



Developments in vocational education and training policy in 2015–17

LITHUANIA



Cedefop monitoring and analysis of VET policies

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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 Lithuania was below the EU average: 26.7% in 2014 compared to 48% in the EU (Cedefop 2017a, p. 85); 27% in 2015 compared to 47% in the EU ⁽¹⁾. However, the employment rate of recent upper secondary VET graduates was higher than in the EU: 75.6% in 2015, compared to the EU average of 73% (European Commission, 2016, p. 7). Adult participation in lifelong learning was low: 5.8% in 2015 compared to 10.7% in the EU (Cedefop 2017a, p. 85) (Table 1).

Lithuania was in the course of tackling the lack of attractiveness of VET and adult education. A 2014-16 action plan for VET development, adopted in 2013, aimed at greater effectiveness in operating VET, developing apprenticeship, modularisation and validation, and improving teaching quality. On the adult side, a 2014-16 action plan for non-formal adult education had been adopted in October 2014, aiming to set up an adult learning system.

(1) Eurostat, data for 2015.

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

Indicator label	2010		Last available year		Recent trend (per year)			
	LT ^f	EU ^f	Yr	LT ^f	EU ^f	Range	LT	EU
Access, attractiveness and flexibility								
IVET students as % of all upper secondary students	A	A	'14	26.7 ^b	48.0 ^b _{E1}	'13-'14	▪ -0.9	▪ -0.9
IVET work-based students as % of all upper secondary IVET	A	A	'14	0.0 ^z	34.0 ^b _{E2}	'13-'14	▪ 0.0	▪ 0.1
IVET students with direct access to tertiary education as % of all upper secondary IVET			'14	97.8	69.2 ^{E3}	'13-'14	▪ 0.0	▪ -1.4
Employees participating in CVT courses (%)	19.0	38.0 ^e	'10	19.0	38.0 ^e			
Employees participating in on-the-job training (%)	25.0	20.0 ^e	'10	25.0	20.0 ^e			
Adults in lifelong learning (%)	4.4		'15	5.8	10.7 ^b	'13-'15	↘ -0.1	→ 0.0
Enterprises providing training (%)	52.0	66.0 ^e	'10	52.0	66.0 ^e			
Female IVET students as % of all female upper secondary students	A	A	'14	20.2 ^b	42.7 ^b _{E1}	'13-'14	▪ -0.3	▪ -1.0
Employees of small firms participating in CVT courses (%)	11.0	25.0 ^e	'10	11.0	25.0 ^e			
Young VET graduates in further education and training (%)			'15	13.8 ^b	33.0 ^b	'14-'15	▪ 0.2	▪ -0.3
Older adults in lifelong learning (%)	1.2 ^u	5.3	'15	3.3	6.9	'11-'15	↗ 0.1	↗ 0.5
Low-educated adults in lifelong learning (%)			'15		4.3 ^b _C			
Unemployed adults in lifelong learning (%)	3.3 ^u		'15		9.5 ^b			
Individuals who wanted to participate in training but did not (%)	8.3 ^B	9.5 ^e _B	'11	8.3	9.5 ^e			
Job-related non-formal education and training (%)	87.8 ^B	80.2 ^e _B	'11	87.8	80.2 ^e			
Skill development and labour market relevance								
IVET public expenditure (% of GDP)			'13	0.42 ^b	0.56 ^b _{E4}	'12-'13	▪ 0.04	▪ -0.03
IVET public expenditure per student (1 000 PPS units)			'13	3.0 ^b	6.4 ^b _{E5}	'12-'13	▪ -0.1	▪ 0.0
Enterprise expenditure on CVT courses as % of total labour cost	0.5	0.8 ^e	'10	0.5	0.8 ^e			
Average number of foreign languages learned in IVET			'14	0.9 ^b	1.0 ^b _{E6}	'13-'14	▪ 0.0	▪ 0.0
STEM graduates from upper secondary IVET (% of total)	A	A	'14	31.9 ^b	30.0 ^b _{E7}	'13-'14	▪ -2.0	▪ -0.4
Short-cycle VET graduates as % of first time tertiary education graduates			'14	0.0 ^z	9.3 ^{E8}	'13-'14	▪ 0.0	▪ 0.4
Innovative enterprises with supportive training practices (%)	60.6	41.5 ^{E9}	'12	51.5	41.6 ^{E9}	'10-'12	▪ -4.6	▪ 0.0
Employment rate for IVET graduates (20- to 34-year-olds)			'15	76.9 ^b	77.2 ^b	'14-'15	▪ 2.9	▪ 0.3
Employment premium for IVET graduates			'15	2.8 ^b	5.3 ^b	'14-'15	▪ 1.2	▪ -1.0

