



Developments in vocational education and training policy in 2015–17

CYPRUS



Cedefop monitoring and analysis of VET policies

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policy in 2015-17**

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This report was produced by Cedefop and reflects contributions from Cedefop's VET policy and systems team, and Cedefop experts working on common European tools and principles for education and training, and statistics. It is based on detailed information on VET policy implementation submitted by Cedefop's European network of expertise on VET (ReferNet) and other sources.

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Aspects of vocational education and training context in 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period, the proportion of upper secondary students enrolled in vocational education and training (VET) programmes in Cyprus was far below the EU average: 13.6% in 2013 (European Commission, 2015, p. 7) compared to 48.9% in the EU; 15.1% in 2014 compared to 48% in the EU (Cedefop, 2017a, p. 77); 16% in 2015 compared to 47% in the EU ⁽¹⁾. The employment rate of recent upper secondary graduates was lower than in the EU: 54.6% in 2014 (European Commission, 2015, p. 7) compared to 70.8% on average in the EU; when taking VET graduates only, their employment rate was 70.3% in 2015 (European Commission, 2015, p. 7), compared to the EU average of 73%. Adult participation in lifelong learning was also low at 6.9% in 2014 (European Commission, 2015, p. 7) and 7.5% in 2015 compared to 10.7% on average in the EU in both years (Cedefop, 2017a, p. 77) (Table 1).

VET in Cyprus faced the challenges of involving employers on a larger scale, expanding the workplace learning component of programmes, and attracting more students. Steps were taken to address the issues. In 2012, post-secondary institutes of vocational education and training (PSIVET) were introduced, offering high profile VET. In the 2012/13 school year, a *New modern apprenticeship* (NMA) model was set up in secondary education. In December 2014, a national action plan for youth employment was adopted, emphasising the importance of primary work experience in the transition from school to work. For lifelong learning, a 2014-20 national *Strategy for lifelong learning* was adopted in June 2014, aiming to promote access for all to quality education.

⁽¹⁾ Eurostat, data for 2015.

Table 1. Framework data: score on VET indicators in Cyprus and in the EU: 2010, last available year and recent trend

Indicator label	2010		Last available year		Recent trend (per year)			
	CY ^f	EU ^f	Yr	CY ^f	EU ^f	Range	CY	EU
Access, attractiveness and flexibility								
IVET students as % of all upper secondary students	A	A	'14	15.1 ^b	48.0 ^{E1}	'13-'14	▪ 1.5	▪ -0.9
IVET work-based students as % of all upper secondary IVET	A	A	'14	0.0 ^z	34.0 ^{E2}	'13-'14	▪ 0.0	▪ 0.1
IVET students with direct access to tertiary education as % of all upper secondary IVET			'14	98.0	69.2 ^{E3}	'13-'14	▪ 0.1	▪ -1.4
Employees participating in CVT courses (%)	37.0	38.0 ^e	'10	37.0	38.0 ^e			
Employees participating in on-the-job training (%)	18.0	20.0 ^e	'10	18.0	20.0 ^e			
Adults in lifelong learning (%)	8.1		'15	7.5	10.7 ^b	'13-'15	↗ 0.1	→ 0.0
Enterprises providing training (%)	72.0	66.0 ^e	'10	72.0	66.0 ^e			
Female IVET students as % of all female upper secondary students	A	A	'14	6.3 ^b	42.7 ^{E1}	'13-'14	▪ 1.1	▪ -1.0
Employees of small firms participating in CVT courses (%)	24.0	25.0 ^e	'10	24.0	25.0 ^e			
Young VET graduates in further education and training (%)			'15	17.7 ^b	33.0 ^b	'14-'15	▪ -3.8	▪ -0.3
Older adults in lifelong learning (%)	3.8	5.3	'15	3.7	6.9	'10-'15	↘ -0.1	↗ 0.4
Low-educated adults in lifelong learning (%)	1.1 ^u		'15	1.6 ^C	4.3 ^{bC}	'14-'15	▪ 0.2	▪ -0.2
Unemployed adults in lifelong learning (%)	6.1 ^u		'15	5.8	9.5 ^b	'13-'15	↘ -0.1	↘ -0.4
Individuals who wanted to participate in training but did not (%)	24.8 ^B	9.5 ^B	'11	24.8	9.5 ^e			
Job-related non-formal education and training (%)	77.5 ^B	80.2 ^B	'11	77.5	80.2 ^e			
Skill development and labour market relevance								
IVET public expenditure (% of GDP)			'13	0.34 ^b	0.56 ^{E4}	'12-'13	▪ 0.00	▪ -0.03
IVET public expenditure per student (1 000 PPS units)			'13	13.4 ^b	6.4 ^{E5}	'12-'13	▪ -0.9	▪ 0.0
Enterprise expenditure on CVT courses as % of total labour cost	1.1	0.8 ^e	'10	1.1	0.8 ^e			
Average number of foreign languages learned in IVET			'14	1.2 ^b	1.0 ^{E6}	'13-'14	▪ 0.0	▪ 0.0
STEM graduates from upper secondary IVET (% of total)	A	A	'14	56.4 ^b	30.0 ^{E7}	'13-'14	▪ -0.1	▪ -0.4
Short-cycle VET graduates as % of first time tertiary education graduates			'14		9.3 ^{E8}			
Innovative enterprises with supportive training practices (%)	90.7	41.5 ^{E9}	'12	85.5	41.6 ^{E9}	'10-'12	▪ -2.6	▪ 0.0
Employment rate for IVET graduates (20- to 34-year-olds)			'15	75.7 ^b	77.2 ^b	'14-'15	▪ 3.3	▪ 0.3
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over general stream)			'15	9.0 ^b	5.3 ^b	'14-'15	▪ 6.7	▪ -1.0
Employment premium for IVET graduates			'15	12.2 ^b	23.7 ^b	'14-'15	▪ 6.5	▪ -0.1

