



Vocational education and training policy briefs 2024

HUNGARY



This vocational education and training (VET) policy brief was produced by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), Department for VET and Qualifications under the supervision of [Jürgen Siebel](#), Acting Head of Department/Executive Director.

The report was drafted by [Veronika Leiner](#), Cedefop expert, and peer reviewed by [Vicky Oraiopoulou](#), Policy officer in VET policies and systems.

This report is part of Cedefop's monitoring of vocational education and training policies and systems. It is based on detailed information on VET policy implementation submitted by Cedefop's European network of expertise on VET (ReferNet) and other sources. For additional information please visit Cedefop's online tool [Timeline of VET policies in Europe](#).

Please cite this publication as:

Cedefop. (2025). *Vocational education and training policy briefs 2024 – Hungary*. National VET policy developments 2023-24.
<https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/2326674>

A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the internet. It can be accessed through the Europa server (<https://european-union.europa.eu/>).

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2025.



© Cedefop, 2025.

Unless otherwise noted, the reuse of this document is authorised under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). This means that reuse is allowed provided appropriate credit is given and any changes made are indicated.



ISBN 978-92-896-3895-1 doi: 10.2801/2326674 TI-01-25-081-EN-N

Contents

1.	Introduction.....	4
2.	National VET context and challenges.....	4
2.1	National VET context.....	4
2.2	Challenges	5
3.	National VET policy priorities	6
4.	Main policy developments and progress 2020-2024	6
4.1	Creating dynamic, modern learning environments that support green and digital transition	6
4.2	Further developing dual training.....	8
4.3	Improving flexibility, inclusion and lifelong learning initiatives	9
4.4	Strengthening quality assurance in VET	11
5.	Statistical information in relation to EU targets	12
6.	Conclusion.....	15
	References	17

1. Introduction

This policy brief ⁽¹⁾ produced by Cedefop presents a snapshot of vocational education and training (VET) policy developments in Hungary between 2020 and the end of 2024. It presents the context and the challenges the country faces, a selection of the latest VET-related statistics, as well as the national priorities until 2030 identified in Hungary's national implementation plan. This VET policy brief provides information from Cedefop monitoring and analysis on the implementation of the [Council Recommendation on VET](#) and [Osnabrück Declaration](#) and contributes to shaping new EU priorities in VET as of 2026 and informing the mid-term evaluation of the Council Recommendation on VET.

2. National VET context and challenges

2.1 National VET context

In Hungary, the Ministry of Culture and Innovation oversees VET and adult training. Other ministries are responsible for the standards and regulations of qualifications for the sectors they oversee. The coordination of VET and policy implementation are managed by the National Office for VET and Adult Learning (NOVETAL) and the IKK Innovative Training Support Centre (IKK), both State bodies. VET policy development includes input from social partners through advisory bodies like the [VET Innovation Council](#) (Cedefop & ReferNet, 2025), which involves government bodies, education and training providers, chambers, employers, trade unions, companies and student representatives. [Sector skills councils](#) contribute to aligning VET programmes and qualifications with labour market needs. The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry manages dual placement registration with sector specific chambers also playing a role (Cedefop, IKK, & MCI, 2023; Cedefop, 2023a and 2023b).

The 2019 Act on VET, based on the [VET 4.0 Strategy](#) (adopted in 2019 and revised in 2023), has significantly reformed Hungary's vocational education and training system. One key change is that VET is now legally and administratively separate from general education. This aims to create an independent part of the education system that works more closely with the economy. VET teachers now have a distinct legal status, with specific rules about their salaries and continuous professional development (CPD). The reforms also replaced the old apprenticeship system with a new dual training system. VET learners first learn general sector-specific knowledge at school. Later, they specialise in a specific profession and have the opportunity to gain experience through training in companies. Vocational employment contracts, replacing apprenticeship contracts, now include remuneration for learners. Additionally, a scholarship scheme for VET learners has been introduced (Cedefop, IKK & MCI, 2023).

VET in Hungary is accessible to students from age 14-15, following the completion of lower secondary education. In 2023, [IVET students in Hungary comprised 50.9% of all](#)

⁽¹⁾ See also the previous edition: Cedefop. (2024). [Vocational education and training policy briefs 2023 – Slovakia](#). Cedefop monitoring and analysis of vocational education and training policies.

[upper secondary students](#). The two main types of VET programmes are the 5-year technician programme, offering an upper secondary school leaving certificate and an EQF 5 technician diploma, and 3-year practice-oriented VET programmes, offering an EQF 4 vocational qualification. Vocational programmes exist tailored for learners with special education needs. Permeability exists between different VET tracks, and graduates can pursue further education, including post-secondary and higher education. VET schools are under the administration of VET centres in Hungary. (Cedefop, IKK & MCI, 2023).