Indicator label	2010		Last available year			Recent trend (per year)		
	LT ^f	EU ^f	Yr	LT ^f	EU ^f	Range	LT	EU
(over general stream)								
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over low-educated)			'15	21.2 ^b	23.7 ^b	'14-'15	▪ -1.5	▪ -0.1
Workers helped to improve their work by training (%)			'15	90.8	83.7			
Workers with skills matched to their duties (%)	60.5	55.2	'15	61.3	57.3	'10-'15	▪ 0.2	▪ 0.4
Overall transitions and labour market trends								
Early leavers from education and training (%)	7.9	13.9	'15	5.5 ^c	11.0 ^c	'10-'15	↘ -0.5	↘ -0.6
30- to 34-year-olds with tertiary attainment (%)	43.8	33.8	'15	57.6 ^c	38.7 ^c	'10-'15	↗ 2.7	↗ 1.0
NEET rate for 18- to 24-year-olds (%)	18.1	16.6	'15	12.6	15.8	'10-'15	↘ -1.0	↘ -0.1
Unemployment rate for 20- to 34-year-olds (%)	21.9	13.1	'15	9.7	12.9	'10-'15	↘ -2.4	↗ 0.1
Employment rate of recent graduates (%)	73.7	77.4	'15	82.1 ^c	76.9 ^c	'10-'15	↗ 2.2	↘ -0.2
Adults with lower level of educational attainment (%)	8.1	27.3	'15	6.5 ^c	23.5 ^c	'10-'15	↘ -0.3	↘ -0.8
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds (%)	64.3	68.6	'15	73.3	70.0	'10-'15	↗ 1.7	↗ 0.3
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds with lower level of educational attainment (%)	29.6	53.4	'15	42.7 ^c	52.6 ^c	'10-'15	↗ 2.8	↘ -0.2
Medium/high-qualified employment in 2020 (% of total)			'16	95.8 ^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.

^(u) Eurostat: 'low reliability'.

^(z) 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. 85

CHAPTER 1.

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

Initial vocational education and training (IVET) programmes are mainly school-based and include work-based learning elements. The practical training comprises the main part of the vocational subjects (60 to 70%). VET providers enrol students in state-funded VET programmes based on local labour market needs.

In continuing vocational education and training (CVET), practical training covers 60 to 80% of the training programme. Half of this training takes place in an enterprise. Training for jobseekers is provided on the basis of contracts concluded between local employment offices, the unemployed and, if applicable, the enterprise.

At the beginning of the reporting period, work-based learning and apprenticeships were being identified as areas for policy development. Measures to support the introduction of apprenticeship had been included in the 2013-22 national education strategy, the 2014-16 action plan for VET development, and the 2014-20 programme for increasing employment. A network of sectoral practical training centres (SPTCs) was created in 2012. These centres offer work-based learning in simulated environments, using state-of-the-art technologies. SPTCs were established in selected VET institutions, with 42 in place by 2015. A European Social Fund (ESF) project on apprenticeship to provide placements and develop national guidelines had also been carried out in 2013-15.

Involving enterprises in VET was also on the table. Since 2012, employer representatives have participated in designing VET programmes and assessing their relevance to labour-market needs. The 2014-16 action plan for VET development also set out measures to increase cooperation with employers.

Entrepreneurship education was also being supported. The 2014-22 national education strategy promoted entrepreneurship skills. The entrepreneurship action plan of Lithuania for 2014-20 provided for developing a 'consistent and continuous entrepreneurship education system'. The 2014-16 action plan for VET development linked career education with entrepreneurship education. Annual competitions to finance entrepreneurship education were in place. Training vouchers for new businessmen have been available since 2011.

