

## VET in Hungary



The Ministry for Innovation and Technology, is responsible for the governance of VET and adult learning (AL); as of 2019 this includes vocational qualification curricula in higher education. Coordination and policy implementation is ensured by the National Office for VET and Adult Learning and (since 2019) by the Innovative Training Support Centre.

Social partners shape VET policy through participation in advisory bodies. The VET Innovation Council (a discussion forum for education and training providers, chambers, employers and trade unions) and sector skills councils shape proposals for aligning VET programmes and qualifications with labour market needs. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry is responsible for the registration and attestation of apprenticeship placements.

### VET for young people

VET is available from age 14 (or 15), after completion of lower secondary, offering several options:

- five-year technological programmes (*Technikum*) combining general subjects and sectoral basic education (common contents of vocational training affiliated to the same economic sector) in grades 9 and 10 and vocational specialisation in grades 11 to 13. Learners acquire the upper secondary school leaving certificate (EQF level 4) giving access to HE, and a technician diploma (EQF level 5);
- three-year vocational school (*Szakképző Iskola*, ISCED 353) programmes provide general and vocational (sectoral foundation) education in grade 9, followed by vocational specialisation (grades 10 and 11). Learners acquire an EQF level 4 vocational qualification entitling holders to perform an occupation. Graduates may enrol in a two-year follow up programme in a *technikum* to obtain the secondary school leaving certificate;
- at the end of the ninth grade there is interoperability between the two VET tracks, without any aptitude test. Skills acquired during the sectoral foundation year(s) are assessed before moving on to specialised vocational training. General upper secondary graduates may enrol in any of the two VET tracks, without general subjects, to acquire a vocational qualification in two years;
- two- to four-year special vocational school programmes for SEN learners (*szakiskola* ISCED 252, 352, 353) provide VET based on special framework curricula issued by the Minister for Education to acquire a partial (EQF level 2) or full (EQF level 3) vocational qualification;
- holders of the secondary school leaving certificate may enrol in post-secondary (ISCED 454) programmes in *technikums* and higher VET programmes (ISCED 554) in higher education institutions. In both programmes, learners acquire in two years an EQF level 5 VET qualification and may transfer credits to a bachelor (BA/BSc) programme in the same field.

Work-based learning is delivered in school-settings or through a practical training placement in companies. In contrast

to the phasing out of apprenticeship contracts, as of 2020/21, learners may conclude vocational employment contracts to follow both, (specialised vocational) theory and practice in companies.

After completion of lower secondary, those unsure of which pathway to follow can enrol in a one-year (optional) orientation programme (ISCED 294, EQF 2).

Learners unable to finish lower secondary by the age of 16 can enrol in a basic competences development programme (*Dobbantó*, ISCED 242), followed by a *catch up program* delivered in school workshops (*műhelyiskolai program*, ISCED 254) to acquire the primary school leaving certificate attesting completion of lower secondary and/or an EQF level 2 or 3 partial qualification.

The formal system is centrally governed. VET schools (371 in 2020) are affiliated to 41 VET centres equipped with state-of-the-art technology. In 2020/21, 54% of the total upper secondary population is enrolled in VET programmes.

