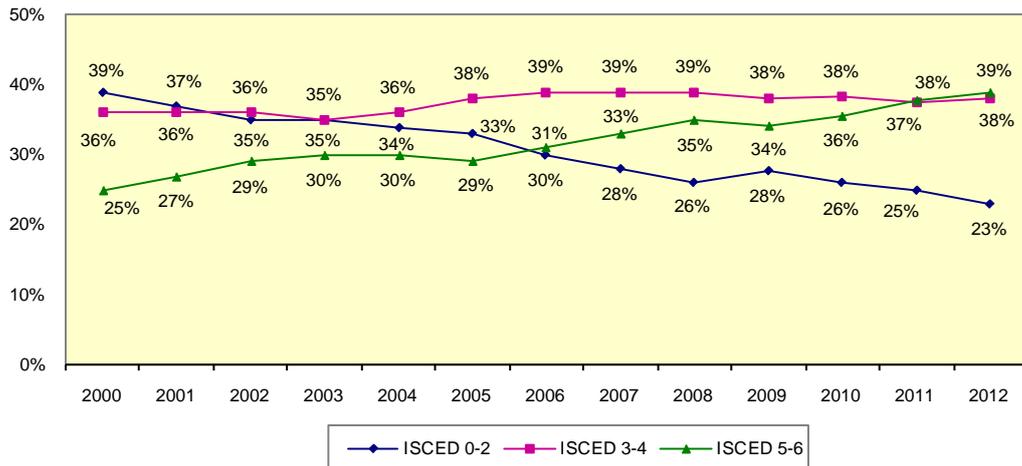
## 1.5. Educational attainment

Human resources in Cyprus are characterised by a high level of educational attainment. As shown in Figure 6, the percentage of people 25-64 years with tertiary education was 39% in 2012, significantly above the corresponding EU27 average (28% in 2012).

There is a strong cultural trend among the Cypriot population in favour of general secondary education followed by higher education. In 2010/11 78% of the students that completed upper secondary education sought places in institutions of higher education. Family plays a

significant role in encouraging and supporting young people to continue to higher education, but it is expected that due to the economic crisis less people choose tertiary level studies, which, with the exception of public universities, is costly. The number of places in Cyprus is rather limited as there are only three public and five private universities, so a large proportion of young people continuing to higher education (55% in 2010) enroll in education institutions abroad.

Figure 6 **Educational attainment of the population 25-64 years**

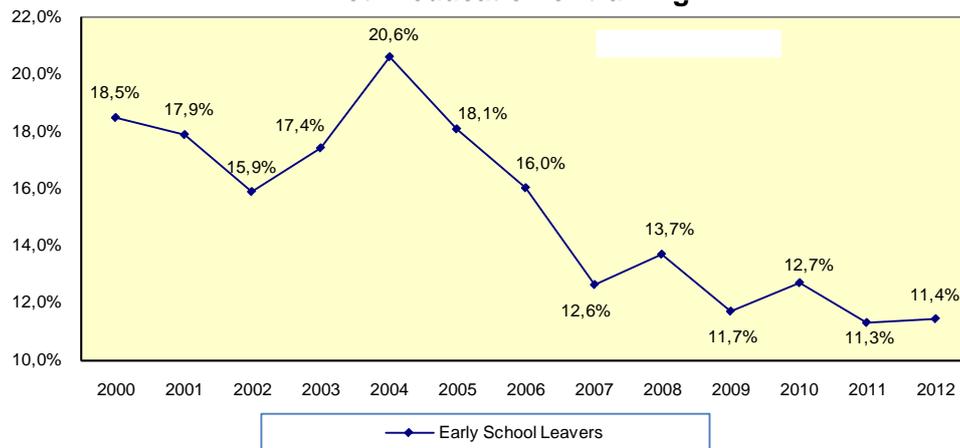


ISCED 0-2: Pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education  
 ISCED 3-4: Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education  
 ISCED 5-6: Tertiary education

Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus, LFS

The percentage of early school leavers has decreased from 18,5% in 2000 to 11,4% in 2012, as shown in Figure 7. This has mainly been the result of measures focusing on restructuring the education system and modernising the curricula, upgrading vocational education and adopting measures for facilitating the integration of students at risk, especially migrants in the school system. The EU27 average in 2012 was 12,8% and the EU2020 target is to reduce the dropout rate to 10% by 2020. However, Cypriot students abroad and soldiers 18-20 years 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 all taken into account the estimated percentage drops below 10%.

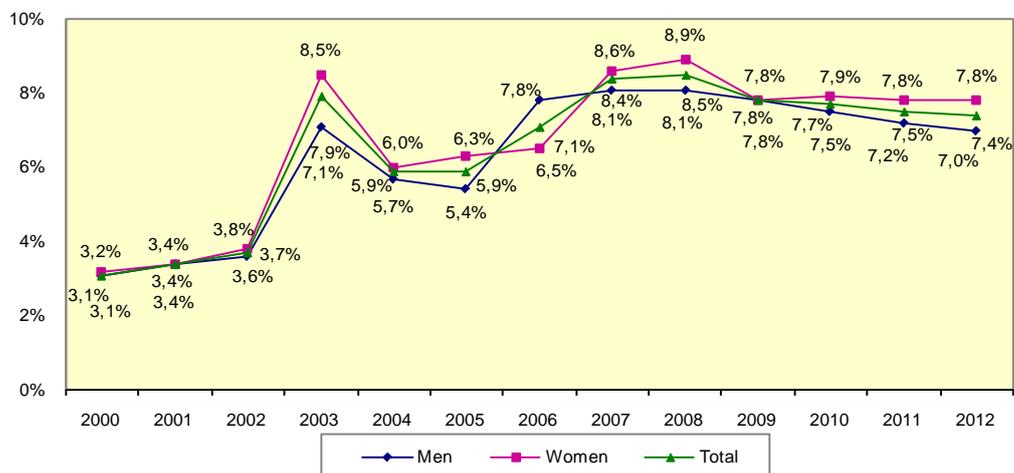
Figure 7 **Percentage of the population 18-24 years with at most lower secondary education and not in education and training**



Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus, LFS

According to the LFS, the percentage of the population 25-64 years participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey was 7,4% in 2012, which is lower than the EU27 average which was 9,0% in 2012 and the national target for 2020 which is 12%. The participation of women, as shown in Figure 8, was generally higher than that of men (exception in 2009).

Figure 8 **Lifelong learning – adult participation in education and training (population 25-64 years) by gender**



Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus, LFS

## CHAPTER 2.

# Providing VET in a lifelong learning perspective

Education developed significantly after 1960, when Cyprus gained its independence and the Cyprus economy posted spectacular growth. The need for an adequately trained workforce in all sectors of the economy led educational institutions at all levels to increase in number and scope. Adult education was also promoted through various initiatives and institutional arrangements, and the establishment and operation of the HRDA provided significant impetus to the training of employees and the unemployed.

Education in Cyprus is available from the pre-primary to the postgraduate levels. It is compulsory at the pre-primary, primary (grades one to six), and lower secondary (grades seven to nine) levels, until the student reaches the age of 15.

In upper secondary education, which lasts for three years (grades 10 to 12) there are two types of schools: the unified lyceum (ενιαίο λύκειο) and technical schools (τεχνικές σχολές). Post-secondary VET is provided, as of the academic year 2012-13, at the post-secondary institutes of vocational education and training (Μεταλυκειακά ινστιτούτα επαγγελματικής εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης). Tertiary education, including postgraduate courses, is provided at three public and five private universities, and several private colleges and institutions provide courses at the post-secondary non-university level.

Public expenditure on education increased from 5,6% of the GDP in 2000 to 7,3% in 2012, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8 **Expenditure on education**

	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Public expenditure on education (% on GDP)</b>	5,6	7,0	7,1	7,1	7,5	8,0	8,0	7,9	7,3
<b>Total expenditure on education (% on GDP)</b>	9,2	9,1	9,2	9,3	9,6	10,5	10,6	10,5	9,9

Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus

The earliest level at which vocational education and training (VET) is available, is the upper secondary level at the technical schools, including the evening technical schools (εσπερινές τεχνικές σχολές). VET is also available through the apprenticeship system (σύστημα μαθητείας), which accepts students who leave formal education between grades eight and ten.

Post-secondary VET is provided, as of the academic year 2012-13, at the post-secondary institutes of vocational education and training.