Indicator label	2010		Last available year			Recent trend (per year)		
	CY ^f	EU ^f	Yr	CY ^f	EU ^f	Range	CY	EU
(over low-educated)								
Workers helped to improve their work by training (%)			'15	92.7	83.7			
Workers with skills matched to their duties (%)	46.8	55.2	'15	53.5	57.3	'10-'15	▪ 1.3	▪ 0.4
Overall transitions and labour market trends								
Early leavers from education and training (%)	12.7	13.9	'15	5.3 ^C	11.0 ^C	'10-'15	↘ -1.5	↘ -0.6
30- to 34-year-olds with tertiary attainment (%)	45.3	33.8	'15	54.6 ^C	38.7 ^C	'10-'15	↗ 1.8	↗ 1.0
NEET rate for 18- to 24-year-olds (%)	16.7	16.6	'15	22.2	15.8	'10-'15	↗ 1.3	↘ -0.1
Unemployment rate for 20- to 34-year-olds (%)	8.8	13.1	'15	19.4	12.9	'10-'15	↗ 2.5	↗ 0.1
Employment rate of recent graduates (%)	78.4	77.4	'15	68.8 ^C	76.9 ^C	'10-'15	↘ -2.0	↘ -0.2
Adults with lower level of educational attainment (%)	26.0	27.3	'15	21.9 ^C	23.5 ^C	'10-'15	↘ -0.8	↘ -0.8
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds (%)	75.0	68.6	'15	67.9	70.0	'10-'15	↘ -1.6	↗ 0.3
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds with lower level of educational attainment (%)	66.8	53.4	'15	55.1 ^C	52.6 ^C	'10-'15	↘ -2.7	↘ -0.2
Medium/high-qualified employment in 2020 (% of total)			'16	84.1 ^D	82.8 ^D			

^(A) UOE (UNESCO OECD Eurostat) back reconstruction of 2010 values based on ISCED (international standard classification of education) 2011 not yet available.

^(B) AES (adult education survey) 2011, used as proxy for 2010 baseline.

^(C) 2014 b flags in Eurostat online tables ignored on the basis of other relevant Eurostat metadata.

^(D) Forecast made in 2016.

^(E1) Based on 28 countries; partial information for NL.

^(E2) Based on 25 countries (missing: ES, PL, RO); partial information for NL.

^(E3) Based on 27 countries (missing: NL); partial information for EL, IT.

^(E4) Based on 19 countries (missing: BE, DK, IE, EL, FR, HR, IT, PT, SK).

^(E5) Based on 21 countries (missing: DK, IE, EL, FR, HR, IT, PT).

^(E6) Partial information for NL.

^(E7) Based on 25 countries (missing: HR, IT, UK).

^(E8) Based on 23 countries (missing: BE, IE, FR, CY, UK).

^(E9) Based on 22 countries (missing: DE, IE, EL, NL, SI, UK).

^(b) Break after 2010, therefore baseline data not included.

⁽ⁱ⁾ Eurostat: 'low reliability'.