1.1. Baltic cooperation on apprenticeship policy design and follow up

The *Erasmus+ KA3 project WBL-Balt*, led by Latvia, was launched in June 2015 aiming to strengthen cooperation between Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in implementing VET reforms including developing work-based learning and apprenticeship. A declaration of intent was signed for the Baltic alliance for apprenticeship and work-based learning (BAfA) ⁽²⁾, promoting exchange of information and experience in policy implementation, quality issues and the potential use of EU transparency tools in apprenticeship and work-based learning. An action plan ⁽³⁾ in four stages for developing and implementing apprenticeship was finalised in December 2016, foreseeing:

- (a) finalising the apprenticeship vision and detailed plan for communication, support team, coordination and monitoring;
- (b) selecting pilot projects;
- (c) implementation and assessment;
- (d) overall evaluation.

1.2. Introducing apprenticeships in formal VET

2015 legislation ⁽⁴⁾ introduced provisions for the implementation of apprenticeship. Apprenticeships can be organised by a VET institution together with employers. Practice and theory are to be provided in alternating periods at the company and the VET institution. A vocational teacher is appointed by the VET school to manage apprentice training in the workplace while company staff appointed by the employer are in charge of organising and coordinating the apprentice's work and practical training. Assessment remains the responsibility of the teacher and the VET institution.

⁽²⁾ http://www.kpmc.lt/kpmc/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/SKM_224e15112510210.pdf

⁽³⁾ Final action plan for the development and implementation of apprenticeship in Lithuania:
http://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/svietimas/Pameistrystes%20galutinis%20veiksmu%20planas_SMM_final%202017%20pdf.pdf

⁽⁴⁾ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/83bdea30f55e11e4927fda1d051299fb>

In 2016, the new Labour Code and accompanying legislation entering into force on 1 July 2017 ⁽⁵⁾ introduced two types of apprenticeship contract (*pameistrystés darbo sutartis*): with and without learning agreements. For apprenticeships that are part of formal VET, the regulation stipulates employer responsibility to ensure that apprentices acquire the learning outcomes defined in the programme. An overall contracts framework provides that:

- (a) work and learning time should not exceed 48 hours per week;
- (b) apprentice salaries should not be less than minimum wage;
- (c) learning time spent in the VET institutions would not be paid by the employer and should not exceed a third of the contract duration.

1.3. Reforming sectoral practical training centres

In May 2016 a map of EU 2014-20 investments in the VET system ⁽⁶⁾ was prepared by the Ministry of Education. The paper analyses results from the previous programming period and new proposals as well as labour market (regional) trends and forecasts; it offers suggestions for improving practical training provision in IVET, either in SPTCs or in other training institutions. It proposes that selected sectoral practical training centres should become competence centres with extended responsibilities, including piloting new training methods and programmes, supporting the continuing professional development of VET teachers, training employees and higher education students, and handling career education for general education students.

1.4. Apprenticeship for company employees

An ESF-funded project has been carried out since November 2016 ⁽⁷⁾, with total funding of EUR 3 668 500. The purpose is to support apprenticeship-type training projects and other training schemes (maximum possible grant: EUR 360 000) for

⁽⁵⁾ Submitted to the Parliament in late 2015, approved in September 2016, Decree No XII-2603 of 14.9.2016: <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/f6d686707e7011e6b969d7ae07280e89/BExFudSUBz>

⁽⁶⁾ Investments in the VET system infrastructure during 2014-20: http://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/es_parama/Investicij%C5%B3%20%C4%AF%20profesinio%20mokymo%20sistem%C4%85%20%C5%BEem%C4%97lapis.pdf

⁽⁷⁾ *Apprenticeship and workplace improvement*, No 09.4.3-ESFA-K-827-01, call for applications November 2016 - February 2017.

company employees to improve their qualifications and career development. Applicants can be private or public entities.

1.5. Encouraging apprenticeship through company compensation

The action plan for the implementation of the government programme approved in March 2017 ⁽⁸⁾ includes measures to encourage apprenticeship, to be set in place by the end of 2018. The measures include the creation of a regular transparent mechanism for compensating company expenditure on apprenticeship ⁽⁹⁾.

⁽⁸⁾ Decree No 167 of 13.3.2017: <https://www.e-tar.it/portal/It/legalAct/2389544007bf11e79ba1ee3112ade9bc>

⁽⁹⁾ Creation of a permanent transparent mechanism to compensate companies for costs incurred through vocational training in the form of apprenticeship.

CHAPTER 2.