Adults in Hungary can access school-based VET programmes, leading to qualifications listed in the [national register of vocational qualifications](#). Alternatively, they can participate in adult training programmes leading to qualifications not included in the national register. These flexible, short-cycle training programmes, offered by various providers, aim to address the dynamic needs of the labour market (Cedefop, IKK & MCI, 2023; Cedefop, 2023a and 2023b).

2.2 Challenges

The main challenges facing Hungary's VET system include outdated infrastructure and capacity issues, skills shortages linked to weak industry cooperation, difficulties in supporting disadvantaged and diverse learners, and the need to strengthen quality assurance and labour market linkages.

Hungary faces significant challenges in modernising VET infrastructure and ensuring that learning environments support the green and digital transition. VET must develop a workforce capable of applying advanced technologies such as AI, automation, and Industry 4.0 – yet data shows that very few Hungarian enterprises have adopted AI solutions, with only 3.7% in 2023, well below the EU average of 8% (European Commission, 2024b). Despite investments such as the '21st century vocational training institutions development programme', many VET institutions remain in outdated buildings with insufficient ICT equipment, limiting their capacity to implement digital and environmentally sustainable practices effectively. The challenges also include an ageing VET teaching workforce, limited participation in further training within company environments, and difficulties in involving real-world professionals in teaching roles. These factors contribute to gaps in technological knowledge among teachers and trainers, impairing the system's ability to deliver up-to-date skills and knowledge aligned with industry needs (Hungary, 2022).

Limited cooperation between VET institutions and businesses, especially SMEs, reduces opportunities for VET learners to gain practical skills through workplace-based learning in Hungary. Many SMEs lack the capacity or resources to participate in dual training, which limits students' opportunities to acquire sector-specific skills in real work environments. This contributes to skills shortages and negatively impacts the overall performance of the VET system (Hungary, 2022).

A shortage of skilled workers is also driven by below-average performance in skills and education, including significant gaps in basic skills based on socio-economic status, high rates of early school leaving, and low participation in higher education (European Commission, 2024a). Hungary has a high rate of early school leaving, at 10.3% in 2024, above the EU target of below 9% by 2030 – especially in disadvantaged regions. Targeted

interventions are needed to retain or reintegrate disadvantaged individuals into the VET system. Low levels of basic skills, as measured by the [OECD's PISA](#) test (Education GPS, OECD, 2025), are most evident especially among disadvantaged students. Moreover, dropout risks persist among these learners due to gaps in career guidance and limited mechanisms for validating non-formal and informal learning, which restrict opportunities for adult upskilling and lifelong development. Additionally, cooperation between VET and higher education remains weak, leading many high-achieving students to opt for general education schools and creating redundancy in content when students pursue higher education after VET. Ensuring that learners with diverse backgrounds and profiles acquire relevant qualifications and skills aligned with labour market needs continues to be a significant challenge (European Commission, 2024a; Hungary, 2022).

Hungary's efforts to embed quality assurance in VET through new management systems and independent assessment centres are ongoing. Additionally, although a newly established labour market-oriented career tracking system provides valuable data, its full implementation and operationalisation was set out in the NIP. Weak linkages between VET outputs and labour market skills demand continue to challenge the system's responsiveness and hinder the realisation of high-quality, labour-market-relevant training (European Commission, 2024a, Hungary, 2022).

3. National VET policy priorities

The main strategic framework that guides VET policy developments in Hungary is the Medium- term VET policy strategy for the renewal of VET and adult education, and the response of the VET system to the challenges of the fourth industrial revolution ([VET 4.0 Strategy](#)). This strategy, approved by the government in 2019 and revised in 2023, aims to modernise and adapt VET for both youth and adult learners.

The VET 4.0 Strategy provides the basis for the measures outlined in Hungary's national implementation plan, prepared in response to the 2020 Council recommendation on VET and the Osnabrück declaration. Hungary's policy priorities are structured around four key areas:

- (a) creating dynamic, modern learning environments that support green and digital transition;
- (b) further developing dual training;
- (c) improving flexibility, inclusion and lifelong learning initiatives;
- (d) strengthening quality assurance systems.

These priorities are aimed at responding effectively to labour market demands, fostering innovation, and ensuring VET's attractiveness and relevance in a rapidly changing economic landscape.