^(j) Eurostat: 'not applicable'.

^(e) Eurostat: 'estimated'.

NB: EU refers to EU-28, unless otherwise specified. Arrows ↗ or ↘ signal a positive or negative trend based on more than two data points and of magnitude 0.1 per year or more. Trends based on more than two data points but of smaller magnitude are indicated by →; trends based on two points only are marked ▪. Trends are estimated by means of regression models.

Source: Cedefop, 2017a, p. 77.

CHAPTER 1.

MTD 1 – All forms of work-based learning with special attention to apprenticeships

At the beginning of the reporting period, initial VET in Cyprus included secondary school-based programmes along with apprenticeships. The apprenticeship system had been reformed in 2012 with the introduction of the new modern apprenticeship (NMA) model. The NMA model is organised on two levels. Level 1 is a one-year preparatory apprenticeship programme providing learners with the opportunity of developing their numeracy and literacy skills and a first discovery of the world of work. Level 2 is the core three-year apprenticeship programme, comprising a workplace learning component based on a contract signed between the apprentice and the employer. Social partners are represented in the apprenticeship board, which supervises the operation of the apprenticeship system.

1.1. Policy priorities for 2016-20

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this area, as set by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC), are:

- (a) for apprenticeship, to:
 - (i) enhance the quality and skills of all involved trainers, teachers and counsellors;
 - (ii) develop closer ties and enhance cooperation with industry;
 - (iii) ease access to formal qualifications for graduates of the apprenticeship scheme;
 - (iv) increase the flexibility of the scheme to respond better to labour market needs;
- (b) for work-based learning in school-based VET, to:
 - (i) develop closer ties and enhance cooperation with industry;
 - (ii) reform and upgrade the programme of secondary technical and vocational education (STVE) for pupils' practical training in industry.

1.2. Main actions taken in 2015-17

1.2.1. Reform of the apprenticeship scheme

A 2015-20 strategic plan for technical and vocational education and training was approved in April 2015 (Section 3.2.1). It aims to reform the public VET system. The plan was set up by the STVE department. Based on the plan, a proposal for upgrading the apprenticeship scheme, in cooperation with the apprenticeship board ⁽²⁾, was approved in August 2015. The reform affects both the preparatory and core programmes:

- (a) at preparatory apprenticeship level: to respond to the needs of students from different academic backgrounds, two different classes (A and B) will be offered. Individualised assessment criteria will be developed for each student wishing to attend this programme. Learners below the age of 15 may decide to return to the first cycle of lower secondary education;
- (b) at core apprenticeship level: cooperation between apprenticeship scheme programmes and industry will be strengthened. Apprenticeship programmes will be linked with the general education programmes offered by the evening technical schools (second chance schools). The graduates of the apprenticeship scheme will be entitled to attend the general upper secondary programme offered at the evening technical schools with part of their acquired education and training being recognised (they can complete upper secondary education in one or two years instead of four). The flexibility of the apprenticeship scheme will be increased by developing new specialisations. About 40 new specialisations are envisaged. Several are already offered in occupational fields which are in high demand in the labour market.

1.2.2. Reform of the work-based learning component in school-based VET

In December 2015, after consultation with employers' organisations, the government decided ⁽³⁾ to increase the work-based learning component (increased duration of industrial placements) of STVE programmes. The decision was carried out in the school year 2016/17. Since then, the practical training of STVE students in enterprises has increased and the work-based learning

⁽²⁾ The apprenticeship board is supervising the operation of the apprenticeship scheme and comprises representatives of the government, technical schools and the employers' and employees' organisations.

⁽³⁾ Decision of the Council of Ministers, dated 14.12.2015

component is offered during the summer. The Minister of Education and Culture appointed a committee to monitor the carrying out of this reform.

1.2.3. Prospective review of the apprenticeship system

In April 2017 the Cypriot government started a joint project with Cedefop. The objective is to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the national apprenticeship system. Interviews with apprentices and the companies involved will be conducted. Several exchange forums will be held. This joint project intends to help national stakeholders plan further development of the national apprenticeship scheme. The project is scheduled to end in June 2018.