MTD 2 – Quality assurance mechanisms in line with EQAVET and continuous information and feedback loops to IVET and CVET ⁽¹⁰⁾

Set up in 2007, the Qualifications and VET Development Centre (QVETDC) operates as the quality assurance national reference point (QANRP). A national quality assurance approach for VET has been developed and partially implemented covering IVET and CVET (full implementation is expected by 2020). The approach includes licensing and supervision of training providers, mandatory self-assessment by all VET providers, external evaluation of the quality of training programmes, support to VET providers (related training and counselling), and a national regulation on developing standards for learning outcomes. VET providers are free to choose their quality management model and to define periodicity and criteria for self-assessment.

For CVET providers that operate under the Ministry of Education and Science, the same quality assurance arrangements apply as for IVET providers. There are no specific requirements for non-formal CVET providers.

IVET providers collect data about graduate transitions to the labour market. VET providers have access to information on unemployed graduates and use data on transitions and employability to update training programmes and to plan

⁽¹⁰⁾ 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 (DGVTS) for the 2016-20 period;

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

enrolment. Data collection from employers, since 2013, allows linking graduates to workplaces and enables monitoring employment and salary growth.

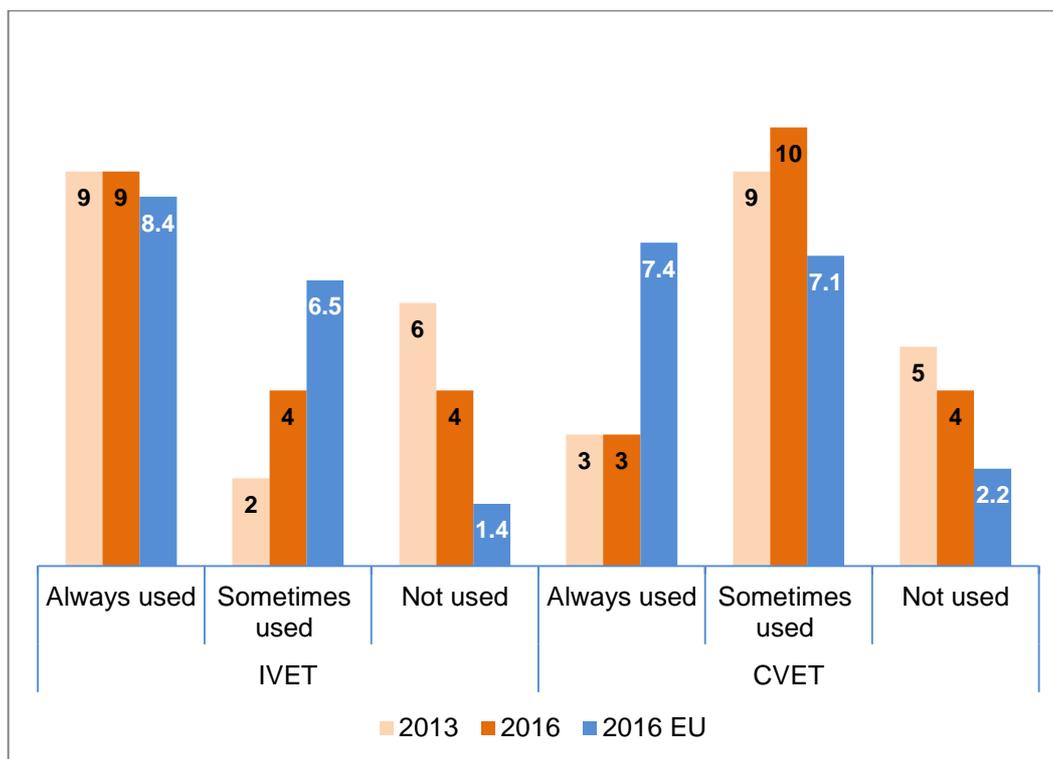
Social partners participate in shaping the content of new qualifications, qualification standards and VET programmes, assessing whether VET programmes correspond to labour-market needs, and organising practical training. They also take part in organising and implementing final qualification exams at accredited competent assessing institutions.

2.1. Quality assurance in line with EQAVET

In 2016-17, the QANRP is using *Erasmus+* funding to strengthen the review phase of the quality cycle by developing instruments to measure, analyse and compare at various levels (national and provider) the satisfaction of graduates, employers, learners and teachers with acquired skills and training environments.