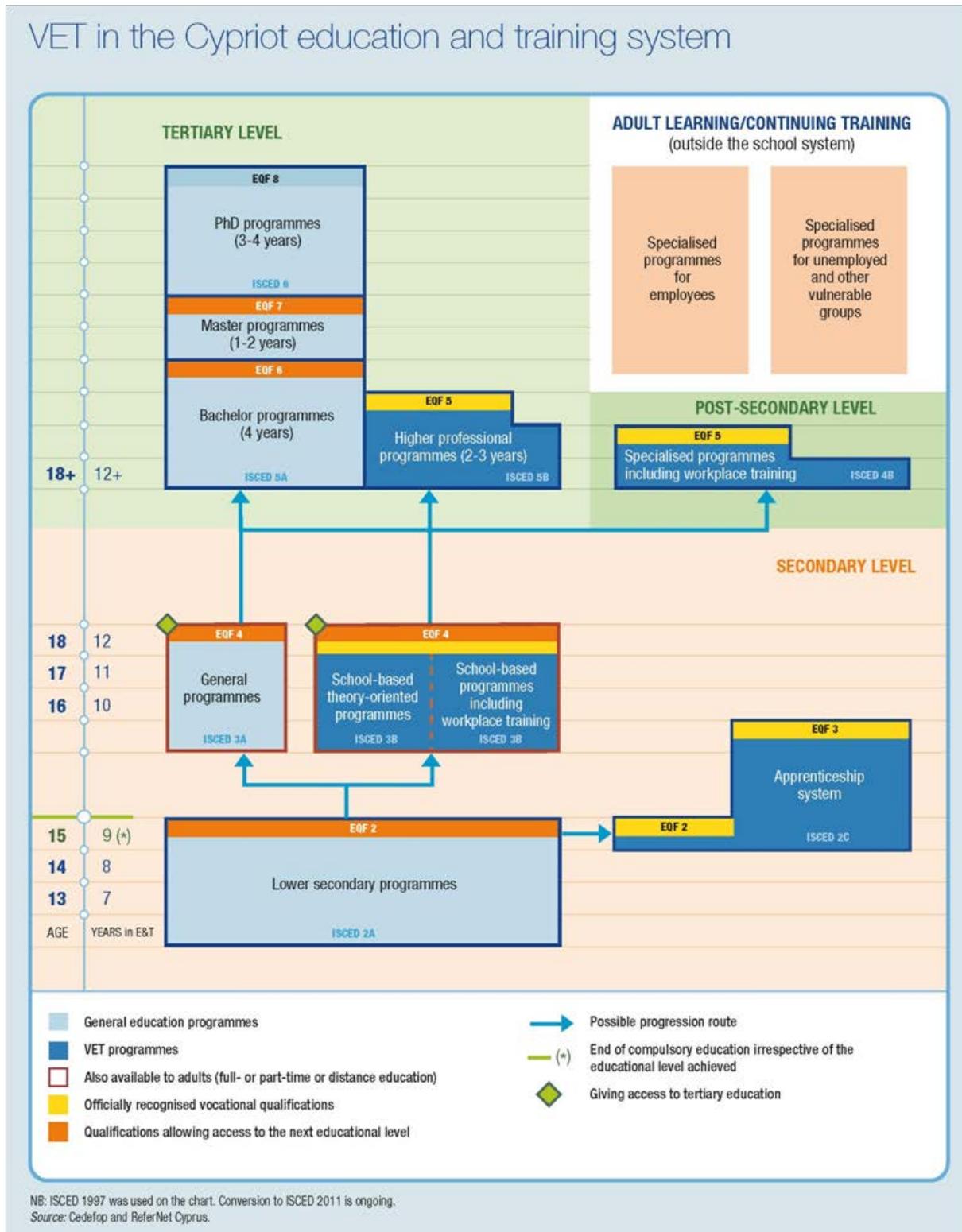
VET at tertiary level is provided at four public institutes/colleges, which come under the jurisdiction of various ministries and at several private institutes.

Furthermore, in Cyprus vocational training is extensively available for employees, the unemployed, other groups at risk of exclusion from the labour market and adults in general through a mixture of public and private provision such as colleges, training institutions, consultancy firms and enterprises.

VET is an important and prominent part of the Cyprus lifelong learning strategy, CyLLS (Εθνική στρατηγική δια βίου μάθησης) for 2007-13. The main actions designed to achieve the objectives of the strategy include enhancement of lifelong guidance and counselling services, development of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and promotion of actions outlined in the education reform (εκπαιδευτική μεταρρύθμιση) that have a specific impact on VET, such as the creation of new VET pathways and the facilitation of horizontal and vertical movement within education.

## 2.1. Chart of the national education and training system

Figure 9 VET in the education and training system of Cyprus



## 2.2. Government-regulated VET provision

Government-regulated VET provision refers to defined VET qualifications, such as diplomas, degrees, certificates, and to the public or private training pathways leading to them within the education and training system. All activities relating to the provision of VET are legitimised by decisions of the Council of Ministers and/or Acts passed by the House of Representatives.

### 2.2.1. Apprenticeship

The apprenticeship system has been a two-year initial VET programme providing practical and theoretical training to young people who had not successfully completed their secondary compulsory education and wished to be trained and employed in technical occupations. This was terminated with the graduation of the last intake of students in June 2013 and was replaced by the new modern apprenticeship, NMA (νέα σύγχρονη μαθητεία) which started its operation in the school year 2012-2013.

In 2007, the Council of Ministers approved the proposal for the establishment of the NMA, which provides an alternative pathway for education, training and development for young people who withdraw from the formal education system and is geared towards meeting the needs of the labour market. The NMA embraces young people between 14 and 21 years of age at two apprenticeship levels (preparatory and core). Participation to the NMA is not part of compulsory education and it is free of charge.

The NMA is designed to target two distinct groups of students:

- (a) students who have not completed compulsory education (third grade of gymnasium) can enroll at the preparatory apprenticeship level. The preparatory apprenticeship has been introduced in order to provide support to early school leavers between the ages of 14 and 16, by gradually introducing them to the labour market, giving them a foretaste of VET, and helping them choose a specialisation when they proceed to the core level of apprenticeship;
- (b) students who have either successfully completed compulsory education or successfully completed preparatory apprenticeship can enroll at the core apprenticeship level.

Preparatory apprenticeship does not involve employment but constitutes an alternative form of education and training for students between the ages of 14 and 16 who have the opportunity through this one-year programme to develop their numeracy and literacy skills, to become acquainted with the world of work, to explore their talents and abilities through creative arts, and to participate in workshops related to technical occupations. Such workshops include carpentry, plumbing, mechanics and the curricula is developed by the trainers. Participation to

these workshops is part of the programme and does not lead to individual qualifications. Students also receive individual counseling from psychologists according to their needs. Students who complete preparatory apprenticeship [EQF<sup>(2)</sup> level 2] may proceed to the core apprenticeship level or, if they wish and provided they succeed at a special set of exams, they may re-enter the formal education system.

Core apprenticeship is of three years duration and involves both training at school and practical training in enterprises. In the first two years, apprentices follow practical training in enterprises for three days per week where they are remunerated for their work, and they receive theoretical training for two days a week where they attend classes at technical schools. In their third and final year they only attend school once a week and work the remaining four days.

New curricula have been developed for car mechanics, plumbing/central heating, welding/metal constructions, bakery/confectionery, carpentry/furniture making, electrical installations, and home appliances technicians by trainers chosen through a competitive process. The curricula have been developed for the theoretical subjects of the core apprenticeship, such as such as Greek, Maths, Physics, English, Information Technology, and technical specialisations. The curricula of technical specialisations incorporate the standards of vocational qualifications developed by the HRDA. The content of training in enterprises is based on a training plan developed by the school trainer and the enterprise trainer working together and agreed by the employer. The enterprise training of the apprentice is monitored by regular visits of the school trainer to the enterprise and a monthly report prepared and submitted to the Apprenticeship Officer, a staff member of the Cyprus Productivity Centre (CPC).

Upon successful completion of the core apprenticeship, graduates may enroll, through a process to be specified, at the post-secondary institutes of VET operated by the MoEC.

Assessment of apprentices in technical schools follows the rules of the education system with regular tests and final examinations. During the practical training, apprentices are assessed by their supervisors and their grades appear on the apprenticeship certificate issued by the CPC to apprentices who successfully complete the course. Assessment of preparatory apprenticeship students is a combination of their attendance and conduct record throughout the year, their individual project work throughout the year and their performance at final exams in Greek language and mathematics.

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<sup>(2)</sup> European Qualifications Framework

The NMA project is co-funded by the ESF (European Social Fund) and the government of Cyprus and it will become fully operational by 2015. It is being implemented by the CPC in cooperation with the MoEC. The CPC also implements (with ESF co-funding) a subsidy scheme for employers who recruit apprentices, which subsidises them with a percentage (10%) of the salary of the in-company trainer in charge of the apprentice, and also compensates employers for wages paid to apprentices while attending classes at technical schools. The scheme also covers the total of the social insurance contributions of the employer for the apprentice.

During the school year 2012-2013, the apprenticeship system and the new modern apprenticeship coexisted. The apprenticeship system operated only at second (final) year level since there was no intake of new students. Of the 53 students who enrolled at the second year, 41 graduated (22 car mechanics, 7 plumbers, 5 car electricians and 7 carpenters).

In the school year 2012-2013, 87 students enrolled at the preparatory level of the NMA. Of those enrolled, 46 successfully graduated from the programme and are entitled to enroll at the core apprenticeship level this year, while seven who completed the programme but did not take the required exams, were only awarded a certificate of attendance. Of the 46 students who completed the programme successfully, four took the special examinations for re-entry to the formal education system and three were successful. In the school year 2013-2014, 60 students enrolled in preparatory apprenticeship.

In the school year 2012-13 there was no intake of students from the preparatory apprenticeship to core apprenticeship since both levels started to operate at the same time. A small group of gymnasium graduates however, chose to enroll at the core apprenticeship level to become car mechanics. Of the group of 13 students who enrolled last year, 9 are now in their second year. In the school year 2013-2014, 35 students enrolled in the first year of the apprenticeship, all following the specialisation of car mechanics.