1.2.4. Erasmus+ programme for tailored apprentice support to SMEs

From October 2016 to September 2018, the *Erasmus+* project *Apprenticeship helpdesk for small and medium size enterprises* in Cyprus (and Poland) is aiming to build the capacity of key intermediary bodies to support those SMEs (small- and medium-sized enterprises) offering training places for apprentices. The need for this project derives from past experience, when the lack of support structures for enterprises deterred SMEs from offering apprenticeships. The main project goals are to:

- (a) set up a national apprenticeship support service for SMEs, offered by intermediary bodies (such as chambers of commerce and professional and trade associations);
- (b) provide training to appointed staff acting as apprenticeship facilitators;
- (c) set up a national online apprenticeship resource centre as a central office providing support to SMEs and apprenticeship facilitators;
- (d) raise awareness about the benefits of apprenticeship schemes among the SMEs and other national stakeholders.

CHAPTER 2.

MTD 2 – Quality assurance mechanisms in line with EQAVET and continuous information and feedback loops to IVET and CVET ⁽⁴⁾

A quality assurance national reference point (QANRP) was set up in 2008. It covers initial vocational education and training (IVET), continuing vocational education and training (CVET) and non-formal learning. A quality assurance approach was prepared by 2012 and partially set up in 2015. The 2015-20 strategic plan for technical and vocational education and training (Section 1.2.1) includes measures for quality assurance by setting up a framework for quality assurance according to the EQAVET (European quality assurance in vocational education and training) recommendation. In IVET, quality standards for providers are set out in law and used for accreditation/approval. A system for the assessment and certification of training providers and trainers was introduced in 2012. An evaluation methodology, which includes internal and external evaluation, has been devised but self-assessment is not carried out regularly in IVET.

In CVET, quality standards are used for accreditation and as a condition for funding. The human resource development authority (HRDA) approves and subsidises training programmes set up by public and private CVET providers.

⁽⁴⁾ Sources:

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop):

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en>

ReferNet: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/networks/refernet>

Priorities reported by Directors General for vocational training for 2016-20;

EQAVET (2016 Secretariat survey, website, newsletters): <http://www.eqavet.eu>

2016 compendium of EQAVET NRP *Erasmus+* funding:

http://www.eqavet.eu/Libraries/Annual_Network_Meeting_2016/Compendium_EQAVET_2016.sflb.ashx

Council recommendations on the 2016 national reform programmes:

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/european-semester/2016/#>

Education and training monitor 2016 country reports:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/et-monitor_en

The HRDA has set up a comprehensive system to evaluate the impact of its activities on the economy of Cyprus. This includes examining the employment status of people who participated in training activities. The evaluation is used to modify and enrich training activities. Every year the HRDA conducts evaluation studies on the impact of its schemes on participants, which include field and desk research and are carried out by independent consultants.

2.1. Quality assurance in line with EQAVET

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this matter, as set by the Ministry of Education and Culture, and/or the HRDA, include:

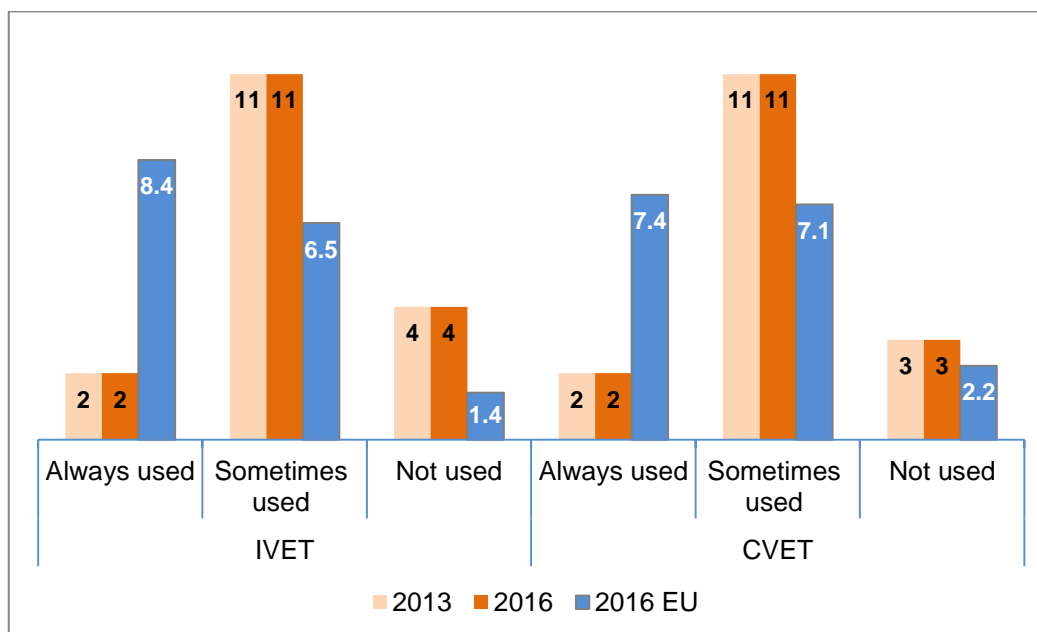
- (a) promoting the EQAVET recommendation in Cyprus among VET providers and other VET stakeholders to develop a national approach to VET quality assurance according to the EQAVET recommendation;
- (b) improving further the quality assurance system in the provision of training, including the certification of training providers in line with the EQAVET recommendation.