4. Main policy developments and progress 2020-2024

4.1 Creating dynamic, modern learning environments that support green and digital transition

Hungary has outlined specific measures in its national implementation plan aimed at fostering a dynamic learning environment within VET. These initiatives encompass the development of modern infrastructure, contemporary VET content and providing VET teachers with up-to-date skills. All these measures are aligned with the overarching focus on fostering transition to digital and green technologies.

[Construction and infrastructure investments](#) are underway at 31 VET schools across 18 VET centres, contributing to green and digital transition of the Hungarian VET system. These developments are part of the '21st century vocational training institutions development programme' which began in 2023 with a planned completion deadline in March 2026. Key developments, with a total funding of HUF 95.8 billion (around EUR 240 million), include energy efficiency improvements, installation of renewable energy systems, modernisation of school workshops, transformation of educational spaces for the digital and green transition, and upgrades to equipment, including the purchase of 13 825 ICT tools. This initiative builds on a multi-phase infrastructure development programme approach launched in 2019, which initially provided national funding for the development of four VET centres under the [21st century VET school development programme](#) (ReferNet Hungary & Cedefop, 2019). Due to subsequent funding adjustments, complex developments were completed at two VET centres by 2023.

Since becoming mandatory for Hungarian public schools in 2017, [KRÉTA^{\(2\)}](#), the [electronic school administration system](#), provides essential functions such as recording student data, logging educational activities, and managing administration. Continuous developments between 2020 and 2024 added VET reporting, VET scholarship, and monitoring functions to this system. This contributes to a more integrated and digitised data infrastructure, supporting better coordination of the VET system. To anticipate labour market demands for VET qualifications, a Workforce forecasting system was also integrated, along with digital collaboration tools and interactive learning materials, dual VET and adult training modules, and a mobile app for learners and parents providing easy access to information. The latest development, launched experimentally in 2024, is a module to support learners in obtaining a driving licence.

In line with the commitment to the green and digital transitions, significant progress has been made in [developing digital learning resources for VET](#). By November 2024, 697 digital learning materials had been created through various projects. This includes 202 general knowledge and 495 vocational education materials, covering 100 subjects, 14 VET sectors, and 43 qualifications. Among these, 147 digital curricula - replacing traditional textbooks and classrooms with digital courses, ebooks, virtual lessons and student clubs - have been accredited, ensuring quality standards, and added to the VET Textbook Register. These curricula are available free of charge to all VET participants through the e-KRÉTA Digital Collaboration Space. Additionally, training on digital learning materials was provided to 3 009 VET teachers. Work continues on developing more digital curricula for VET through Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) funding of EUR 49 million, running until March 2026 (ReferNet Hungary & Cedefop, 2022).

⁽²⁾ *Kréta* is the Hungarian word for chalk.

To support the twin transition and promote sustainability, qualification requirements for VET qualifications listed in the national register were expanded in 2023 to include sustainability and 'greening' content to encourage students to adopt environmentally conscious practices in their professional activities. Additionally, in the 2022/23 school year, secondary schools introduced a dedicated sustainability subject to enhance students' environmental awareness and sustainability knowledge. In 2024, the Green Earth digital educational programme was launched for grades 9 to 12 in secondary schools and includes a framework curriculum, textbook, workbook, e-learning materials, a teacher's methodological manual, and a 30-hour teacher training course.

Hungary's NIP aims to support teachers in keeping their knowledge up-to-date. To facilitate this, the IKK Training Support Centre – the coordinating body for VET teacher CPD – introduced the [electronic system for CPD of VET teachers and trainers \(OTR\)](#) in 2021. By September 2024, the OTR system had recorded 221 training programmes from 60 CPD course providers, with 22 614 registered teachers/trainers. These courses cover a broad range of competences, including digital and foreign languages, professional skills, methodological training, sustainable development, green skills, and inclusive education. Emphasizing tailored training for VET, the IKK has been organising sector-specific, practice-oriented teacher training since 2024, marking a distinct shift from CPD for teachers in general schools. Furthermore, from 2023, certain activities completed under Erasmus+ may be recognised as credits towards the mandatory training requirement of 60 hours every four years. Wage increases in 2023 and 2024, based on performance evaluations, recognise and reward CPD and up-to-date knowledge, to acknowledge teachers' efforts and help maintain competitive salaries.

4.2 Further developing dual training

Recent efforts to strengthen dual VET in Hungary have included the establishment of sectoral training centres (STCs), sectoral knowledge centres and measures to incentivize company participation. The following sections detail key developments implemented during 2020-24.