The apprenticeship certificate (ISCED 2C, EQF level 3) allows access to several regulated occupations (e.g. building contractor and electrician), provided that all other requirements of the relevant legislation are observed.

The Apprenticeship Board (Συμβούλιο Μαθητείας), which supervises the operation of the apprenticeship system, has a tripartite character whereas the design of the NMA is the outcome of long and detailed deliberations with the social partners.

### **2.2.2. VET at upper secondary level**

VET at upper secondary level is provided at technical schools for students aged 15-18 and evening technical schools, as well as in the afternoon and evening classes of technical schools for adults (απογευματινά και βραδινά τμήματα των τεχνικών σχολών). Secondary technical and vocational education, STVE (Μέση τεχνική και επαγγελματική εκπαίδευση) provides a broad range of initial training programmes to gymnasium leavers and adults.

#### *2.2.2.1. Formal mainstream upper secondary initial technical and vocational education*

Formal upper secondary technical and vocational education programmes are offered free of charge in both the theoretical direction (θεωρητική κατεύθυνση) and the practical direction (πρακτική κατεύθυνση). The duration of studies is three years for both directions. The first year of studies is common for all branches in both directions and students select a specialisation offered in the branch of their choice in the second and third year of their studies.

The theoretical direction and the first and second years of the practical direction are completely school-based and combine general education subjects with technological and workshop subjects. The third year of studies in the practical direction combines a school-based environment with a real workplace, with final-year students placed in enterprises for one day a week, where they follow a practical training programme.

The programmes provided include various branches in both the theoretical and practical directions. Examples include mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, civil engineering and architecture, hotel and catering, woodcraft and furniture making, clothing and applied arts.

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

School leaving certificates (απολυτήρια) are awarded upon successful completion of either direction and are equivalent to those of secondary general education schools (STVE). Therefore, STVE school leavers are eligible for admission to universities and other tertiary education institutions in Cyprus and abroad. Qualifications (ISCED 4B, EQF level 4) provide access to regulated occupations, provided that all other requirements of the relevant legislation are met.

Teachers must hold an appropriate diploma in their subject area or a degree relevant to the subject they will teach. Pre-service training is an obligatory requirement for all new appointments to the Educational Service. In-service continuing training consists of compulsory training programmes which are conducted twice a year and cover all eleven fields of study

offered at Technical Schools and voluntary training programmes which are conducted in the afternoon.

Curriculum development is a collective effort involving qualified STVE staff, experts from other training institutions, STVE advisory committee members, trade unions and employers' representatives. The STVE curriculum is subject to approval by the Council of Ministers before being implemented.

The restructuring of STVE is underway within the context of the education reform with the direct involvement and cooperation of VET stakeholders. The quality and efficiency of VET has been improved through the further development of the infrastructure of technical schools and the introduction of modern technology in VET curricula.

The new curricula, which are expected to be developed by 2015, will enhance the attractiveness of VET and match specialisations offered with the current needs of the labour market, thus providing students with an opportunity to acquire the key competences they need to make them more competitive in the labour market. Related to this is the inclusion of entrepreneurship components in the curricula. The reformed curricula will be oriented towards learning outcomes and will be based on Learning Modules and ECVET<sup>3</sup> units.

The 2011/12 enrollments in STVE include students in the theoretical and practical directions as well as evening classes. As shown in Table 9, 13,2%, were students in technical schools, as most students prefer to follow general education due to the prejudice against technical occupations. This is one of the lowest percentages among European countries. However, the unprecedented economic crisis that Cyprus is currently facing, together with the efforts to increase VET attractiveness, have contributed to a significant increase in the number of students who opt to enroll in Technical Schools and the percentage of students attending Technical Schools is estimated to have increased to around 19% in 2013.

The total public expenditure for STVE was estimated to be EUR 59,4 million in 2012 (Statistical Service of Cyprus). The share of secondary technical and vocational public expenditure was estimated to be 4,6% of total public expenditure on education in 2011.

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(<sup>3</sup>) European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training

Table 9 **Students in upper secondary education by programme orientation (general/vocational) (%)**

	2005 /2006	2006 / 2007	2007 / 2008	2008 / 2009	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012	2012 / 2013
<b>Upper secondary education pre-vocational and vocational programmes</b>	13,3	13,0	12,6	12,8	13,2	12,7	13,2	13,6
<b>Upper secondary education general programmes</b>	86,7	87,0	87,4	87,2	86,8	87,3	86,8	86,7

Source: Statistical Service of Cyprus

#### 2.2.2.2. *Second chance formal initial vocational education*

##### **Evening technical schools**

The MoEC also offers formal education programmes through the two evening technical schools, one in Nicosia and another in Limassol, to further promote participation in STVE and support the integration of school dropouts in the workplace and in society in general. The programmes are equivalent to the STVE programmes (ISCED 4B, EQF level 4) that are offered in mainstream technical schools. The evening technical schools offer courses in the fields of mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, civil engineering/architecture and hotel and catering. However, they have the capacity to offer courses covering all the fields of study that are offered by mainstream Technical Schools, provided that at least eight students are interested. Attendance is free of charge.

The duration of studies varies from one to four years, depending on the educational background of the students. Attendance is free of charge and leads to the acquisition of a leaving certificate (απολυτήριο), which has the same legal status as the one awarded by the unified lyceum (ενιαίο λύκειο) and mainstream technical schools. Adult graduates then have the opportunity to compete for a place in higher education in Cyprus or abroad or enter the labour market.

In 2012, expenditure for the evening secondary general and the evening technical schools amounted to EUR 8,8 million (Statistical Service of Cyprus), including teacher salaries.

##### **Three-year programmes of the afternoon and evening classes of technical schools**

The three-year programmes are provided in the context of the afternoon and evening classes of technical schools, which are administered by the Directorate of STVE (Διεύθυνση Μέσης τεχνικής και επαγγελματικής εκπαίδευσης) of the MoEC. They offer a variety of theoretical and practical courses such as plumbing, electric installations, engineering, computers, car

mechanics, cooking and graphic design. The objective of these programmes is to offer, at limited fees, formal initial education and training to employed or unemployed adults, to respond more efficiently to the contemporary demands of the labour market and achieve re-integration in the labour market in areas where there is shortage of skilled workers. Successful completion of the three-year programmes leads to the acquisition of a leaving certificate equivalent to that awarded to graduates of upper secondary general or technical and vocational education, as far as the technical component is concerned. This means that individuals who already hold an upper secondary education leaving certificate are given an opportunity to obtain a second leaving certificate in their chosen field of study.

In 2012, expenditure for the afternoon and evening classes of technical schools amounted to EUR 548 134 (Statistical Service of Cyprus), including teacher salaries.

### **2.2.3. VET at post secondary level**

VET at post secondary level has not been available in Cyprus. The MoEC in cooperation with the MLSI and other stakeholders has established, within the context of the education reform, post-secondary institutes of VET, co-financed by the ESF, which offer further technical specialisation and started their operation in the academic year 2012-13.

Students who attend these Institutes, especially those who wish to enter the labour market directly, have the opportunity to acquire or complete their technical and vocational education (ISCED 4B, EQF level 5). These Institutes provide opportunities to Cypriot citizens, especially young people, to acquire, improve, or upgrade their qualifications and skills so that they are better prepared for the labour market.

Post-secondary institutes of VET operate at existing technical schools, as public education institutions, within the remit and under the supervision of the MoEC. The duration of the programmes offered is two years, on a 5-day basis. Attendance is free of charge and it includes work-based learning, which is a compulsory component of the curricula and lasts for six weeks per academic year. Suitable enterprises and industrial units are selected on the basis that they have the capacity to implement the learners' work plan, providing them with the necessary skills and competences required for their chosen programme of study. During work-based learning, the VET trainer who is responsible for each programme of study, monitors the learners' progress. Learners are not remunerated for their work. In addition, practical training is provided in workshops on the premises of the technical schools.

The programmes offered have been defined following consultation with the stakeholders participating in the Advisory Body, based on their experience and knowledge of labour market

needs. Maintaining the curricula's flexibility and relevance to the labour market is an ongoing process, since they are systematically evaluated, revised and updated on an annual basis, taking into account the views and suggestions of all the relevant social partners and stakeholders, as well as current labour market needs determined after research regarding employment prospects in Cyprus.

The programmes currently offered are the following:

- (a) Management of Natural Gas Industrial and Residential Installations;
- (b) Gas Handling Pipes Welding and Industrial Structures;
- (c) Specialist Baker and Confectioner;
- (d) Computer Networks and Communications;
- (e) Electrical and Industrial Refrigeration Installations;
- (f) Installation and Maintenance of Photovoltaic Systems and Wind Turbines;
- (g) Industrial and Residential Automation;
- (h) Organic Vegetable Production.

During the academic year 2012-2013, 196 students attended the programmes offered. During the current academic year 2013-2014, the total number of students attending the first and second year of the programmes has reached 400. A student placement system with selection criteria (favouring in particular young unemployed individuals) is applied, since the demand is very high and the number of applicants exceeds the number of the available places.

#### **2.2.4. VET at tertiary level**

VET at tertiary level is provided by four public institutions of tertiary education, which come under the jurisdiction of various ministries and by 38 private institutions of tertiary education.