In the reporting period, carrying out the national quality assurance approach has been linked to the setting up of the Cyprus qualification framework.

The QANRP is using *Erasmus+* funds to promote the work of EQAVET in Cyprus through dissemination activities, information seminars to VET providers and social partners and the development of a website. It also informs the further development of the national quality assurance approach in line with EQAVET.

The systematic use of EQAVET indicators to monitor the VET system ('always used' item in Figure 1), has remained unchanged compared to 2013. Cyprus was below the EU average in IVET and CVET in 2016. The EQAVET indicators that are systematically used in IVET are those related to the investment in training of teachers and trainers. The indicators not used, both in IVET and CVET, are those related to the prevalence of vulnerable groups.

Figure 1. Use of EQAVET indicators



NB: Of the 17 indicators suggested by the 2009 EQAVET recommendation, two were 'always used' in IVET in 2013 and 2016, compared to 8.4 in the EU on average in 2016.

In 2013 and 2016, no reply was provided for the use of one indicator in CVET.

EU average was calculated based on available information for 31 out of 35 VET systems.

Source: Cedefop calculations based on EQAVET Secretariat surveys for 2013 and 2016 data.

2.2. Continuous information and feedback loops in initial VET and continuing VET

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this matter, as set by the MoEC and/or the HRDA, are to:

- develop a national monitoring system of IVET and CVET graduates;
- continue carrying out evaluation studies on the impact of the activities of the HRDA.

The 2015-20 strategic plan for technical and vocational education and training (Section 1.2.1) aims to set up a national monitoring system of IVET and CVET graduates, which will inform the upgrading of the VET system. A European Social Fund (ESF) project *Improvement of the quality, attractiveness and efficiency of VET in Cyprus and new modern apprenticeship 2014-20* (budget EUR 13 250 000) is being used to fund the setting up of the monitoring system.

In 2016, the Department of Labour of the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance (MLWSI) finalised the user requirements for developing an evaluation system for active labour market programmes (ALMPs). The

computerised system for collecting information on ALMPs was put in place in 2016. The system for continuously monitoring and evaluating ALMPs is expected to be operational in 2017.

CHAPTER 3.

MTD 3 – Access to VET and qualifications for all through more flexible/permeable systems, guidance and validation of non-formal and informal learning

3.1. Policy priorities for 2016-20

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this area, as set by the MoEC, and/or the HRDA, are two-fold:

- (a) for young people: ease access to formal qualifications for graduates of the apprenticeship scheme;
- (b) for adults:
 - (i) ease access to formal qualifications for graduates of the afternoon and evening classes of technical schools (CVET);
 - (ii) enhance the mechanisms for validating non-formal and informal learning so that people will not have to be examined when evidence of prior learning is already available and, to that end, further develop the range of vocational qualifications.

3.2. Main actions taken in 2015-17

3.2.1. Permeability and flexibility

The 2015-20 strategic plan for technical and vocational education and training ⁽⁵⁾ (Section 1.2.1) provides for all IVET and CVET curricula under the remit of the MoEC to be modularised and to use ECVET points to improve permeability. Modularisation and ECVET, along with recognition of prior learning, are expected to ease the access of people who completed CVET programmes (offered by the afternoon and evening classes of technical schools) to upper secondary formal qualifications (offered by the evening technical schools). The programmes of afternoon and evening classes of technical schools provide initial and advanced

⁽⁵⁾ The strategic plan was approved by the council of ministers on 15.4.2015 with Decision No 78.657.

technical skills and competences to people of all ages to satisfy the need for updated knowledge and retraining.