To [encourage wider participation in dual VET](#), a 2023 amendment to the VET Act expanded eligibility for registration as dual training providers to include small-scale farmers. By 2022, Hungary established 31 [sectoral training centres \(STCs\)](#), involving almost 200 businesses across 15 sectors. These STCs play a key role in implementing dual VET among SMEs. STCs are formed by various businesses, potentially including a VET centre, and collectively provide dual training for students. They operate as non-profit companies overseeing organisation, coordination, and administration of dual training. In 2022-23, Hungary's efforts to establish STCs included the development of operational models, digital curricula, and an IT system, as well as tools for measuring sectoral competences. In addition to STCs, Hungary has been establishing [sectoral knowledge centres](#), with the Forestry Sectoral Knowledge Centre launched in 2023 - the first of five planned to be completed by 2029. Similar to STCs, knowledge centres are established as non-profit associations, but they also include a higher education institution in their partnership. They provide a common location for training both technician students (VET programme within upper secondary VET giving access to tertiary education) and dual tertiary education

students, modelling the collaborative approach of problem-solving used by engineers, technicians, and skilled workers in the workplace.

Financial, administrative, and IT measures were introduced to incentivize and simplify the participation of companies in dual VET. The 2021 amendments to the VET Act introduced [tax refunds for companies involved in dual training](#), with the amounts depending on sectoral classification and the learner's grade. Additionally, dual training providers receive extra tax refunds if learners successfully pass their vocational exams. Learners in dual VET with vocational employment contracts now earn three to five times more per month compared to their pay before the 2020 VET reform. In 2022, the development of the [dual VET module within the KRÉTA electronic school administration system](#) further supported these efforts by enabling dual training providers to manage lessons and access school records through the platform for administrative purposes.

To foster [knowledge sharing among companies engaged in dual training](#), sector skill councils (SSCs) organised multiple meetings and expert activities throughout 2022-24. These events provided platforms for educational entities, including VET schools, dual training sites, and economic stakeholders, to exchange experiences and gain insights into the dual training system of large companies like AUDI, Pick and Unicon. The series of roundtables on good practices aimed to identify and share effective practices across sectors to support dual VET. As an outcome of these activities, a VET Methodology Guide was produced in 2023, consolidating sector-specific good practices across 19 sectors related to training programmes, project assignments, and portfolios, aiming to facilitate the daily work of practitioners.

4.3 Improving flexibility, inclusion and lifelong learning initiatives

Hungary aims to develop a flexible VET system that supports individualised development, addresses the needs of disadvantaged learners, and promotes excellence. This is achieved through measures encompassing flexible learning pathways within upper secondary VET for those struggling in traditional school settings, competence development for entrants to VET, an upper secondary VET programme fostering excellence in collaboration with higher education, financial incentives for both IVET and CVET learners, and measures for validation of non-formal and informal learning.

[Flexible learning programmes](#) in Hungary (ReferNet Hungary & Cedefop, 2024) have expanded since their introduction in the 2020/21 school year. These pathways – including the [orientation preparatory year, 'springboard' class, and school workshop programme](#) – help disadvantaged students and those without a qualification (re)access VET. Designed for learners who may not thrive in traditional school settings, these programmes implement alternative teaching methods such as mentoring, project-based and experience-based learning, individualised development, and formative assessment. Legislative changes in 2023 lowered the springboard programme entry age to 15 and doubled scholarships for these programmes, aligning them with mainstream VET scholarships. Additionally, students completing the school workshop programme and gaining partial vocational qualifications ⁽³⁾ now benefit from streamlined progression to

⁽³⁾ A partial vocational qualification represents part of a full qualification and allows learners to work in certain jobs. Not all qualifications include partial qualifications.

full qualification programmes. These changes have boosted participation, with a 63% increase in springboard class, and a 32.5% rise in school workshop enrolments from 2023 to 2024. Furthermore, since 2023, VET school heads and teachers involved in these programmes have access to professional-methodological support.

Recognising that those students that enter the VET pathway often have competence gaps, which may potentially lead to struggle with vocational curricula, consequently low motivation and drop-out, Hungarian IVET schools have established learning support groups that provide targeted assistance. The methodology and concept behind these groups were developed through projects co-founded by the EU, aimed at improving the effectiveness of VET, developing students' competences, and reducing early school leaving. In the 2021/22 school year, approximately 2 000 learning groups were formed following initial competence assessments of 9th-grade students, resulting in an 8-10% improvement in participant performance by the end of the school year. Additional [initiatives to reduce early leaving](#) included mentoring for Roma students, activities addressing bullying and peer exclusion, talent management, programmes promoting constructive leisure and learning, and initiatives fostering school engagement. Continuous communication with family and child welfare services ensured seamless information exchange about at-risk learners.