According to Table 10, less than one-third of the persons in higher education (26,6%) participate in tertiary education programmes that are practically oriented and occupation-specific, while most participate in programmes that are largely theory based. However, large numbers of Cypriot students are enrolled in educational institutions abroad.

During 2011/12, the total number of tertiary education students in Cyprus was 31 772, while 23 232 of them were Cypriot students and 8 540 were foreign students.

**Table 10** Participation rates in higher education by programme orientation – 2011/2012

	Total ISCED 5-6	ISCED 5a		ISCED 5b		ISCED 6	
	Number	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Cyprus</b>	31 772	22 604	71,2	8 458	26,6	710	2,2

ISCED 5a: Tertiary education programmes that are largely theoretically based and are intended to provide sufficient qualifications for gaining entry into advanced research programmes and professions with skill requirements

ISCED 5b: Tertiary education programmes practically oriented and occupationally specific, which do not provide direct access to advanced research programmes

ISCED 6: Second stage of tertiary education, leading to an advanced research qualification

Source: Eurostat, Statistical Service of Cyprus

#### 2.2.4.1. Public institutions of tertiary education

There are four public institutions of tertiary education (non-university level) offering programmes in forestry, culinary arts and other vocations. These institutions operate under a relevant ministry or organisation as follows:

- (a) the Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus (Ανώτερο Ξενοδοχειακό Ινστιτούτο Κύπρου) operates under the aegis of the MLSI;
- (b) the Forestry College (Δασικό Κολέγιο) operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment (Υπουργείο Γεωργίας, Φυσικών Πόρων και Περιβάλλοντος);
- (c) the Tourist Guides School (operates whenever there is a need) operates under the aegis of the Cyprus Tourist Organisation (Κυπριακός Οργανισμός Τουρισμού);
- (d) the Cyprus Police Academy (Αστυνομική Υπηρεσία Κύπρου) operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Justice and Public Order, MJPO (Υπουργείο Δικαιοσύνης και Δημόσιας Τάξης).

The basic admission requirement for public tertiary education institutions is completion of 12 years of primary and secondary education, as certificated by the leaving certificate issued by the lyceum or technical school. The selection of candidates is based on the applicants' success in the common final examinations and in some cases success in an oral interview is also required.

Cypriot and EU students studying in public institutions of tertiary education pay no fees. In some institutions, all students receive free accommodation and board. International students are required to pay fees to attend these institutions. The student tuition fees range from about EUR 3 700 to EUR 4 500 per year. All fees are usually paid directly to the institution.

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.

Students are assessed on the basis of semester, and often mid-term examinations. Workshop and laboratory assignments, project work and industrial training are also assessed and taken into consideration when assigning final marks. In addition to the course modules, participants may be expected to prepare and submit a final project.

Successful completion of the programme, which lasts one to three years, leads to the institution's diploma or higher diploma awarded by the institution.

Depending on the job specifications, teachers must hold an appropriate diploma in their subject area or a degree relevant to the subject they will teach; work experience in their area of specialisation is also required. Pre-service training is usually not a requirement. In-service, continuing training of VET teachers in public institutions is common practice but on a voluntary basis.

#### *2.2.4.2. Private institutions of tertiary education*

Private institutions of tertiary education offer a wide range of academic as well as vocational programmes of studies at various levels (one- or two year diploma, three-year higher diploma, four-year bachelor degree and one- or two-year master's degree) in secretarial studies, aesthetics, food preparation, music, arts and drama, graphic design, hotel and tourism management, computer science, social sciences, education, business studies and engineering. The language of instruction is English for most programmes of studies offered, which attracts scholars and students from other countries. Over and above these programmes, more than 10 private institutions of tertiary education offer academic programmes of studies based on validation or franchising agreements with more than 10 European universities and following the provisions of the competent Law of the Republic of Cyprus.

The Law which was enacted in 1996 regulates the establishment and operation of all private institutions of tertiary education which must be registered with the MoEC. Each institution sets its own internal regulations, student entry requirements and evaluation, qualifications awarded, tuition fees and teachers' qualifications, which are published in an annual prospectus. According to the Law, both internal regulations and prospectus of the institutions must be approved by the MoEC.

Teachers in private institutions of tertiary education usually hold the qualification of the level of the subjects they are teaching or higher. Previous work and teaching experience and pre-service training are not usually required although institutions of tertiary education will consider experience and training as an advantage when hiring teachers. In-service, continuing training of teachers in private colleges is voluntary, but in some of the institutions, there are funds available for supporting the upgrading of teachers' knowledge and skills.

### 2.3. Other forms of training

Other forms of training refer to VET programmes which do not lead to a formal qualification but to professional development and updating of specific skills and competences and which are addressed to adults, employees, the unemployed and other groups at risk of exclusion from the labour market.

#### 2.3.1. Training for employees

The main bodies promoting training provision for employees are the HRDA, the MoEC, the MLSI and other ministries and public institutions. 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.

##### 2.3.1.1. *Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus*

The provision of training programmes addressed to employees has been encouraged and strengthened primarily through the approval and subsequent subsidisation of training activities by the HRDA, a semi-government organisation whose source of income comes from the Human Resource Development levy paid by all companies. Civil servants and the self-employed are excluded from the HRDA's sphere of competence. The HRDA is governed by a 13-strong Board of Governors, comprised of representatives of government, employers and trade unions.

As far as the training provision is concerned, the HRDA subsidises a variety of training activities, implemented by public and private institutions and enterprises, which are addressed mainly to employees:

- (a) single-company initial and continuing training programmes in Cyprus provide in-company training to employees, implemented by internal or external trainers, to allow them to meet the specific needs of the enterprise for the effective utilisation of its personnel through its

appropriate training and development. During 2012, 5 781 programmes were subsidised with 59 316 participants and total expenditure of EUR 7 266 895;

- (b) single-company continuing training programmes abroad train and develop employees of an enterprise, in order to meet specific enterprise needs for the effective utilisation of its personnel through its appropriate training and development. During 2012, 671 programmes were subsidised with 671 participants and total expenditure of EUR 1 311 915;
- (c) standard multi-company continuing training programmes provide continuing training for meeting the training needs of employees through their participation in training programmes implemented by public or private training institutions and organisations. During 2012, 1 039 programmes were subsidised with 12 121 participants and total expenditure of EUR 3 532 475;
- (d) high-priority multi-company continuing training programmes provide continuing training to meet the training needs of employees through participation in training programmes implemented by public or private training institutions and organisations in specific high-priority issues. During 2012, 49 programmes were subsidised with 892 participants and total expenditure of EUR 1 305 537.

#### *2.3.1.2. Ministry of Education and Culture*

The MoEC offers continuing education and training to employees through the one-year programmes of afternoon and evening classes of technical schools and it is responsible for the training of secondary education teachers.

In the context of the afternoon and evening classes of technical schools, the Directorate of STVE of the MoEC offers, at limited fees, one-year programmes which lead to the award of a certificate. A variety of courses are offered such as plumbing, electric installations, engineering, computers, car mechanics, cooking and graphic design. These programmes are designed to offer continuing education and training to employees, enrich their knowledge and skills and thus place them in a position to respond more efficiently to the contemporary demands of the labour market. No qualifications are required to attend these programmes and the teaching methods used vary, depending on the programme.

#### *2.3.1.3. Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance*

The MLSI is responsible for the CPC, which offers short modular programmes for employees in technical occupations and management and the Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus, which offers upgrading courses for employees in the hotel and restaurant sector.

#### *2.3.1.4. Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment*

The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment (MoA) is responsible for the training of farmers. Most of the training is provided by the Department of Agriculture training centres and during 2012, 46 training courses were organised which lasted 71 days in total, with the participation of 806 farmers. Additionally, the centres organised 17 courses on home economics such as basket making, embroidery, weaving etc, in which 275 female farmers participated which lasted 44 days in total.

Also, the Department of Agriculture organised in 2012 various apprenticeship schemes in a range of subjects. Persons under 40 years old are granted a daily allowance of EUR 18,00 per training day. During 2012, five such schemes were implemented which lasted 19 days in total, and in which 47 farmers participated.

Finally, within the framework of the Cyprus Rural Development Programme 2007-2013, 139 young farmers who applied for financial support were trained on various agricultural topics for a total of 100 hours for each participant.

The MoA is also responsible for the training of foresters and forestry graduates provided by the Forestry College.

#### *2.3.1.5. Cyprus Academy of Public Administration*

The Cyprus Academy of Public Administration, CAPA (Κυπριακή Ακαδημία Δημόσιας Διοίκησης), whose budget was EUR 1 361 114 for 2012, is the learning and development centre of the Cyprus civil service. It was established in 1991 and is part of the Public Administration and Personnel Department of the Ministry of Finance, MoF (Υπουργείο Οικονομικών, ΥΟ). CAPA's overall objective is to contribute to the continuous improvement of the Cyprus civil service through learning activities in the broad field of management, organisational development projects and applied research.

CAPA's main activities include the development of the capacity for the management of learning in civil service organisations by setting up a learning unit in each civil service organisation to systematically manage its learning activities, the development of personal and interpersonal skills, the organisation of induction courses for newcomers, the offer of EU training programmes and training programmes for foreign public officers and the design and organisation of workshops on a wide variety of management and leadership skills for the civil service and local authorities.