3.2.2. Transparency, recognition, validation

3.2.2.1. National qualifications framework ⁽⁶⁾

A draft version of the Cyprus qualifications framework (CYQF) was presented in 2014. The CYQF is learning-outcomes based and intended to cover qualifications awarded both within and outside formal education and training. The system of vocational qualifications (SVQ) developed by the HRDA is integrated within the CYQF at levels 2 to 7. The CYQF was referenced to the EQF (European qualifications framework) IN 2017. A more thorough analysis of the SVQ and how it is connected with formal education was presented to the EQF advisory group. The CYQF booklet, which provides full information on the CYQF and its social benefits, was prepared and circulated to all stakeholders. Consultation with stakeholders and an evaluation of the CYQF is planned for May to June 2018.

3.2.2.2. Validation ⁽⁷⁾

A national strategy for validating non-formal and informal learning is not yet in place. Validating non-formal learning is possible for certain competence-based VET qualifications. Qualifications awarded by VET schools, through apprenticeships and via other IVET programmes, cannot yet be validated. The government has agreed that VET qualifications, usually granted by labour market institutions or employment services, will have the same learning outcomes as those obtained through the formal system. Quality assurance measures linked to validation are in place and are being further developed. In 2013, an interdepartmental validation committee was set up. The committee has to develop a comprehensive action plan for validating non-formal and informal learning by 2018, and for validation to begin by 2020. The committee is also considering work already done by HRDA, which has developed an SVQ through which it is possible to validate non-formal and informal learning by the award of full or partial qualifications.

⁽⁶⁾ Cedefop, 2017b.

⁽⁷⁾ Cedefop, 2017b; Cedefop et al., 2017.

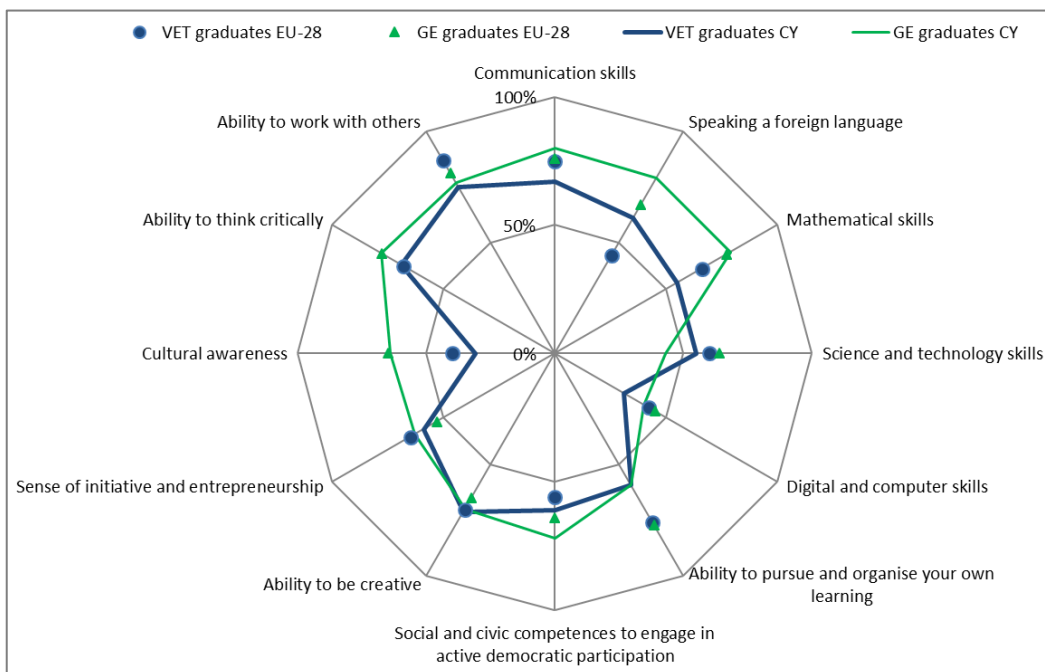
CHAPTER 4.

MTD 4 – Key competences in both IVET and CVET

Compared with general education graduates, those who completed VET programmes feel they have:

- (a) stronger or similar (ranked by priority):
 - (i) science and technology skills;
 - (ii) ability to be creative;
 - (iii) ability to pursue and organise their own learning;
- (b) and weaker:
 - (i) cultural awareness;
 - (ii) mathematical skills;
 - (iii) foreign language speaking (Figure 2).

