### Cyprus

#### Education and training in figures

**Upper secondary students (ISCED 2011 level 3) enrolled in vocational and general programmes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Vocational</th>
<th>General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>69.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lifelong learning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey, 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Early leavers from education and training**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of early leavers from education and training, 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Share of employees (aged 24 to 65) with medium-level education (ISCED 3-4) who obtained a vocational qualification, and whose highest level of education involved some learning in a workplace (%), 2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>CY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Further information


### Websites

- [www.anad.org.cy](http://www.anad.org.cy) - Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus
- [www.dgepcd.gov.cy](http://www.dgepcd.gov.cy) - Directorate General for European Programmes, Coordination and Development
- [www.moec.gov.cy](http://www.moec.gov.cy) - Ministry of Education and Culture
- [www.mof.gov.cy/cystat](http://www.mof.gov.cy/cystat) - Statistical Service of Cyprus
- [www.llp.org.cy](http://www.llp.org.cy) - Foundation for the Management of European Lifelong Learning Programmes
- [www.erasmusplus.cy/](http://www.erasmusplus.cy/) - Erasmus+
- [www.eurydice.org](http://www.eurydice.org) - National Eurydice unit
- [www.refernet.org.cy](http://www.refernet.org.cy) - ReferNet Cyprus

This Spotlight is based on input from Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (ReferNet Cyprus 2016).
The vocational education and training (VET) system of Cyprus played a significant role in the recovery from the economic and labour market crisis in 2012-13, and led the foundations for socioeconomic development.

VET is initially available at upper secondary in technical schools, including evening technical schools. The unified lyceum provides general upper secondary education. Horizontal and vertical movement across upper secondary education is possible, with students moving between the unified lyceum and technical schools provided they succeed in specific examinations. Technical schools offer two types of three-year programmes. Students select their specialisation in the first year. Theoretical stream programmes and the first and second years of practical stream programmes are mainly school-based and combine general education subjects with practical subjects and training in enterprises at the end of the first and second years. The third year is usually spent at the workplace, one day per week. School leaving certificates are awarded on successful completion and are equivalent to those of secondary general education schools. Graduates are eligible for admission to universities and other tertiary education institutions in Cyprus and abroad. Qualifications provide access to several regulated occupations, provided all other requirements of relevant legislation are met.

VET is also available through the new modern apprenticeship system, which is directed towards young people who leave formal education between ages 14 and 18. Preparatory apprenticeship lasts for one school year and young people between 14 and 16 years of age who have completed lower secondary education (EQF 2) or preparatory apprenticeship or dropped out of upper secondary programmes. On successful completion, participants may continue with post-secondary VET.

The apprenticeship certificate affords access to several regulated occupations, provided all other requirements of relevant legislation are met.

Post-secondary VET has been provided at post-secondary institutions of technical and vocational education and training since the 2012/13 academic year. These institutions provide the citizens of Cyprus, especially young people with two-year courses to acquire, improve, or upgrade their qualifications and skills. By acquiring a post-secondary technical qualification, they are better prepared for the labour market.

VET at tertiary, non-university level is provided at public universities/colleges and at several private institutes. Successive completion of the programmes, which last for two-to-three years, leads to a diploma or higher diploma awarded by the institution.

Vocational training for adults is extensively available in Cyprus for the employed, the unemployed, vulnerable groups and adults in general, through a mixture of public and private provision: colleges, training institutions, consultancy firms and enterprises. The employed usually participate in training programmes for job-specific skills to meet company needs, while the unemployed acquire both horizontal and job-specific skills to improve their employability. Training schemes targeted at the unemployed combine training with either employment in an enterprise or job placement to acquire work experience. However, the percentage of 25 to 64-year-olds participating in education and training is lower than the EU average.

The Ministry of Education and Culture has overall responsibility for developing and improving education policy, and is also involved in Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance has overall responsibility for labour and social security and the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus. Cyprus plays an important role in vocational training.

### VET in the Cypriot education and training system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower secondary programmes</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education programmes</td>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary programmes</td>
<td>Post-secondary</td>
<td>3-4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary programmes</td>
<td>Post-secondary</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical schools programmes</td>
<td>Post-secondary</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education programmes</td>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD programmes</td>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Distinctive features of VET

**Cypriot vocational education and training**

- Cypriot vocational education and training aims to "fit" into the framework of the European Union’s (EU) structural and investment programmes.
- Cyprus is in the process of implementing the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
- VET in Cyprus has a high level of educational achievement.
- The government, in co-operation with the community, is promoting the participation of vulnerable groups in VET programmes.
- The Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus is responsible for the development and implementation of the national VET strategy.

### Challenges and policy responses

The recent economic crisis, and its adverse effects on the labour market, has been a critical challenge for education and training in Cyprus. Training has been redirected to respond flexibly and effectively to the crisis, with targeted actions for the unemployed, the economically inactive, and the employed.

A major challenge is to address the young as well as long-term unemployment. Actions are being taken to promote employability of young persons and the long-term unemployed, through individualised guidance, training and work placements.