#### 2.3.1.6. *Ministry of Health*

The Ministry of Health, MoH (Υπουργείο Υγείας) is responsible for the training of public sector nurses provided by the School of Nursing (Νοσηλευτική Σχολή).

#### 2.3.1.7. *Ministry of Justice and Public Order*

The Ministry of Justice and Public Order promotes the training of police officers and sergeants provided by the Cyprus Police Academy. The Police Academy also offers part-time training in the use of computers for police members. The lessons are taught by qualified teachers appointed by the MoEC and they take place at the computer lab of the Police Academy. The courses run from autumn until summer of next year.

#### 2.3.1.8. *Foundation for the Management of the European Lifelong Learning Programmes*

The Foundation for the Management of the European Lifelong Learning Programmes is the body which manages education programmes and promotes the goals and the EU education and training policies in Cyprus. The Foundation uses funds obtained from the European Commission to subsidise educational institutions and organisations active in this field, as well as teachers, students, educators, trainers and trainees.

According to the Foundation, in 2012, the amount of EUR 993 042 was approved for funding activities within the Leonardo da Vinci Mobility programme. This amount funded the mobility and training of 272 learners/trainees in VET (compared to 345 in 2011). The numbers of training mobility depend on the country of destination and the duration of training. Furthermore, 47 teachers and trainers (compared to 43 in 2011) and 36 enterprises/organisations (compared to 38 in 2011) participated in VET mobility schemes.

### **2.3.2. Training for the unemployed**

Over the recent years, training provision for the unemployed has become vitally important for combating the effects of the economic crisis. Resources have been re-directed towards the prevention and reduction of unemployment. The main bodies promoting training provision for the unemployed are the HRDA in cooperation with the MLSI and the MoEC.

#### 2.3.2.1. *Human Resource Development Authority*

The Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) offers the following training activities:

- (a) a scheme for the improvement of the employability of the unemployed. It is co-financed by the ESF in the programming period 2007-13. It aims at improving the employability of the

unemployed by offering opportunities for participation in training programmes on information technology, English language and secretarial skills, as well as work experience programmes in enterprises. The programmes are offered free of charge and participants receive an allowance. During 2012, the HRDA subsidised the participation of 626 unemployed persons in 43 training programmes and the participation of 143 persons in work experience programmes. Total expenditure was EUR 1 688 298;

- (b) training programmes for upgrading the skills of unemployed persons. They cover important horizontal as well as job-specific skills, including green skills, which will help people to return to productive employment. The programmes are offered free of charge to unemployed persons, with priority given to the long-term unemployed. For the duration of these programmes participants are also entitled to training allowances from the HRDA. During 2012, the HRDA subsidised the training of 727 unemployed and total expenditure was EUR 679 788;
- (c) the accelerated initial training scheme. It is a multi-company initial training scheme operated by the HRDA aimed at remedying significant labour shortages by providing theoretical and practical training in occupations that are currently in demand. The HRDA covers all the costs for the institutional training. In addition, trainees receive a weekly allowance. During 2012, training programmes were organised for Mobile Telephone Technicians, Auto Body Fitters and Elevator Technicians, 220 persons benefited from the scheme and total expenditure was EUR 809 975;
- (d) the training programmes for newly employed tertiary education graduates. They aim at strengthening the management capacity of enterprises and organisations through the employment and training of young university and other tertiary education graduates. The HRDA provides subsidies to employers for the delivery of in-house training programmes of six months duration. These programmes are supplemented by participation in other training courses. During 2012, 709 participants were subsidised and total expenditure was EUR 6 227 934;
- (e) job placement and training of unemployed Cypriots and EU nationals to fill vacancies and/or replace labour from third countries. This scheme provides a subsidy and guidance to employers as incentives to encourage them to employ and provide individualised training for unemployed. As of 1 March 2012, the scheme is directed exclusively at the long-term unemployed. During 2012, 525 participants were subsidised and total expenditure was EUR 2 365 912.

#### **2.3.2.2. *Ministry of Education and Culture***

In the context of the afternoon and evening classes of technical schools, the Directorate of STVE of the MoEC offers one-year programmes leading to the award of a certificate.

One of the objectives of these programmes is to offer continuing education and training to the unemployed, aiming at their re-integration into the labour market, in areas where there is shortage of skilled workers. A variety of courses are offered such as plumbing, electric installations, engineering, computers, car mechanics, cooking and graphic design. Therefore, these programmes help to meet the workforce needs of the economy, both in terms of quality and quantity. No qualifications are required for attending these programmes and the teaching methods used vary, depending on the programme.

#### **2.3.3. *Training for other groups at risk of exclusion from the labour market***

The training programmes for groups at risk of exclusion from the labour market, such as inactive women, public assistance recipients, single parents, drop-outs, persons with disabilities and asylum seekers are provided mainly by the MLSI, the MoEC, the HRDA and other ministries.

##### **2.3.3.1. *Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance***

The Centre for the Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled (Κέντρο Επαγγελματικής Αποκατάστασης Αναπήρων) provides specialised programmes to promote the acquisition of professional skills by disabled persons, which are promoted by the MLSI. The centre provides training and offers employment opportunities in the following specialisations: leather goods/shoemaking, furniture industry/carpentry, brooms making, knitting and sewing embroidery. The centre provides a special allowance in addition to the regular training allowance.

The Department for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities subsidises the operation of Supported Employment Programmes which include on-the-job training of persons with disabilities by job coaches in the open labour market. During 2012, 236 persons participated in 20 programmes with a cost of EUR 297 000 for the subsidisation of the job coach salaries. In addition, the Department promotes a scheme for vocational training of persons with disabilities to expand the employment opportunities by improving working skills, mostly in IT. The scheme covers the training costs at an appropriate training institution or company for any course of up to six months and to a maximum amount of EUR 1 700. During 2012, training opportunities were provided to 10 persons with a budget of EUR 8 500.

The Social Welfare Services (Υπηρεσίες Κοινωνικής Ευημερίας) is implementing the project named “Work and Social Activation of People in Vulnerable Groups through the Development of Social Skills and Other Actions” co-financed by the ESF in the programming period of 2007-13. The aim of this project is to provide training in social skills to vulnerable groups (such as people aged 15-24 or over 50 years of age, single parents, public assistance recipients, ex-prisoners, people with disabilities) and to reintegrate them in the labour market. It is expected that 1 300 persons will participate in the scheme and the total budget for the period 2011-15 is EUR 2 385 979. The training in social skills addressed to people who belong to vulnerable groups began in February 2013, and so far 315 people attended the seminars. An amount of EUR 63 000 has already been given to the people who have successfully completed the seminars.

#### **2.3.3.2. *Ministry of Education and Culture***

In the context of the afternoon and evening classes of technical schools, the Directorate of STVE of the MoEC offers one-year programmes which lead to the award of a certificate. One of the objectives of these programmes is to offer continuing education and training to specific groups of people at risk of exclusion from the labour market. As a result, special programmes addressing prisoners, aiming at their re-integration into the labour market, are offered at the central prisons in Nicosia. These programmes include classes in cooking, graphic design, woodcraft and furniture making, and AUTOCAD design.

#### **2.3.3.3. *Human Resource Development Authority***

The HRDA is implementing a scheme co-financed by the ESF in the programming period 2007-13 which aims at the improvement of the employability of the inactive women by providing opportunities for them to participate in training programmes on information technology, English language and secretarial skills, as well as work experience programmes in enterprises. The programmes are offered free of charge and participants receive an allowance. During 2012, the HRDA subsidised the participation of 624 women in 40 training programmes and the participation of 88 women in work experience programmes. Total expenditure was EUR 1 053 346.

#### **2.3.3.4. *Ministry of Justice and Public Order***

The Ministry of Justice and Public Order in cooperation with the MoEC and the private sector offers classes and other programmes of professional training to the prisoners, on a voluntary basis.

#### **2.3.3.5. Ministry of Interior**

Based on the national employment strategy and the labour market needs in general, the immigration strategy aims to integrate legal immigrants into the society under conditions of increased social cohesion. The action plan for the integration of third country nationals includes actions in a number of sectors such as education, vocational training, and learning of the Greek language, health, information and more.

#### **2.3.4. Training for adults in general**

The adult education centres (επιμορφωτικά κέντρα) of the MoEC offer a wide range of courses aimed at the holistic development of each adult's personality and the social, economic and cultural development of citizens and society.

The adult education centres operate both in the urban and rural areas of the government-controlled area of Cyprus, run by the Directorate of Primary Education (Διεύθυνση Δημοτικής Εκπαίδευσης) of the MoEC. They offer a variety of interdisciplinary courses which focus mainly on the teaching of foreign languages, arts and crafts, cultural programmes, health and other issues of general interest, as well as on teaching professional and vocational skills.

Classes take place from November to the end of May on the premises of public schools. No entry qualifications are required and anyone over the age of 15 can attend the courses. Lessons are held once a week and last for 90 minutes. Those who attend the courses pay a small fee and at the end of the year they receive a certificate of attendance.

More than 31 341 citizens (73% of which were female and over 8% were over 65 years of age) attended the Adult Education Centres during the school year 2012-2013 and 30% attended courses in rural areas. In 2011, expenditure was EUR 2 303 342, including teacher salaries.