The number of EQAVET (European quality assurance in vocational education and training) indicators 'always used' to monitor the VET system has not changed since 2013. In 2016, Lithuania is slightly above the EU average in IVET and below in CVET. Several EQAVET indicators are used, including those on the destination of VET learners, the share of employed learners on completion of their training, and the mechanisms to identify training needs in the labour market. Data on investment in training of teachers and trainers, the share of accredited VET providers and the success rate of disadvantaged learners are not available.

Figure 1. Use of EQAVET indicators



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

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 and continuing VET

In early 2016, the government approved a national human resources monitoring framework that would link data from various registers (qualification map of specialists and human resources forecasting system) to allow assessment of current and future trends in employment. The indicators approved by the Education Ministry include graduate activities and people in employment and further education. Analysis of the data will inform education/lifelong learning policy as well as the planning and funding of education programmes. The Higher Education Monitoring and Analysis Centre (MOSTA) has been assigned to coordinate the monitoring framework.

In early 2017, an ESF project *Development and renewal of human resources monitoring and forecasting system* was launched. This aims at improving medium-term forecasts by updating information systems to monitor demand for human resources in the labour market better, linking the occupational groups

under the Lithuanian classification of occupations with training programmes, and other related activities.

A current ESF-funded project for 2016-20 *Development of the Lithuanian qualifications system (first stage)* is producing a methodical framework for the development of sectoral qualification standards and vocational training curricula in line with the Lithuanian and European qualifications frameworks.

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. The 2017-20 action plan for the development of lifelong learning

An action plan for the development of lifelong learning for 2017-20 was adopted by the Ministry of Education and Science in June 2017. The plan has replaced the former 2014-16 action plan for VET Development and partly the 2014-16 action plan for non-formal adult education. It extends support to apprenticeship and work-based learning, designing sectoral qualifications standards and modular VET programmes, external evaluation of VET programme provision and VET institutions, provision of career services, VET and lifelong learning promotion campaigns and skills competitions, reform and modernisation of the VET institutional network, further development of sectoral practical training centres, design and introduction of model of competence/excellence centres.

In lifelong learning the action plan envisages key competences training programmes for adults, second chance education for early school leavers, training of the older population, funding of non-formal and continuing training programmes and projects, preparation and implementation of procedures for recognition of non-formal and informal learning.

3.2. The 2016-23 non-formal adult education and CVET development programme

The programme was approved by the government in April 2016 ⁽¹⁾ and is related to the 2013-23 national education strategy. It aims at creating a coherent adult education system, and matching lifelong learning with the needs of society and

⁽¹⁾ *Development programme for non-formal adult education and continuing education 2016-23.* Decree No 347 of 6.6.2016: <https://www.e-tar.it/portal/lt/legalAct/3a34e780007811e6b9699b2946305ca6>

the economy. Among the measures planned is the creation of a network of adult education coordinators at municipality level. To support the network, the qualifications and VET development centre is putting in place the project *National coordinators for the implementation of the European agenda for adult learning*.

3.3. Permeability and flexibility: modularisation of VET curricula

Since 2013, priority has been given to designing modular VET programmes with a policy target that, by December 2020, all VET programmes should be modular. In spring 2015, the Education Ministry decided ⁽¹²⁾ that formal IVET and CVET programmes would consist of mandatory (85%) and elective (15%) modules which would be grouped in introductory, professional and final categories. They would be competence-based and in line with sectoral qualifications standards. Credits would be introduced, with one school year corresponding to 60 credits. More than 60 modular programmes were finalised by 2016, prepared by expert groups consisting of VET providers and social partners, most with ESF support. Piloting modular VET programmes started in 2015 and was extended in 2016 to 38 modular programmes in about half of the VET institutions. As of September 2017, modular programmes will replace most subject-based VET programmes. The qualifications and VET development centre will coordinate the development process, and sectoral committee agreement is needed prior to new programme or module development.

3.4. Transparency, recognition, validation

3.4.1. ECVET ⁽¹³⁾

A measure aimed at implementing the European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET) was included in the 2014-16 action plan for VET development 2014-16 (2014); it was described in the concept of modular VET and the methodology for developing modular programmes (which describe how to define the volume of VET programmes in ECVET credit points). A national contact point for ECVET (NCP-ECVET) is in place. A community of practice is being set up. A national ECVET expert network was established in 2014. In 2015,

⁽¹²⁾ <https://www.e-tar.it/portal/it/legalAct/b1d753f0d2b511e4bcd1a882e9a189f1>

⁽¹³⁾ Source: the ECVET users' group members.