Figure 2. **Self-evaluation of acquired skills in general education and VET**



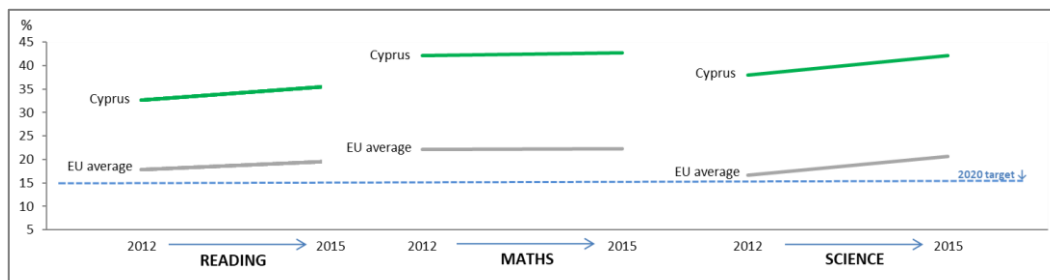
NB: GE stands for general education.

Respondents who attended upper secondary education. Interviewees were asked in summer 2016 about their overall experience in upper secondary education. Aggregated data do not take account of different types and sectors of VET and age groups of respondents.

Source: Cedefop, 2017c.

The context of key competences in 2015 was mainly characterised by an increasing share of young low achievers in reading, maths and science compared with 2012 (Figure 3). The share of low achievers in Cyprus was much higher than in the EU average, where the trend is similar.

Figure 3. **Share of 15-year-olds with low achievement in reading, maths and science**



NB: Low achievement means failing level 2 on the PISA (programme for international student assessment) scale.

Source: OECD, 2014; OECD, 2016.

Key competences (communication, problem-solving, social and learning-to-learn) are included in the CYQF level descriptors and have been promoted in the same way in both practical and theoretical components of upper secondary VET since 2004-05 ⁽⁸⁾.

4.1. Key competences in initial VET

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area, as set by the MoEC, is to promote the acquisition of key competences through the new learning outcomes and credit points-based VET curricula that, from the school year 2016/17, have emphasised foreign language(s), entrepreneurial skills, maths, science, technology, digital skills and learning to learn competences.

The 2014-20 national strategy for lifelong learning promotes the acquisition of key competences that enhance employability and improve the economy's potential for growth. The 2015-20 strategic plan for the system of technical and vocational education and training promotes foreign languages, entrepreneurial skills, maths, science/technology, digital skills, and learning to learn competences. The resulting new curricula under development include these

⁽⁸⁾ For more information on key competences in VET see Korelli and Mourouzides, 2016.

competences along with career management skills, numeracy and literacy. To promote cultural expression, music is now a compulsory subject in the first year of studies in secondary VET and optional in the 2nd and 3rd years. Russian has been introduced as an optional subject in the hotel and catering study field since 2016-17.

4.2. Key competences in continuing VET

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area, as set by the MoEC, is to include key competences in CVET programmes.

Since 2017, the HRDA has included the acquisition of basic digital skills for employees over the age of 35 in the single- and multi-company training programmes that it subsidises.

CHAPTER 5.

MTD 5 – Systematic initial and continuous professional development of VET teachers, trainers and mentors

5.1. Initial training for teaching/training staff in VET schools

A law designed to make teacher recruitment more effective was adopted in July 2015. It will base teacher appointments on:

- (a) examination results;
- (b) extra qualifications;
- (c) seniority.

The new recruitment system of teachers will apply to VET teachers but it has not yet been put into practice.

VET school teachers are referred to as trainers in the national context. Since 2015, trainers involved in training subsidised by HRDA are subject to the specific requirement of obtaining – within the framework of HRDA's system for the assessment and certification of training providers (*AxioPistoSyn*) – the certificate for the vocational qualification *Vocational trainer – level 5*. This certificate is included in the CYQF at level 5, corresponding to level 5 of the EQF. The assessment criteria are related to the applicant's ability to identify their training needs, and design, carry out and evaluate their training.

5.2. Initial training for trainers and mentors in enterprises

The decision of August 2015 upgrading the apprenticeship system (Section 1.2.1) included measures to provide suitable training for apprenticeship trainers.

A training programme has been developed for preparatory apprenticeship trainers, teachers and counsellors, to assist them in addressing the needs of apprentices.

5.3. Continuing professional development for teaching/training staff in VET schools

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area is to enhance the quality and competences of VET teachers.

The 2015-20 strategic plan for technical and vocational education and training (Sections 1.2.1 and 3.2) sets the further development of the quality and competences of VET teachers as a priority. Practical workshops are planned on modern teaching methods aimed at updating VET teachers' knowledge in their field of specialisation.