The adult education centres also organise about 50 special classes each year, free of charge, for various disadvantaged groups of people such as illiterate people, prisoners, senior citizens and people with disabilities.

Furthermore, the adult education centres are implementing a project teaching Greek language to foreigners, immigrants and other residents of Cyprus aged 15 and over, co-financed by the ESF during the period 2010-15. The programme consists of fifty, 90-minutes teaching sessions, twice a week for each teaching group and attendance is free.

## CHAPTER 3.

# Shaping VET qualifications

### 3.1. Anticipation of labour market needs

Cyprus has a long experience in providing forecasts for skills needs. 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 HRDA. The Ministry of Finance provides projections for the growth of the economy, which include forecasts for different sectors. The MoEC is responsible for the identification of educational and special skill needs.

#### 3.1.1. Human Resource Development Authority

For the systematic employment forecasting and the identification of skills gaps, the HRDA conducts the following research studies:

(a) long term employment trends and forecasting in Cyprus.

The HRDA provides 10-year employment forecasts on a regular basis every two to three years. The latest set of employment forecasts for Cyprus were completed in 2010, cover the period 2010-20 and provide forecasts of employment, expansion and replacement demand for 46 sectors of economic activity and for around 200 occupations, which cover the whole spectrum of the Cyprus labour market. Furthermore, the HRDA participates actively in initiatives and actions that are promoted at European level in the framework of the European network Skillsnet for skill needs forecasting;

(b) 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 multi-company initial training programmes. In the study, the views of employers' organisations, trade unions, district labour offices of the MLSI and the Cyprus Tourism Organisation are collected and analysed through a specially designed questionnaire;

(c) study on the anticipation of green skill needs.

The study entitled "*Identification of Green Skill Needs in the Cyprus Economy 2010-13*" outlines the green economy of Cyprus, provides employment needs forecasts for sectors

of economic activity and occupations of the green economy and identifies green skill needs for the period 2010-13. A special action plan for promoting green skills in the Cyprus economy has been put forward as a result of the study, which includes a variety of targeted measures that are directed towards enterprises, persons employed and the unemployed;

- (d) study on the identification of employment and training needs for the effective utilisation of natural gas in Cyprus.

The existence of natural gas in the exclusive economic zone of Cyprus and the emerging growth prospects of the Cyprus economy due to its future exploitation, has led the HRDA to conduct a research study entitled "*Early Identification of Employment and Training Needs for the Effective Utilisation of Natural Gas in Cyprus*". The study identifies the needs for human resources, in sectors and occupations that are directly or indirectly related to the utilisation of natural gas. Based on the findings of the study, which was finalised in November 2012 and which includes a road map for promoting skills for the utilisation of natural gas, the HRDA promotes the acquisition of such skills through its training activities. Furthermore, a National Strategy for Education and Training in the Sector of Hydrocarbons is being formulated by a committee comprising the Ministry of Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism, the MoEC, the MLSI and the HRDA;

- (e) thematic priorities setting.

Every year the HRDA prepares documents that contain the thematic priorities for the continuing training programmes it subsidises. The HRDA then examines, approves or rejects the submitted programmes that need to be in accordance with the policy and subsidy manual and subsidises the implemented programmes.

The results of the HRDA's studies on anticipation of skill needs are utilised by policy makers for the development of strategies and policies in education, training and lifelong learning. Furthermore, they are utilised at operational level for the development of programmes of study in education, including the programmes of study of Technical Schools and the Post-Secondary Institutes of Vocational Education and Training of the Ministry of Education and Culture. They are also utilised by people involved in counselling such as secondary education vocational guidance teachers and employment counsellors and by the general public. For this purpose, all research studies, upon completion are disseminated to a wide audience of prominent stakeholders. Special presentations are organised for secondary school guidance counsellors and employment counsellors, students and parents.

The HRDA studies on employment forecasts are an important tool for the planning of HRDA activities. On the basis of these research studies and following consultations with

stakeholders, the HRDA every year prepares documents that contain the thematic priorities for the continuing training programmes it subsidises. The HRDA then examines, approves or rejects the submitted programmes, which need to be in accordance with the policy priorities and criteria. The findings of the research studies are also taken into account by the HRDA in selecting the Standards of Vocational Qualifications that are being developed.

### **3.1.2. Ministry of Finance**

The MoF provides projections for the growth of the economy, which include forecasts of value added, productivity and employment for all sectors, and submits proposals for the required policy changes.

### **3.1.3. Ministry of Education and Culture**

The MoEC and more specifically the Directorate of STVE is responsible for the introduction, with the participation of the social partners, of new branches and specialisations, the design of curricula and the identification of special skills needed.

To carry out these tasks, while taking into account the developmental needs of the Cyprus economy and the latest scientific and technological advances, the Directorate of STVE has developed close cooperation with all major stakeholders such as Ministries and the Directorate General for European Programmes Coordination and Development, the social partners (employers' and employees' organisations), teachers and their associations, the University of Cyprus (Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου), the Pedagogical Institute (Παιδαγωγικό Ινστιτούτο) and the HRDA. The findings of the research studies of the HRDA are also taken into account for the design of curricula.

The curriculum is revised whenever a need is identified. The last reform was completed in 2004. A revision of the curricula is underway within the context of the education reform, based on a study focusing on the reorganisation of STVE. For the introduction of new branches and specialisations, the views of all major stakeholders are considered and the teachers of STVE provide their suggestions every year.

In addition, the Centre for Educational Research and Evaluation (CERE) of the MoEC participates in the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), a survey recognised by OECD and delivered by ETS<sup>(4)</sup>. PIAAC assesses the level and distribution of adult skills in a coherent and consistent way across countries. It focuses on

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<sup>(4)</sup> <https://www.ets.org/> [accessed 21.10.2014]

the key cognitive and workplace skills that are required for successful participation in the economy and society of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## 3.2. Qualifications systems and frameworks

In Cyprus until recently there has been relatively limited implementation of frameworks and mechanisms regarding the transparency of qualifications and systems for the recognition of competences and qualifications. However, Cyprus is committed to introducing the relevant EU tools. A description of progress in implementing qualifications systems and frameworks is provided below.

### 3.2.1. Implementation of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

The development of a NQF to promote recognition of academic and vocational qualifications acquired in Cyprus is a government priority. To facilitate the process, the Council of Ministers appointed a high-level national committee comprised of the Directors-General of MoEC, the MLSI and the HRDA. An Interim Report was developed by the Committee and finalised in March 2012. This report formed the basis for further consultation with stakeholders and other interested parties.

The National Coordination Point (NCP) was established in October 2012, following the Decision of the Council of Ministers 541/2012, comprised of representatives from the MoEC, the MLSI and the HRDA. Four international and one Cypriot expert have been appointed in order to assist the NCP in the development of the referencing report, which will describe the process of referencing the Cyprus qualification levels to the EQF.

A first draft of the referencing report was developed and sent to the international and local experts for comments. After their feedback, a second draft of the referencing report was developed and sent back to the experts for more feedback. At the same time, the implementation process has begun. Various meetings with the stakeholders (students, parents, education providers) are being programmed as the first step of the implementation plan. The project for the establishment of a NQF in Cyprus is expected to be completed by March 2014 and presented to the EQF advisory group by April 2014.

Regarding the regulated professions, Cyprus has fully transposed the new Directive 2005/36/EC into national law by adopting eight different laws, one for the general recognition of regulated professions and seven others for the seven sectoral professions (nurse responsible for general care, dental practitioner, veterinary surgeon, midwife, architect, pharmacist and doctor).

Furthermore, the development of a competence-based system of vocational qualifications, which will constitute an integral part of a future NQF, is a high priority for Cyprus. The vocational qualifications system is designed for the assessment and certification of the competence of a person to carry out a specific job in real or/and simulated working conditions. The standards of vocational qualifications define the framework for the training and development of a person, providing him or her, the opportunity to reach the appropriate competence level. Opportunity for access is provided to persons regardless of the way they have acquired the knowledge, skills and competence. It is expected that during the second phase, 5 500 persons will be given the opportunity to get their qualifications recognised according to the 85 standards. The main actions of the System are described below:

(a) Development of Standards of Vocational Qualifications

The HRDA is establishing and implementing the system in two phases. During the first phase in the period 2006-09, five standards of vocational qualifications at level 2 have been developed in the three economic sectors of hotel and restaurants, construction and retail trade for the occupations of waiter, cook, receptionist, construction mason and sales person.

During the second phase, which covers the period 2007–15 and is co-financed by the ESF, 80 new standards are expected to be developed (67 of which have already been developed) and opportunities for access are provided to employees, unemployed and economically inactive persons. The standards cover a broad range of occupations in the sectors of hotels and restaurants, retail and wholesale trade, construction, manufacturing, repairs of motor vehicles, systems and networks of communication and computers and hairdressing as well as the occupation of trainer of vocational training. The new standards that are developed, are discussed by the sectoral technical committees of vocational qualifications and approved by the Board of Governors of the HRDA;

(b) Awarding of Vocational Qualifications

In order to award the vocational qualifications, a diagnosis of skills and competences of candidates is conducted by the internal assessor of the assessment centers, followed by an assessment of candidates by an assessment committee (internal and external assessors). The assessment methods and processes are verified by an external verifier and the candidates are certified by HRDA;

(c) Training Programmes for Internal and External Assessors, and External Verifiers

The HRDA organises training programmes for the internal assessors of Assessment Centres, the external assessors and the external verifiers of the system;

(d) Studies

Within the framework of the project, specific studies regarding the system are conducted, including an evaluation study to be completed by the end of 2014.