19 *Erasmus+* VET KA1 projects dealing with ECVET implementation in practice, and one *Erasmus+* VET KA2 strategic partnership project for creating and adopting the ECVET system among partner schools, were granted.

3.4.2. Validation ⁽¹⁴⁾

Legislation on education and higher education (2010) provides the legal base for the possibility of validating non-formal and informal learning. In 2014, a national framework for validation was set up with implementation decentralised at training provider level ⁽¹⁵⁾. Validation procedures still lack a clear quality assurance framework. In 2016, addressing the problem that non-formal training for unemployed adults organised by the public employment service (*Lithuanian labour exchange*) did not lead to formal qualifications, the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Education agreed to enable validation/recognition of learning outcomes gained through these training courses. Also in 2016, the public employment service initiated work on using modern ways of testing (*ProfileXT*) and tests in native languages, to help with validation of refugees' competences and speed up their integration into the labour market.

3.5. Upskilling people in employment

A range of measures for CVET projects are planned within ESF programming period 2014-20 under the responsibility of the Ministry of Economy. Training of 6 600 employees in predefined sectors is to be funded within the *Competences LT* ⁽¹⁶⁾ measure. This aims to help employees to adapt to new jobs, technologies or work processes and to acquire or improve qualifications. A total of EUR 4 million has been allocated in 2016 to fund first call projects. EUR 10 million is allocated for the *Competence vouchers* ⁽¹⁷⁾ measure to fund the training of almost 42 000 employees by 2020; the first call was launched in March 2017. Within these projects, companies can claim back 50 to 70% of training-related costs.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Cedefop, 2017b; Cedefop et al., 2017.

⁽¹⁵⁾ If people want to continue in/progress to an appropriate VET or higher education programme, prior learning is recognised as part of that programme. In higher education, the maximum credit for recognised prior learning is 75% of a total study programme volume. However, there has been a lack of coordination of validation across education, the labour market and the voluntary sector.

⁽¹⁶⁾ *Competence LT*, No 09.4.3-ESFA-K-814.

⁽¹⁷⁾ *Competence voucher*, No 09.4.3-IVG-T-813.

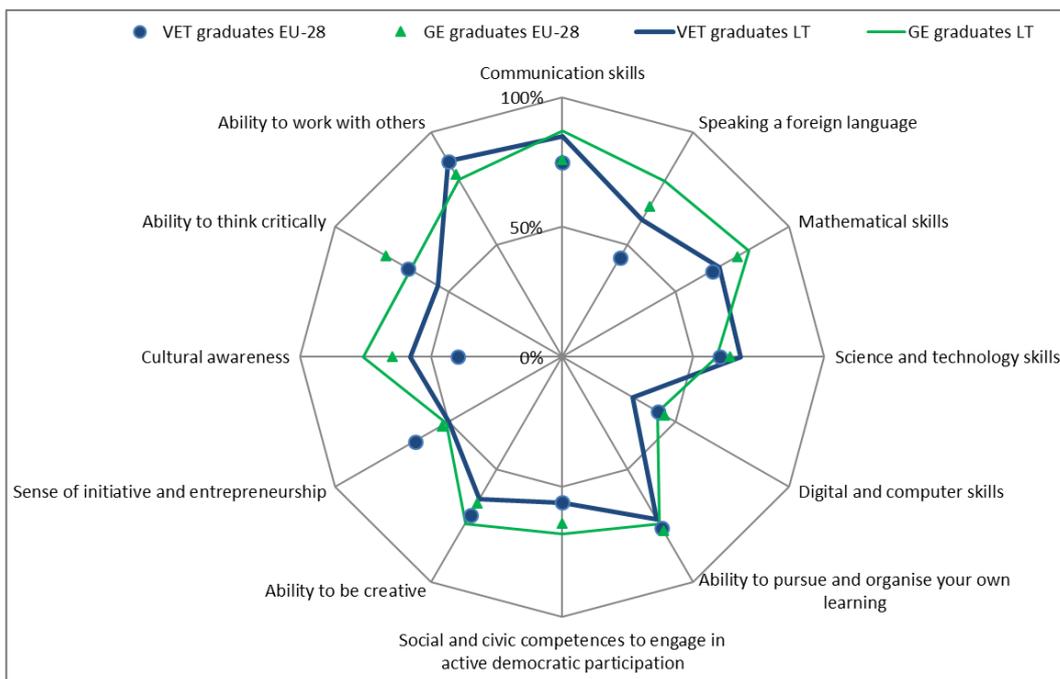
CHAPTER 4.