To support disadvantaged students, Hungary offers a [comprehensive scholarship scheme for IVET learners](#). A general scholarship has been available to all IVET students since the 2020/21 school year, to support the acquisition of a first vocational qualification, while the *Apáczai* scholarship serves as an additional incentive for talented, disadvantaged IVET learners. Eligibility is based on disadvantage and good academic results. The *Apáczai* scholarship provides HUF 16, 25 or 34 thousand (EUR 40, 62.5 or 85) per month based on academic performance. In the 2023/24 school year, around 5 000 learners received *Apáczai* scholarships. Beyond financial assistance, mentoring also supports young people in achieving better academic results. (ReferNet Hungary & Cedefop, 2021).

To strengthen links between VET and higher education and improve permeability within the education system, Hungary introduced two measures. The first is the [certified technician programme](#), an upper secondary VET programme that promotes excellence and provides pathways to both higher education and the labour market. Since its pilot phase in 2021/22, when 27 [technicums](#) across 10 sectors participated with 13 university partners, the programme has expanded significantly. For the 2024/25 academic year, it involved 145 technicums across 20 sectors, working with 27 universities (ReferNet Hungary, & Cedefop, 2025). The second measure is the [pre-university student status](#) for VET students introduced by the 2023 amendment of the Higher Education Act. Under this scheme, students who plan to continue their studies at university can take additional courses during their final year of VET. They can earn micro-credentials in specific subjects, which are recognised as credits towards a bachelor's degree. If students meet the university's criteria, they can be admitted directly, bypassing the traditional admission process. This measure aims to improve VET quality, make it more attractive, and facilitate progression to higher education.

From 31 May 2021, adult learners participating in training programmes have the

opportunity to apply for a [state-supported, interest-free study loan](#). This initiative addresses financial challenges of adult learners, offering loans up to HUF 500 000 (EUR 1 250). To qualify, the adult training course must be at least 3 months long, with the learner covering at least 20% of the training fee. This financial support aims to make adult learning more accessible and affordable, and open the doors for individuals who want to improve their skills and knowledge.

To support more flexible adult learning pathways, Hungary introduced measures under the 2023 amendment to the VET Act allowing up to half of the sectoral foundation education⁽⁴⁾ hours for adult learners to be delivered through distance learning. Additionally, building on a pilot programme completed in November 2020, which tested tools for validating prior learning with 700 adults, a project, '[Improving the quality and content of 21st-century vocational training and adult education](#)' developed a study on the quality assurance system for the validation of non-formal and informal learning (finalised in September 2021) and a methodological guide for validation experts (developed in 2022). Although the project concluded in August 2023 with a draft proposal for a national validation system model, implementation is expected to continue from the school year 2023/24 under the priority project 'Improving measurement assessment, prior-knowledge feedback and interoperability in VET'. These measures significantly enhance opportunities for adults to engage in lifelong learning and acquire recognised qualifications flexible to their needs.

4.4 Strengthening quality assurance in VET

Hungary's efforts to improve VET quality between 2020 and 2024 focused on three key initiatives: implementing a new, EQAVET-aligned quality management system, establishing independent examination centres to ensure standardised assessments, and developing a career tracking system to better align VET with labour market needs

In 2022, a [new quality management system \(QMS\) was introduced for VET](#), separate from general education (ReferNet Hungary and Cedefop, 2023a). This system, based on EQAVET and the 2019 VET reform, aims to improve VET quality. A self-assessment handbook was published, and VET institutions used it to create their own QMS by August 2022. Dual VET providers also updated their quality management systems. The QMS includes self-assessment of institutions and school leaders every 2 years, VET teacher evaluation every 3 years, and external evaluation every 4 years, all using the same standards. Performance-based teacher evaluations took place in 2023, and these influenced teacher salaries in 2024. By July 2024, VET schools and leaders also completed a self-evaluation process based on evidence such as stakeholder feedback and VET indicators. The results were used to launch improvement activities in September 2024. These activities will be monitored and assessed during the next self-assessment cycle. The IKK Innovative Training Support Centre, the state body responsible for external evaluation, began developing new methods and IT for this process in 2024, as part of the

⁽⁴⁾ VET programmes in Hungary consist of two phases: sectoral foundation education (*ágazati alapoktatás*) and vocational specialised education (*szakirányú oktatás*). The first builds broad sectoral skills and key competences and ends with an exam, that allows progression to the specialised phase. (Cedefop, 2024).

priority project on 'Quality improvement and the expansion of continuing education in VET' (ReferNet Hungary & Cedefop, 2023).