### **3.2.2. Implementing a unit-based credit system**

The European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) is part of the overall project to develop European cooperation in VET and constitutes one of its operational tools. A working committee on the development and implementation of ECVET in Cyprus was set up in September 2011. This committee comprises stakeholders from the public and the private sector, such as the MoEC, the MLSI, the Directorate General for European Programmes Coordination and Development, the HRDA, the CPC, the Foundation for the Management of the European Lifelong Learning Programmes in Cyprus and private providers of VET. Furthermore, several pilot projects on implementing ECVET prepared by the ECVET European expert groups are under consideration as part of the ongoing reform of STVE curricula.

### **3.2.3. Europass**

The CPC, an institution of the MLSI, was appointed as the Cyprus National Europass Centre and is thus responsible for the coordination, management and promotion of all the activities related to Europass documents as well as for the provision of information regarding the documents and for cooperation with other organisations in the field of mobility and qualification transparency.

The Cyprus National Europass Centre (NEC) in cooperation with the Foundation for the Management of the European Lifelong Learning Programmes in Cyprus is encouraging all organisations participating in mobility programmes to issue the Europass mobility document and during 2012, 225 documents were issued.

Additionally, in 2012, the Cyprus NEC managed to contact almost all interested organisations both private and public to promote the Europass documents and make them accessible to all citizens. Around 80% of the higher educational institutes automatically issue the Europass diploma supplement to their graduates, and the number of Europass diploma supplements issued in 2012 reached 4 708. Furthermore, 1 500 Europass certificate supplements have been issued to the 2012 technical schools' graduates and the graduates of the CPC accelerated training programmes.

In 2012, the Cyprus NEC organised 53 workshops with 623 participants. During the workshops, the participants created their own Europass CV and were advised on how to write a cover letter and on how to perform well in an interview.

#### **3.2.4. Quality assurance, accreditation and recognition**

##### Secondary technical and vocational education

The respective Inspector of each branch is responsible for the proper implementation of the IVET curricula, therefore each Inspector supervises the work of educators and ensures that the teaching material is adequately covered, through the use of effective teaching methods. Constant assessment of the progress of learners, in the form of written assignments, projects, tests and a final examination is instrumental in order for Inspectors to evaluate the outcome of the educators' work.

##### Tertiary education institutions

There are two bodies responsible for quality assurance, accreditation and recognition of tertiary education institutions in Cyprus:

- (a) the Cyprus Council for the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications (Κυπριακό Συμβούλιο Αναγνώρισης Τίτλων Σπουδών), an independent body, is the competent authority responsible for the recognition of diplomas awarded by institutions of higher education;
- (b) the Council for Educational Assessment and Accreditation (Συμβούλιο Εκπαιδευτικής Αξιολόγησης και Πιστοποίησης) is an independent body that advises the Minister of Education and Culture on issues concerning the establishment, control and operation of tertiary education institutions in Cyprus.

The MoEC is working towards the adoption of new legislation, to establish the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Education (CyQAAE). The CyQAAE, which will be responsible for the external evaluation of all tertiary education institutions, will replace the existing separate evaluation and accreditation bodies and will simplify all evaluation and accreditation procedures and the quality assurance system.

##### Vocational training

The training programmes are implemented by public and private institutions and enterprises. To be approved they need to adhere to the criteria laid down by the HRDA. An important development with regard to trainers is the introduction of a system for the assessment and certification of training providers. Through this system, vocational training centres, vocational training infrastructure and trainers are assessed against specific criteria to ensure that they are eligible for certification. For trainers, the criteria are based on their academic qualifications and their professional experience as trainers.

The HRDA carries out evaluation studies on the effectiveness and impact of its activities. To this end, a comprehensive system evaluating the impact of HRDA on the economy of Cyprus has been set up. Within this system, evaluation studies, which include field and desk research, are conducted by either independent consultants or the HRDA.

## CHAPTER 4.

# Promoting participation in VET

### 4.1. Incentives for participation in VET

Incentives for promoting participation in VET are aimed at individuals and enterprises, the main ones being the free provision of a variety of VET programmes, the subsidies granted for participation in training programmes and tax incentives for enterprises.

#### 4.1.1. Incentives for individuals

The main incentive for participation of individuals in vocational education is the fact that the provision of secondary technical vocational education including evening technical education, the apprenticeship system and public tertiary vocational education are free of charge, while various lifelong learning programmes are offered for a small fee. Public funds administered mainly by the MoEC are the primary source for financing VET.

Furthermore, a government grant is paid to parents with a child in tertiary education based on specific income and property criteria.

In the case of unemployed and economically inactive persons, the HRDA provides a major incentive to participate in vocational training: the programmes, which are implemented by public and private institutions, are provided free of charge and participants receive training allowances.

The financing provided by the ESF has played an important role in the promotion of participation due to the increased level of funds available which led to the introduction of new training programmes. Many training programmes that are co-financed by the ESF are addressed to the unemployed and groups at risk of exclusion from the labour market.

Educational leave schemes, which are applied in the public sector in Cyprus, provide public-sector employees with the opportunity to take educational leave for studies which are relevant to their job. The State pays up to 100% of the training and travel costs of civil servants awarded a scholarship from, through or with the approval of the government or any other authority approved by the Council of Ministers.

In some sectors, leave of absence for education and training purposes is included in the collective agreements, thereby ensuring a certain level of education and training. Such sectors are the hotel industry, banking sector, cabinet making and carpentry industry and private clinics.

#### **4.1.2. Incentives for enterprises**

The funding provided by the HRDA has effectively motivated enterprises and their employees to participate in training and development activities. The funds of the HRDA come from the human resource development levy of 0,5% on the payroll of eligible employers. Enterprises are directly involved in training activities and prepare and submit training programmes to the HRDA on a continuous basis. In general, for enterprises with more than 250 employees, the subsidisation covers 60% of the eligible total costs, for enterprises that employ 50-249 persons the subsidisation is 70% and for enterprises that employ 1-49 persons the subsidisation is 80%. The HRDA provides subsidies to the employers. In the case of single-company initial and continuing programmes, eligible costs include the cost of trainers, the personnel cost for trainees, administrative expenses and cost of training materials. As regards the multi-company continuing training programmes, the HRDA provides the subsidies directly to the training providers and the employer covers the remaining cost.

The HRDA subsidies have also proved to be an important incentive for the development of efficient training institutions and providers, which prepare and submit for approval, every six months, continuing training programmes, in accordance with the thematic priorities that are communicated to them by the HRDA.

Furthermore, the scheme for the support of infrastructure and systems for the development of human resources provides several incentives. These include support for (a) development of centres providing training services to enterprises and organisations; (b) development of cooperation in training activities among enterprises; (c) establishment of certified assessment centres.

In terms of tax incentives to enterprises, all expenditure on human resource development is tax deductible in the same way that other production expenses are treated. It is therefore estimated that about 20-25% of total human resources development expenditure is borne by the State and the rest by private funds.

#### **4.2. Guidance and counselling**

Enhancing the provision of guidance and counselling services to all population groups is a policy priority for Cyprus. The main bodies delivering guidance and counselling in Cyprus are the Counselling and career education service, CCES (Υπηρεσία συμβουλευτικής και επαγγελματικής αγωγής) of the MoEC, the Public employment services, PES (Δημόσια υπηρεσία απασχόλησης) and the Euroguidance centre Cyprus of the MLSI, the HRDA, the Youth Board of Cyprus and certain private organisations. Guidance is provided mainly for

students and young persons, to the unemployed and for the employed and economically inactive.

An important development with regard to guidance was the establishment in March 2012 of the National Forum on Lifelong Guidance, which was a basic step in the upgrading of all guidance and counselling services in Cyprus. The Forum acts as a coordinating mechanism for guidance services provided in Cyprus through various channels. Its mission is to act as an advisory body to the government policy makers in the field of lifelong guidance. All major stakeholders are represented in the Forum, such as the MoEC, the MLSI, the HRDA, the Youth Board of Cyprus and the social partners.

#### **4.2.1. Students and young persons**

Guidance and counselling for students is provided mainly by the MoEC, the Euroguidance centre in Cyprus of the MLSI, the HRDA and the Youth Board of Cyprus.

##### *4.2.1.1. Ministry of Education and Culture*

The Counselling and career education service of the MoEC provides students in public secondary general and technical schools with specialised assistance in developing their personal awareness of their interests, needs, abilities, and skills so that they can take suitable decisions about their personal lives, education and careers. Educational and vocational guidance is provided throughout upper secondary education with personal and group counselling. Moreover, a careers and social education course is offered at the third grade of lower secondary level.

The services are provided by qualified guidance counsellors, who have undergone specialised post-graduate education in counselling and or career education/guidance. The counsellors are placed in schools and at the central and regional offices of the MoEC. At the central offices, counsellors are responsible for numerous publications that address the needs of the Counselling and career education services as well as the continuous support of the school counsellors. Moreover, schools counsellors administer psychometric tests for career guidance to their students.