MTD 4 – Key competences in both IVET and CVET

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

- (a) stronger (ranged by priority):
 - (i) science and technology skills;
 - (ii) ability to work with others;
- (b) weaker:
 - (i) cultural awareness;
 - (ii) foreign language speaking;
 - (iii) ability to think critically (Figure 2).

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



NB: GE stands for general education.

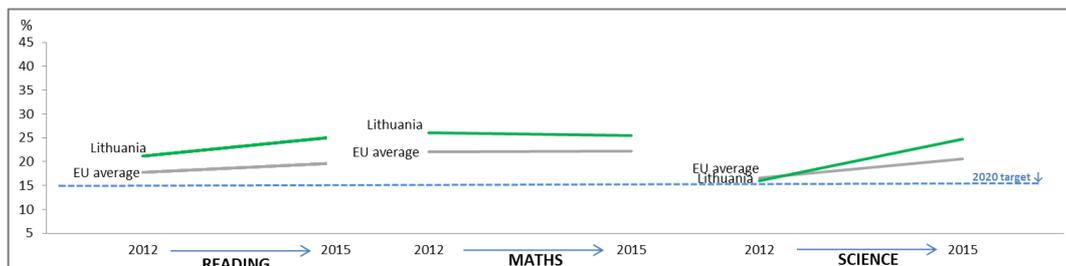
Respondents who attended upper secondary education. Interviewees were asked in summer 2016 about their overall experience in upper secondary education. Aggregated data do not take account of different types and sectors of VET and age groups of respondents.

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 Lithuania is higher than in the EU on 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.

As VET enrolls 27% of all upper secondary learners in the country ⁽¹⁸⁾, this trend is likely to be reflected in the key competences trained for in VET programmes. This is happening against a background of upper secondary VET programmes that comprise vocational and general parts; key competences ⁽¹⁹⁾ are the core of the latter. The vocational part is based on VET standards and also includes key competences. Compared to general education, there is no explicit guidance on how to organise acquisition of key competences in VET and each institution applies own approaches ⁽²⁰⁾.

4.1. Key competences in initial VET

In 2015, an amendment to the procedure on how formal VET programmes (IVET and CVET) are to be designed was approved by the Education Minister (Section **Error! Reference source not found.**). It set new principles for VET curricula and underlines that key competences are integrated into learning together with the competences needed to acquire a qualification. The EU key competences framework is used as a basis.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Calculated from Eurostat, data for 2015.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Learning to learn, communication, cognition, social-civic, initiative and creativity, personal competence and cultural competence.

⁽²⁰⁾ For more information on key competences in VET see Kvalifikacijų ir profesinio mokymo plėtros centras, 2016.

In 2017, the Ministry of Education initiated changes in VET that stipulate allocating a share of curricula to key competences. In March, this Ministerial Decree was presented for public consultation.

4.2. Key competences in continuing VET

In 2015-16, the Qualifications and VET Development Centre called for development of non-formal adult education programmes. Several education institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and private companies received funding for projects that aimed at developing adults' key competences, including computer literacy, entrepreneurship, learning to learn, foreign languages, communication and conflict management.

CHAPTER 5.

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

The 2014-16 action plan for VET development pointed to the 'lack of persons working in companies (masters, mentors), who would have a relevant qualification and would have a legal right to work as VET teachers' as one of the weaknesses of the VET system. Attracting practice experts to teaching was one of the three teaching improvement measures brought forward in the plan, along with improving the VET teacher qualification and strengthening the links between VET and higher education institutions in VET teacher training.

A new legal act on requirements for teacher qualifications was also adopted in 2014. It further detailed the requirements for obtaining teacher qualifications in terms of duration, pedagogical work experience and duration of obligatory pedagogical training.

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

In 2015, the Ministry of Education approved the organisation of VET teacher continuing professional development (CPD) within the framework of sectoral practical training centres and in innovative companies. In 2015-16, traineeships in companies were funded for 100 VET teachers from engineering, construction, trade, transport, services and other areas.