[Accredited vocational examination centres \(AVECs\)](#) are independent bodies established under the VET Act of 2019 to ensure the quality and standardised assessment of vocational examinations, independently from the training provider. The establishment of AVECs started in 2020, following the publication of a roadmap and national standards by the Hungarian Standards Institution. By 2021, all VET centres had begun establishing AVECs affiliated to their institutions and started the accreditation process. VET centres can continue to conduct examinations during a transition period until the end of 2025, regardless of accreditation. Many AVECs affiliated to VET centres are now operational, and a list is available on the IKK website (the state VET body acting as a VET information centre). In 2023, the [IKK was designated as the national central AVEC](#), meaning it is responsible for organising examinations if no other AVEC can conduct them for a specific qualification. Also from 2023, examinees can request a Europass Supplement to their certificates. The 2024 amendments to the VET decree require accredited vocational examination centres to use NOVETAL's electronic examination platform for registering data needed for final qualification examinations and issuing certificates.

To obtain relevant data regarding the alignment of labour market and VET, Hungary has developed [VET career tracking system](#) run by NOVETAL since 2020. All participants in school-based VET and adult learning are included, regardless of whether they completed their training, including dropouts and NEETs (not in education, employment, or training). Tracking is primarily carried out through administrative data integration, where labour market, higher education, and social security registers are integrated anonymously into the VET registration system every six months. Regarding school-based VET, this data is supplemented by a questionnaire focusing on students' satisfaction with education and future plans. The first data integration took place in 2022, resulting in over 1 600 000 tracking cases with a nine-year follow-up period. This integration, along with questionnaires completed by over 11 000 students, [enabled analysis of the EU Council's employment rate indicator for VET graduates](#) (ReferNet Hungary & Cedefop, 2023b), with initial results from the 2020/21 academic year showing that 68% of school-based VET students were in the labour market one year after graduating, and 22% continued their education. Long-term, the system aims to improve quality assurance, provide feedback on training relevance, and inform career guidance, facilitating studies on transitions and skill mismatches.

5. Statistical information in relation to EU targets

Hungary's VET system shows positive trends, exceeding targets in areas such as adult learning participation and graduate employment. While further progress is needed in areas like reducing early school leaving and increasing work-based learning opportunities to align with EU objectives, significant improvements have been made in these areas in recent years, demonstrating the impact of ongoing reforms.

Regarding the role of VET in developing a lifelong learning culture, Hungary performs strongly with 62.2% of adults (aged 25-64) having participated in learning activities within

the last 12 months (2022). This is the second-highest rate in the EU, well above both the EU average of 39.5% and the 47% target set for 2025 in the Council Resolution on the European Education Area. This high participation rate demonstrates Hungary's commitment to lifelong learning, supported by various initiatives such as financial and non-financial incentives, flexible programme structures, and shorter course delivery options. However, the rate of early leavers from education and training remains a challenge. Although it has improved from 12.5% in 2017 to 10.3% in 2024, it is still above the EU average of 9.3% in 2024 and the 2030 target of under 9%.

The employment rate for 20–64-year-olds is 81.1% in 2024, exceeding both the EU average of 75.8% and the EU target of 78% for 2030. The NEET rate for 15–29-year-olds in Hungary is 10.9%, aligning with the current EU average of 11% (2024). Despite being higher than the EU's 2030 target of 9%, this indicator has shown improvement from 15.1% in 2015, reflecting ongoing efforts to better (re)engage young people in education or employment.

Hungary demonstrates strong performance in the employment rate of recent IVET graduates (20 to 34-year-olds). In 2024, the employment rate reached 84.2%, surpassing both the EU average of 80% and the 2025 Council Recommendation target of 82%. While the employment rate has fluctuated between 77.3% (in 2015) and 87.2% (2022) over the period, the trend shows a general upward direction, indicating improved alignment with the labour market.

Regarding digital targets, significant progress has been made in adults (16–74-year-olds) with at least basic digital skills, showing a 9.8 percentage point increase from 2021 (49.1%) to 2023 (58.9%), surpassing the EU average of 55.6%. However, gaps remain significant among older generations and vulnerable groups (European Commission, 2024b). Flexible learning programmes (such as the orientation year, 'springboard' class, and school workshop programme) for disadvantaged groups, increasing accessibility, and supporting adult learners through measures like distance learning and validation of prior learning can contribute to addressing these gaps in digital skills.

The country still falls short in work-based learning. In 2024, only 43.1% of recent IVET graduates (20 to 34-year-olds) experienced work-based learning, significantly below the EU average of 65.3% and the 60% EU target set in the Council Recommendation on VET by 2025. However, this indicator has improved considerably since the 2020 VET reform, rising from 29.7% in 2021. This demonstrates the positive impact of VET reforms focused on developing dual VET programmes and the school modernisation programme, which includes the creation of school workshops offering work-based learning opportunities.