During the first grade of the lyceum (public upper secondary education) students have the opportunity to become acquainted with the world of work by attending presentations from professionals in different fields and visiting corresponding workplaces.

In order to raise public awareness and increase initial VET attractiveness, the Open School Day has been established, organised by the Department of Secondary Technical and

Vocational Education. During the Open School Day, students of the third year of lower secondary education and their parents are given the opportunity to visit a technical school of their choice and be guided by teachers and students to the various technology rooms, design rooms and workshops of the school. Moreover, an exhibition of the students' achievements is organised at each technical school, in order to further promote awareness of the career possibilities provided by initial VET programmes. As of the school year 2012-2013, the Open School Day has been expanded to cover not only one day but the whole period between January and March of each year.

Additionally, students attending technical schools have traineeships in the specialisation of their choice as part of their curriculum. Furthermore, the third year of studies in the practical direction of technical schools 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.

Each year, the MoEC organises the International Education Fair where the students and other interested parties receive educational information about universities' study programmes, entrance requirements, fees and scholarships. Over 200 higher education institutions and universities from 35 countries, as well as the national universities and colleges usually attend the fair.

The Guidance and Counsellors Association (part of the Association of Secondary School Teachers of Cyprus) also organises an Annual Careers Fair. More than 150 organised professional bodies and organisations take part.

Educational Fairs are additionally organised by the British Council and the Fulbright Commission with the participation of different universities and colleges from the UK and the US respectively in order to provide information to prospective students for further studies in these countries.

#### *4.2.1.2. Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance - The Euroguidance centre Cyprus*

A website ([www.nrcg.dl.mlsi.gov.cy](http://www.nrcg.dl.mlsi.gov.cy)) has been set up by the Euroguidance centre Cyprus, in accordance with the Euroguidance initiative. The Euroguidance network is the European network of the National Resource Centres for Vocational Guidance and currently includes 65 centres that are co-financed by the European Commission and the relevant national authorities.

It provides among other things information on (a) education and training opportunities in Cyprus (private and public); (b) living and studying in Cyprus; and (c) the Cyprus education

system, 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 target groups of the Euroguidance centre Cyprus are guidance counsellors, individuals and organisations in need of counselling and guidance, especially students and parents seeking information on tertiary education.

#### **4.2.1.3. *Human Resource Development Authority***

The findings of the HRDA research studies on the anticipation of skill needs are a significant tool for guidance. The HRDA presents the findings of its research studies to secondary school guidance counsellors in collaboration with the MoEC, employment counsellors in collaboration with the MLSI, as well as parents and students in secondary schools in all districts.

Additionally, 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.

#### **4.2.1.4. *The Youth Board of Cyprus***

The Youth Board of Cyprus is a semi-government organisation which promotes progress and prosperity for all young people of Cyprus, regardless of religion, ethnic or racial origin. It also promotes young people's active participation in the social, economic and cultural development of our country. The Youth Board of Cyprus operates the youth information centres, which are based on European standards and provide young people with general information and counselling services.

#### **4.2.2. *Adults - employed, unemployed and inactive***

Guidance for adults is provided mainly by the MLSI through the PES and certain private organisations. Furthermore, the CCES of the MoEC is planning to extend access to guidance for other groups of people besides students/young people and thus promote the goal of lifelong guidance.

#### *4.2.2.1. Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance - Public Employment Services*

The vocational guidance service of the PES 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, jobseekers and those in employment who wish to change jobs, by providing registration and placement services, information on training opportunities and job vacancies. Since 2006 the PES have offered individualised counselling at the district and local labour offices, which has been intensified as a result of the economic crisis, mainly targeted towards the unemployed, economically inactive women and young secondary education graduates.

#### *4.2.2.2. Private employment services*

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.

#### *4.2.2.3. Ministry of Education and Culture*

The CCES also operates central offices at the MoEC and regional offices which do not only serve the needs of students but provide services to all citizens. Furthermore, the central offices have an administrative and supportive role.

## List of abbreviations

CAPA	Cyprus Academy of Public Administration
CCES	Counselling and career education service
CPC	Cyprus Productivity Centre
CyQAAE	Cyprus Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Education
ECVET	European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ESF	European Social Fund
GDP	Gross domestic product
HRDA	Human Resource Development Authority
ISCED	International standard classification of education
LFS	Labour force survey
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment
MoEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MJPO	Ministry of Justice and Public Order
MLSI	Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
NCP	National Coordination Point
NEC	National Europass Centre
NMA	New modern apprenticeship
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PES	Public employment services
PIAAC	International Assessment of Adult Competencies
STVE	Secondary technical and vocational education
VET	Vocational education and training

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Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry [www.ccci.org.cy](http://www.ccci.org.cy)

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Cyprus Productivity Centre [www.kepa.gov.cy](http://www.kepa.gov.cy)

Cyprus Workers Confederation [www.sek.org.cy](http://www.sek.org.cy)

Europa [www.ec.europa.eu](http://www.ec.europa.eu)

Eurydice [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index_en.php)

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[www.moa.gov.cy/fc](http://www.moa.gov.cy/fc)

Foundation for the management of European lifelong learning programmes [www.llp.org.cy](http://www.llp.org.cy)

Higher Hotel Institute – Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance  
[http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/mlsi21\\_en/ENTER%20URL%20HERE](http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/mlsi21_en/ENTER%20URL%20HERE)

Human Resource Development Authority [www.hrdauth.org.cy](http://www.hrdauth.org.cy)

Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment [www.moa.gov.cy](http://www.moa.gov.cy)

Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus [www.moec.gov.cy](http://www.moec.gov.cy)

Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance [www.mlsi.gov.cy](http://www.mlsi.gov.cy)

National Resource Centre for Guidance Cyprus [www.nrcg.dl.mlsi.gov.cy](http://www.nrcg.dl.mlsi.gov.cy)

Nursing School [www.moh.gov.cy](http://www.moh.gov.cy)

Pancyprian Federation of Labour [www.peo.org.cy](http://www.peo.org.cy)

Directorate General for European Programmes Coordination and Development  
[www.fundingprogrammesportal.gov.cy/](http://www.fundingprogrammesportal.gov.cy/)

Police Academy – Ministry of Justice and Public Order [www.police.gov.cy](http://www.police.gov.cy)

Pre-service training programme [www.proy.ucy.ac.cy](http://www.proy.ucy.ac.cy)

Statistical Service of Cyprus [www.cystat.gov.cy](http://www.cystat.gov.cy)

ReferNet Cyprus [www.refernet.org.cy](http://www.refernet.org.cy)

University of Cyprus [www.ucy.ac.cy](http://www.ucy.ac.cy)

# Annex

## Members of the Cyprus Consortium

[accessed 21.10.2014]

### 1. **NATIONAL COORDINATOR**

1.1. Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus ([www.hrdauth.org.cy](http://www.hrdauth.org.cy))

### 2. **MINISTRIES/GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS**

2.1. Directorate General for European Programmes Coordination and Development ([http://www.dgepcd.gov.cy/dgepcd/dgepcd.nsf/index\\_en/index\\_en?OpenDocument](http://www.dgepcd.gov.cy/dgepcd/dgepcd.nsf/index_en/index_en?OpenDocument))

2.2. Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance/Department of Labour ([http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/dmlindex\\_en/dmlindex\\_en?OpenDocument](http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/dmlindex_en/dmlindex_en?OpenDocument))

2.3. Ministry of Education and Culture ([www.moec.gov.cy](http://www.moec.gov.cy))

2.4. Statistical Service of Cyprus ([www.cystat.gov.cy](http://www.cystat.gov.cy))

2.5. Cyprus Academy of Public Administration (CAPA) ([www.mof.gov.cy](http://www.mof.gov.cy))

2.6. Pedagogical Institute ([www.pi.ac.cy](http://www.pi.ac.cy))

2.7. Cyprus Productivity Centre ([www.mlsi.gov.cy/kepa](http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/kepa))

### 3. **SOCIAL PARTNERS: EMPLOYER AND TRADE UNION ORGANISATIONS**

3.1. Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation ([www.oeb-eif.org](http://www.oeb-eif.org))

3.2. Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry ([www.ccci.org.cy](http://www.ccci.org.cy))

3.3. Cyprus Confederation of Professional Craftsmen and Shopkeepers ([www.povek.com](http://www.povek.com))

3.4. Cyprus Workers' Confederation ([www.sek.org.cy](http://www.sek.org.cy))

3.5. Pancyprian Federation of Labour ([www.peo.org.cy](http://www.peo.org.cy))

3.6. Democratic Labour Federation of Cyprus ([www.deok.org.cy](http://www.deok.org.cy))

3.7. Cyprus Union of Bank Employees ([www.etyk.org](http://www.etyk.org))

4. **OTHER ORGANISATIONS/NON-PROFIT MAKING ORGANISATIONS**

4.1. University of Cyprus ([www.ucy.ac.cy](http://www.ucy.ac.cy))

4.2. Research Promotion Foundation ([www.research.org.cy](http://www.research.org.cy))

5. **NATIONAL AGENCIES/UNITS FOR MANAGING EUROPEAN PROGRAMMES/INITIATIVES**

5.1. Foundation for the Management of European Lifelong Learning Programmes  
([www.llp.org.cy](http://www.llp.org.cy))

5.2. National Eurydice Unit ([www.eurydice.org](http://www.eurydice.org))