### VET for adults

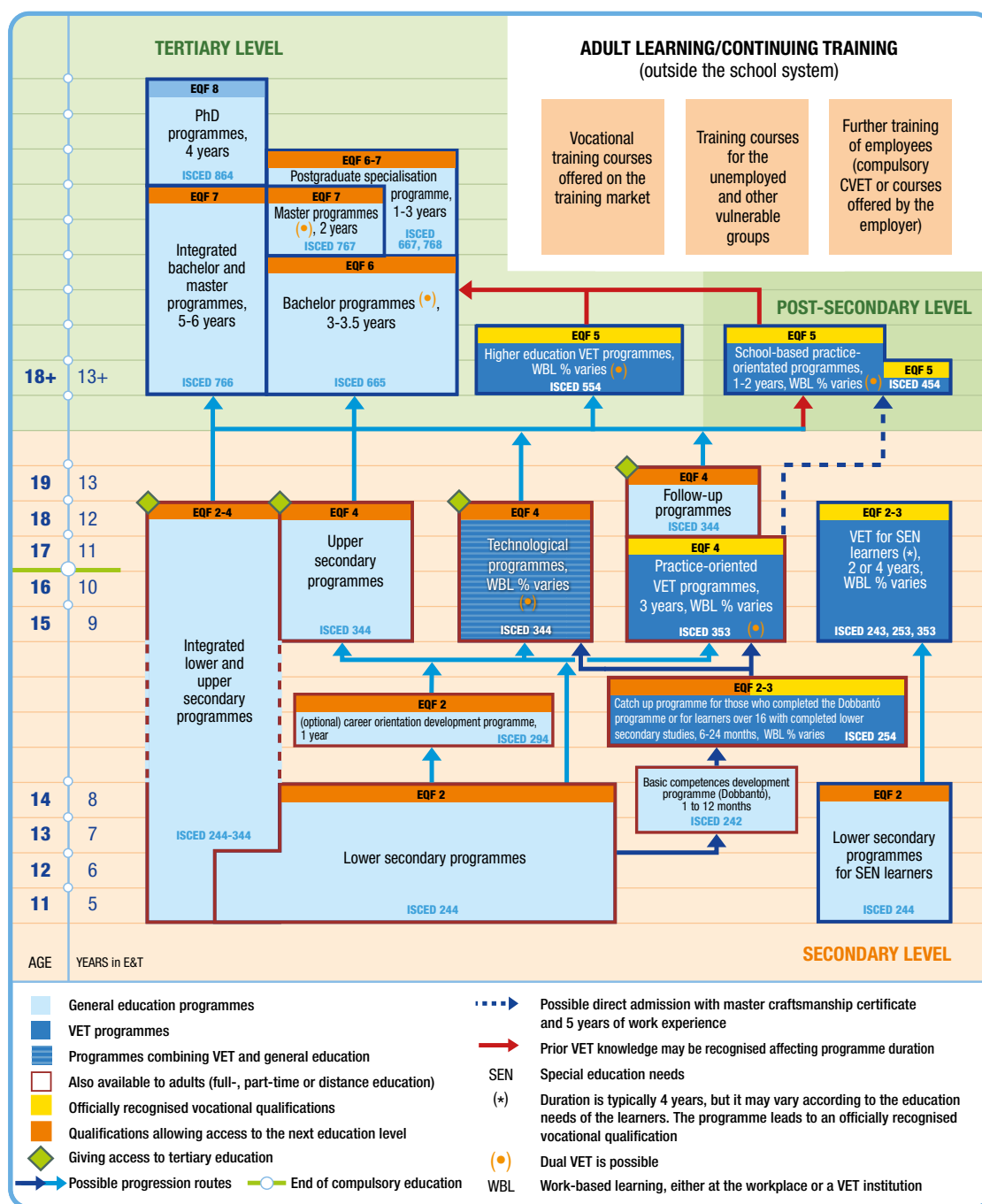
Adults may acquire up to two vocational qualifications free of charge in formal VET programmes. Legislation in force in 2020 (VET Act and Adult Learning Act) aims, by 2022, to reform the adult training provided outside the school system to improve its quality and flexibility. The State provides financial support for the training of vulnerable groups and SMEs.

### Distinctive features of VET

Based on job analysis, the national vocational qualifications register (OKJ) was revised in 2019. The new register (*Szakmajegyzék*) lists a reduced number of qualifications aligned with the needs of the economy in the sectors. Qualifications entitle holders to practise the occupation (HUQF/EQF levels 4 and 5) specified in respective training and learning outcomes requirements set in the register. Qualification requirements, programme curricula and local (practical training) curriculum have been shaped based on a learning outcomes approach. Former VET (OKJ) qualification programmes are phasing out.

Young people and adults need to pass a final examination upon completion of a formal VET programme. Currently a system of accredited vocational examination centres is being established and should be operational by 2025.

The general VET scholarship scheme is accessible by all VET learners in upper secondary schools (including during practical training periods delivered in school workshops). Learners in company placements under a vocational employment contract (*szakképzési munkaszerződés*) receive remuneration (60% of the minimum wage or more, depending on performance). A career starter allowance in one lump sum is given on completion of the first vocational qualification (EUR 420 to 840 depending on the results of the exam). Business organisations can compensate (reduce) the obligatory vocational contribution by providing dual VET (theory and/or practice).



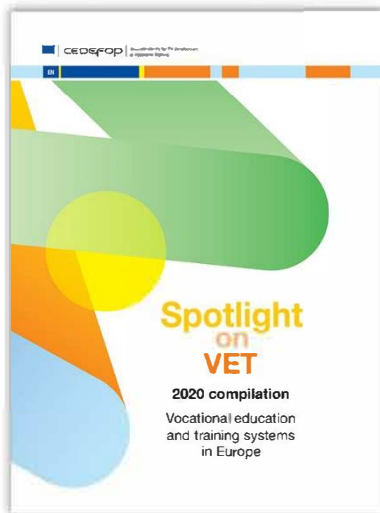
NB: ISCED-P 2011.  
 Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Hungary, 2020.

## Challenges and policy responses

Hungary has high shares of dropout rates, especially for men and from VET; the share of upper secondary learners with low basic skills is still below the EU 2020 benchmark. Measures to tackle early leaving include the introduction (2020) of an early warning system in the public education monitoring system (NEPTUN-KRÉTA) to detect learners mostly at risk and inform school administration. An optional orientation year is being introduced in 2020/21 to allow learners who completed lower secondary with lack of competences to receive personalised support and career guidance for further VET studies.

The adoption of the new VET Act in 2019 (in force in 2020) introduced a learning outcomes approach with less prescriptive programme implementation and more freedom for VET institutions to shape implementation. It allows delivery of both theoretical and practical vocational training to take place in companies upon completion of the sectoral basic examination. The dual training form remained in place, with a prominent change in the approach and methodology of content regulation.

In contrast to adult education, the challenge remains to attract young learners to upper secondary VET.



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