Hungary needs to increase participation in international programmes. In 2021, only 0.2 % of learners in IVET experienced learning mobility abroad. The figure has remained stagnant for several years historically, while EU recommendations aim for 8% by 2025 (as outlined in the Council Recommendation on VET and the Skills Agenda) and 12% by 2030 (Council Recommendation Europe on the Move).

Table 1. **European vocational education and training policy dashboard: Hungary**

Type of indicator ⁽⁵⁾	Indicator	Last available year	HU	EU-27	Policy Document	EU target (year)
VET for developing a lifelong learning culture						
Progress	Adults (25-64 year-olds) with a learning experience in the last 12 months (%) [*]	2022	62.2	39.5	Skills Agenda	50% (2025)
					Council Resolution on EEA	47% (2025)
					ESPR Action Plan	60% (2030)
Progress	Low-qualified adults with a learning experience in the last 12 months (%) ^(*)	2022	42.1	18.4	Skills Agenda	30% (2025)
Progress	Unemployed adults with a learning experience in the last 4 weeks (%)	2024	3.3	15.3	Skills Agenda	20% (2025)
Context	Employment rate for 20-64 year-olds (%)	2024	81.1	75.8	ESPR Action Plan	78% (2030)
Context	Early leavers from education and training (%)	2024	10.3	9.3	Council Resolution on EEA	<9% (2030)
Context	NEET rate for 15-29 year-olds (%)	2024	10.9	11.0	ESPR Action Plan	9% (2030)
VET for Resilience, transitions, sustainability and excellence						
Progress	Adults (16-74 year-olds) with at least basic digital skills (%)	2023	58.9	55.6	Skills Agenda	70% (2025)
					ESPR Action Plan	80% (2030)
Progress	Employment rate for recent IVET graduates (20-34 year-olds) (%)	2024	84.2	80.0	Council Rec on VET	82% (2025)
Progress	Recent IVET graduates (20-34 year-olds) with a work-based learning experience as part of their vocational education and training (%)	2024	43.1	65.3	Council Rec on VET	60% (2025)
					Council Resolution on EEA	
Context	25-34 year-olds with tertiary attainment (%)	2024	32.3	44.2	Council Resolution on EEA	45% (2025)
Context	Gender employment gap (%)	2024	7.9	10.0	ESPR Action Plan	To be halved (2030)
Context	People at risk of poverty or social exclusion (1000s)	2024	1914	93 333	ESPR Action Plan	15 million decrease (2030)
Context	Employed ICT specialists (1000s)	2024	211.1 ^e	10273.6 ^e	2030 Digital Compass	20 million, with convergence between men and women (2030)
VET for the European Education Area						
Progress	Learners in IVET who benefitted from a learning mobility abroad (%) ^{**}	2021	0.2	2.1 ^{dv}	Council Rec on VET	8% (2025)
					Skills Agenda	
					Council Rec Europe on the Move	12% (2030)
Context	Average number of foreign languages learned in IVET	2023	1	1.2 ^d		

Available flags: d – definition differs, e – estimated, V – Cedefop estimate.

* Eurostat data (Adult Education Survey, special calculation excluding guided on-the-job training)

** Provisional estimates affected by the Covid19 pandemic

Source: Cedefop. (n.d.). [European VET policy dashboard](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/european-vet-policy-dashboard).

⁽⁵⁾ Definitions on the type of indicators are available at <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/european-vet-policy-dashboard/methodology>

6. Conclusion

Hungary's priorities outlined in its national implementation plan, in line with EU priorities for VET, progressed significantly between 2020 and 2024. These priorities include creating a dynamic learning environment, that prepares VET for the green and digital transitions; expanding dual training; promoting flexibility, inclusion, and lifelong learning; and improving the quality management system in VET.