In October 2016, a national-level project was launched aiming at creating a CPD system for vocational teachers and adult educators ⁽²¹⁾. The project is coordinated by the Qualifications and VET Development Centre, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science. It is foreseen that 700 vocational teachers (almost one third of currently working vocational teachers) will participate in key and pedagogical competences training courses on such topics as communication and cooperation, working culture, creativity

⁽²¹⁾ *Development of the system for the development of vocational and adult teachers' qualifications*, No 09.4.2-ESFA-V-715-01-000.

development, organisation of distance learning, assessment of learning outcomes, digitalisation of curricula, and vocational training of special needs students. In addition, around 300 vocational teachers will be enrolled in training courses on such topics as preparation and quality of training resources, mentorship, planning of lessons, differentiation of learning, evaluating learners and learning reflection. A total of EUR 2.2 million has been allocated for the project, which will run until 2020.

In January 2017, a call for VET teacher CPD project applications, under a measure *Development of formal and non-formal learning* ⁽²²⁾, was announced by the Ministry of Education and Science. The total budget allocated to fund projects was EUR 4 799 000. The activity supported under this call will be VET teacher training on technological competences (including preparation and update of training programmes, training material and training provision). Training programmes should last at least 30 hours per year. VET institution-business partnerships were required for applicants to be eligible for funding. Most applications came from social partner organisations, such as chambers of commerce, industry and crafts, and the Lithuanian Employers' Confederation.

5.2. Continuing professional development for trainers and mentors in enterprises

A training programme for in-company trainers has been in progress since 2015 within the *Erasmus+* project *Developing apprenticeship: in-company trainer training and apprenticeship promotion*. The programme is dedicated to the professional development of in-company trainers and employees working with apprentices and other trainees. Knowledge and skills have been listed for each of the 11-course modules. Online training material will be prepared to support the training of trainers during and beyond the project. The programme will be piloted with a limited number of trainees.

Since February 2017, Lithuanian institutions (qualifications and VET Development Centre, Lithuanian association of VET institutions, Kaunas chambers of commerce, industry and crafts) have joined the *Erasmus+* key action 3 project *Testing new approaches to training VET and workplace tutors for work-based learning, TTT4WBL* (2017-20). The anticipated results of the project will be a joint tutor training programme and the training of 300 in-company tutors.

⁽²²⁾ *Development of formal and non-formal learning opportunities*, No 09.4.2-ESFA-K-714-01.

Conclusion

Since 2015, Lithuania has taken measures to introduce apprenticeship in initial VET, improve its quality assurance in VET mechanism, and reinforce its information and forecasting system on employment trends to guide VET development strategy better. The development of a full system for non-formal adult education has been initiated. Further steps have been taken in piloting ECVET, developing additional mechanisms for validation, and making VET curricula more flexible through introducing modularisation. Initiatives taken aim to aid the development of key competences in initial and continuing VET, and a range of projects has been launched to support the continuous professional development of VET school teachers and in-company trainers, tutors and mentors.

The actions carried out show that the main lines of the Riga conclusions are being addressed but information available to Cedefop at the time suggests issues which could benefit from further consideration:

- (a) making more systematic use of EQAVET indicators in monitoring CVET;
- (b) supporting the initial training of VET school teachers and in-company trainers and mentors.

The area of guidance also seems to have been overlooked over the past three years. Setting out policy priorities in the five areas covered by the Riga medium-term deliverables, for the remaining period until 2020, could also be considered.

List of abbreviations

AES	adult education survey
BAfA	Baltic alliance for apprenticeship and work-based learning
CPD	continuing professional development
CVET	continuing vocational education and training
DGVT	Director General for vocational education and training
ECVET	European credit system for vocational education and training
EQAVET	European quality assurance in vocational education and training
ESF	European Social Fund
Eurostat	statistical office of the European Union
GDP	gross domestic product
GE	general education
ISCED	international standard classification of education
IVET	initial vocational education and training
MOSTA	Higher Education Monitoring and Analysis Centre
NCP-ECVET	national contact point for ECVET
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NEET	not in education, employment, or training
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PISA	programme for international student assessment
PPS	purchasing power standards
QANRP	quality assurance national reference point
QVETDC	Qualifications and VET Development Centre
SPTCs	sectoral practical training centres
STEM	science, technology, engineering and math programmes
UOE	UNESCO OECD Eurostat
VET	vocational education and training

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