Another challenge for education and training, which features prominently in the current education reform, is to encourage adult participation in lifelong learning activities and increase VET participation among the young. A comprehensive, attractive, flexible and high quality VET system is being developed to respond better to the needs of the economy. Core measures are promoting post-secondary institutes for technical and vocational education, which offer students an intermediate level of education between upper secondary and tertiary education, upgrading secondary technical and vocational education (STVE) curricula and raising the quality and competences of STVE teachers. There are also actions to upgrade the new modern apprenticeship, designed to constitute a viable, alternative form of training for young people.

An important feature of the strategic plan for technical and vocational education 2015-20 is the proposal of the Ministry of Education and Culture for appointing a new modern apprenticeship, approved by the government in 2013.

EU tools for validating acquired skills, such as the national qualifications framework (NQF), will improve horizontal and vertical permeability of education and training systems. The development of a competence-based system of vocational qualifications, which will be based on the NQF, is expected to strengthen the links between VET for young people and vocational training for adults, improving their knowledge and skills.
VET in Cyprus

The vocational education and training (VET) system in Cyprus played a significant role in the recovery from the economic and labour market crisis in 2012-15, and laid the foundations for socioeconomic development. VET is initially available at upper secondary in technical schools, including evening technical schools. The unified lyceum provides general upper secondary education. Horizontal and vertical movement across upper secondary education is possible, with students moving between the unified lyceum and technical schools provided they succeed in specific examinations.

Technical schools offer two types of three-year programmes. Students select their specialisation in the first year. Theoretical stream programmes and the first and second years of practical stream programmes are mainly school-based and combine general education subjects with technical and work subjects. Programmes in both streams offer practical training in enterprises at the end of the first and second year - four weeks in the practical and two weeks in the theoretical stream. The final year of practical stream programmes includes training at a workplace, one day per week. School leaving certificates are awarded on successful completion and are equivalent to those of secondary general education schools. Graduates are eligible for admission to universities and other tertiary education institutions in Cyprus and abroad. Qualifications provide access to several regulated occupations, provided all other requirements of relevant legislation are met.

VET is also available through the new modern apprenticeship system, which is directed towards young people who learn job-related occupation between ages 14 and 18. Preparatory apprenticeship lasts for one school year and young people between 14 and 16 years of age who have not completed lower secondary programmes (EQF 2) or preparatory apprenticeship or dropped out of upper secondary programmes. On successful completion, participants may continue with post-secondary VET. The apprenticeship certificate allows access to several regulated occupations, provided all other requirements of relevant legislation are met.

Post-secondary VET has been provided at post-secondary institutes of technical and vocational education and training since the 2012/13 academic year. These institutes provide the citizens of Cyprus, especially young people with two-year courses to acquire, improve, or upgrade their qualifications and skills. By acquiring a post-secondary technical qualification, they are better prepared for the labour market.

VET at tertiary, non-university level is provided at public universities/colleges and at several private institutes. Successor component to the first year programme, which lasts for two-to-three years, leads to a diploma or higher diploma awarded by the institution.

Vocational training for adults is extensively available in Cyprus for the employed, the unemployed, vulnerable groups and adults in general, through a mixture of public and private provision: colleges, training institutions, consultancy firms and enterprises. The employed usually participate in training programmes for job-specific skills to meet company needs, while the unemployed acquire both horizontal and job-specific skills to improve their employability. Training schemes targeted at the unemployed combine training with either employment in an enterprise or job placement to acquire work experience. However, the percentage of 25 to 64-year-olds participating in education and training is lower than the EU average.

The Ministry of Education and Culture has overall responsibility for developing and implementing education policies, including the implementation of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance has overall responsibility for labour and social policy and the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus. Vocational education and training plays an important role in vocational training.

VET in the Cypriot education and training system

**TERTIARY LEVEL**

- Degree programmes, 3 years
- Master programmes, 2 years
- Research programmes

**SECONDARY LEVEL**

- Lower secondary programmes
- General education programmes
- Preampprenticeships, 2-4 years
- Programmes continuing UET and general education

**ADULT LEARNING/CONTINUING TRAINING**

- Post-secondary training
- Lifelong learning, either at the workplace or in a VET institution

**Possible progression routes**

- Along traditional VET pathways, including WBL, 1-2 years
- Admissions for secondary VET including evening technical training
- Post-secondary VET is free of charge, while various adult vocational training programmes are offered for a limited fee.

A major incentive for participation in adult vocational training is provided by the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA), a semi-government organisation. Funding provided by the HRDA has encouraged enterprises and their employees to participate in training and development activities.

Cyprus has a high level of educational attainment, with a strong cultural trend among Cypriots in favour of general secondary education followed by higher education. Provisions for vocational education since the 90s have faced in 2012-15, together with the efforts to increase VET attractiveness, have contributed to a significant increase in the number of students who enrol in technical schools. In 2014, VET attracted 15.1% of the labour force compared to 12.7% in 2011.