A new framework for teachers' professional learning was approved by the council of ministers in August 2015. It includes VET teachers and sets principles for CPD (continuing professional development), which will be systematic, addressed to all teachers, and targeted to teachers' and schools' needs. The framework calls for 50 hours of CPD per teacher every two years.

An August 2015 decision of the council of ministers tasked the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI) with the professional training of teachers. CPI offers a variety of training programmes that are either compulsory for teachers (if provided for by the education laws and service plans) or are developed with reference to the particular needs of the schools. Enhancing the quality and competences of VET teachers is mainly funded by the ESF project *Improvement of the quality, attractiveness and efficiency of VET in Cyprus and new modern apprenticeship 2014-20* (budget EUR 13.25 million). This new policy was piloted in the school year 2015/16. Based on an evaluation of the pilot, the MoEC decided that all schools at all levels (pre-primary, primary, secondary and technical/VET) should implement a professional learning action plan ⁽⁹⁾.

As part of the promotion of the European agenda for adult education, a series of seminars was held from May to June 2015 to enhance the knowledge and skills of adult educators who teach vulnerable adult learners, including those at evening technical schools, the afternoon and evening classes of the technical schools and the adult education centres of the MoEC.

The training programme that has been developed for preparatory apprenticeship staff to assist them in addressing the needs of apprentices (Section 5.2) also covers the continuing training of VET school teachers.

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http://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1580&Itemid=456&lang=el

In January 2016, the CPI, in cooperation with the department of secondary general education and the department of secondary technical and vocational education, organised two-day in-service training seminars. The teachers attending the seminars had the opportunity to choose training activities offered in their schools.

In 2016, an in-service training programme for school leaders took place; 15 newly promoted headmasters and 59 deputy headmasters of secondary and technical schools successfully completed the programme.

5.4. Continuing professional development for trainers and mentors in enterprises

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area is to enhance the quality and competences of in-company trainers and mentors.

The August 2015 decision to upgrade the apprenticeship system (Section 1.2.1) included measures for enhancing cooperation with industry and providing suitable training to all trainers, teachers and counsellors involved in apprenticeships.

The training programme that has been developed for preparatory apprenticeship staff to assist them in addressing the needs of apprentices (Section 5.2) also covers the continuing training of in-company trainers and mentors.

Conclusion

Since 2015, Cyprus has further reformed its apprenticeship and work-based learning systems, while also building on international cooperation and providing support to the SMEs involved. Steps have been taken to improve quality assurance mechanisms and the information system (especially on transition monitoring) to guide the strategy for VET development. Initiatives have been taken to increase flexibility and permeability in VET. Progress has been made in further developing the Cyprus qualifications framework and the system for validating non-formal and informal learning. The development of key competences is being supported, in particular through the new VET curricula, which are under development. Rules and programmes for the initial and continuing training of VET school teachers and in-company trainers and mentors are being developed.

The actions carried out show that the main lines of the Riga conclusions and the country's policy priorities for 2016-20 are being addressed, though information available to Cedefop at the time suggests issues which could benefit from further consideration:

- (a) further developing guidance;
- (b) providing groups in need (for example the long-term unemployed or young people not in education, employment, or training (NEETs)) with targeted training opportunities;
- (c) making more systematic use of EQAVET indicators to monitor VET developments.

Setting out policy priorities on initial training of VET school teachers and in-company trainers and mentors for the remaining period until 2020 could also be considered.

List of abbreviations

AES	adult education survey
ALMPs	active labour market programmes
CPD	continuing professional development
CPI	Cyprus Pedagogical Institute
CVET	continuing vocational education and training
CYQF	Cyprus qualifications framework
DGVT	Director General for vocational education and training
EQAVET	European quality assurance in vocational education and training
EQF	European qualifications framework
ESF	European Social Fund
Eurostat	statistical office of the European Union
GDP	gross domestic product
GE	general education
HRDA	human resource development authority
ISCED	international standard classification of education
IVET	initial vocational education and training
MLWSI	Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance
MoEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
NEETs	not in education, employment, or training
NMA	new modern apprenticeship
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PISA	programme for international student assessment
PPS	purchasing power standards
PSIVET	post-secondary institutes of vocational education and training
QANRP	quality assurance national reference point
SMEs	small and medium-sized enterprises
STEM	science, technology, engineering and math programmes
SVQ	system of vocational qualifications
STVE	secondary technical and vocational education
UOE	Unesco OECD Eurostat
VET	vocational education and training

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