**Possible progression routes**

- Fully-complex education (rigor and complexity of the educational level outlined taking access to tertiary education and work-related learning, either at the workplace or in a VET institution)

Distinctive features of VET

Cyprus has a long-standing tradition of tripartite consultation (government, trade unions and employers’ organisations) and social dialogue. The social partners are involved in planning and an advisory and consultative capacity. Education reform promoted by the government; boards of directors of institutions dealing with human resource issues; identifying education and training needs and setting priorities in education and training.

Vocational education and training in Cyprus is mainly public. Provision of secondary VET including evening technical training is free of charge, while various adult vocational training programmes are offered for a limited fee. A major incentive for participation in adult vocational training is provided by the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA), a semi-government organisation. Funding provided by the HRDA has encouraged enterprises and their employees to participate in training and development activities.

Cyprus has a high level of educational attainment, with a strong cultural trend among Cypriots in favour of general secondary education followed by higher education. Provisions for vocational education since the 90s have faced in 2012-15, together with the efforts to increase VET attractiveness, have contributed to a significant increase in the number of students who enrol in technical schools. In 2014, VET attracted 15.1% of the labour force compared to 12.7% in 2011.

Challenges and policy responses

The recent economic crisis, and its adverse effects on the labour market, has been a critical challenge for education and training in Cyprus. Training has been redirected to respond flexibly and effectively to the crisis, with targeted actions for the unemployed, economically inactive, and the employed.

A major challenge is to address the young as well as long-term unemployment. Actions are being taken to promote employability of young persons and the long-term unemployed, through individualised guidance, training and work placements.

Another challenge for education and training, which features prominently in the current education reform, is to encourage adult participation in lifelong learning activities and increase VET participation among the young. A comprehensive, attractive, flexible and high-quality VET system is being developed to respond better to the needs of the economy. Core measures are promoting post-secondary institutes for technical and vocational education, which offer students an intermediate level of education between upper secondary and tertiary education, upgrading secondary technical and vocational education (STVE) curricula and raising the quality and competences of STVE teachers. There are also actions to upgrade the new modern apprenticeship, designed to constitute a viable, alternative form of training for young people.

These measures are included in the strategic plan for technical education and vocational training 2015-20 and the proposal of the Ministry of Education and Culture for approving the new modern apprenticeship, approved by the government in 2015.

EU tools for validating acquired skills, such as the national qualifications framework (NQF), will improve horizontal and vertical permeability of education and training systems. The development of a competence-based system of vocational qualifications, which will be based on the NQF, is expected to strengthen the ties between VET for young people and vocational training for adults, improving their knowledge and skills.

**Source:** Cedefop and ReferNet Cyprus.
The vocational education and training (VET) system in Cyprus is characterized by a strong emphasis on the recovery from the economic and labor market crisis. In 2012-13, the Ministry of Education,Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance has implemented several measures to promote vocational education and training (VET) among young people between 14 and 18. The Ministry of Education has also introduced an alternative form of technical education called the “apprenticeship” system, which is directed towards young people who leave formal education. VET is available through the new modern apprenticeship system, which is designed to constitute a viable, comprehensive, attractive, flexible, and high-quality alternative form of training for young people.
### Further information


---

### Cyprus

**Education and training in figures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>EU-28</th>
<th>DK</th>
<th>EL</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>DE</th>
<th>PT</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>ES</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>EU-28</th>
<th>NL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Early leavers from education and training (%) of population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey, 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>EU-28</th>
<th>DK</th>
<th>EL</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>DE</th>
<th>PT</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>ES</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>EU-28</th>
<th>NL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Share of employees (aged 24 to 65) with medium-level education (ISCED 2-3) who obtained a vocational qualification, and whose highest level of education involved some learning in a workplace (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>EU-28</th>
<th>DK</th>
<th>EL</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>DE</th>
<th>PT</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>ES</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>EU-28</th>
<th>NL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Education and training in figures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>EU-28</th>
<th>DK</th>
<th>EL</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>DE</th>
<th>PT</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>ES</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>EU-28</th>
<th>NL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Early leavers from education and training (%) of population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey, 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>EU-28</th>
<th>DK</th>
<th>EL</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>DE</th>
<th>PT</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>ES</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>EU-28</th>
<th>NL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Share of employees (aged 24 to 65) with medium-level education (ISCED 2-3) who obtained a vocational qualification, and whose highest level of education involved some learning in a workplace (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>EU-28</th>
<th>DK</th>
<th>EL</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>DE</th>
<th>PT</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>ES</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>EU-28</th>
<th>NL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Further information**


---

**Please visit the Cedefop European centre for the development of vocational training**

[www.cedefop.europa.eu](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu)

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

[www.eurydice.org](http://www.eurydice.org)

[www.erasmusplus.cy](http://www.erasmusplus.cy)

[www.mof.gov.cy/cystat](http://www.mof.gov.cy/cystat)

---

**Further information**