Hungary has made significant progress in upgrading VET schools across the country, making learning more attractive and supporting green and digital changes. Investments in energy efficiency, workshops, and digital equipment are ongoing, with plans to modernise at least 15 VET centres by 2027. By the end of 2024, Hungary had started renovation in 18 centres - more than the initial target of 15 - out of 41 VET centres overall. The measures include development of digital learning resources and their integration into the electronic school management system (KRÉTA), helping promote digital learning in line with the NIP. Work continues to keep up with rapid digital developments. In 2023, sustainability was included in qualification requirements to encourage eco-friendly practices among students - ahead of the planned target year of 2025. Additionally, an online platform was created for VET teachers' CPD, tailored specifically to VET needs, offering digital, inclusion, in-company, and sector-specific courses. Salary increases based on performance indicators such as CPD have been introduced as a way to make the teaching profession more attractive and address an ageing teaching workforce. The development of this platform was completed in 2021, while the offering of CPD courses is ongoing and continuously adapted to reflect current needs, in line with the NIP. However, further steps are needed to strengthen sectoral cooperation and secure funding so teachers can access CPD programmes regardless of their school budgets, as the NIP also aims to develop a financial scheme to support needs-based choice for VET teachers.

Hungary has made significant progress in developing its dual VET system between 2020 and 2024, implementing various measures set out in its NIP to strengthen practical training and increase company participation. Key developments include the establishment of 31 sectoral training centres (STCs) to involve SMEs in dual VET. STCs are supported by new operational models, digital curricula, and IT systems. Alongside STCs, the first sectoral knowledge centre was established in 2023 – in addition to dual VET providers and VET schools, these centres involve at least one higher education institution in their partnerships, promoting excellence and permeability between upper secondary VET and higher education. The establishment of more knowledge centres, as set out by the NIP, will strengthen cooperation, support green and digital goals, and improve overall quality. To encourage greater company participation in dual VET, Hungary also introduced financial and administrative incentives, like tax refunds and a dedicated dual VET management module within the KRÉTA school management system. Furthermore, sector skill councils have actively facilitated knowledge sharing

among dual VET providers through meetings and a published methodology guide, aligned with the NIP.

Between 2020 and 2024, several measures improved VET flexibility, inclusion, and lifelong learning. Flexible learning programmes were introduced in the 2021/22 school year, to support disadvantaged learners and those without qualifications. Support included legal adjustments, methodology development, and networking for teachers, leading to increased student enrolment by 2024. To address skills gaps among incoming VET students, learning support groups were established in IVET schools, leading to improved student performance and a reduction in early leaving through targeted interventions and continuous engagement with families. Developing a streamlined career guidance system to involve parents, students, teachers, and companies, will help reduce early school leaving. The general scholarship scheme for IVET learners was expanded in the 2021/22 school year, introducing the *Apáczai* Scholarship for disadvantaged students, alongside mentoring programmes. The certified technician programme, which fosters excellence and seamless transitions to higher education and the labour market, also saw significant expansion, with strengthened partnerships with universities. From 2023, universities can establish a pre-university status for last-year VET students, allowing them to undertake additional coursework and earn micro-credentials, with direct enrolment outside the standard admission process. To further support lifelong learning, the government introduced interest-free study loans and extended tax incentives to dual companies for training their own employees. While a national validation system for prior learning is still under development, steps have been taken to develop methodology.

Between 2020 and 2024, Hungary implemented significant reforms to improve quality assurance in VET. A new quality management system (QMS), aligned with EQAVET, was introduced in 2022. It requires VET providers to conduct regular self-assessments, teacher evaluations, and external reviews based on common standards. Teachers' performance evaluations now influence their salaries. To ensure independent and standardised vocational examinations, the establishment of accredited vocational examination centres (AVECs) started in 2020, and many of these centres are now operational. These centres provide certificates with Europass Supplements, and from 2024, they are required to use electronic platforms for examinations and data registration. A populated examination databank will facilitate uniform examination requirements. A VET career tracking system was developed in 2022, collecting data on graduate pathways to inform quality assurance, and career guidance.

References

[accessed 13.8.2025]

Cedefop. (n.d.). [European VET policy dashboard](#) [Online tool].

Cedefop. (2023a). [European Inventory of National Qualifications Frameworks 2022 – Hungary](#).

Cedefop. (2023b). [NQF online tool](#).

Cedefop. (2024). [Vocational education and training in Hungary: short description](#).

Cedefop, IKK, & MCI. (2023). [Vocational education and training in Europe - Hungary: system description](#). In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2024). Vocational education and training in Europe: VET in Europe database - detailed VET system descriptions [Database].

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). [Timeline of VET policies in Europe \(2024 update\)](#) [Online tool].

Education GPS, OECD. (2025, May 29). [Hungary: Student performance \(PISA 2022\)](#).

European Commission. (2024a). [2024 Country Report - Hungary Accompanying the document Recommendation for a COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on the economic, social, employment, structural and budgetary policies of Hungary](#) (SWD/2024/617 final)

European Commission. (2024b). [Digital Decade Country Report 2024: Hungary](#).

Hungary. (2022). [National Implementation Plan of the Council recommendation on VET: Hungary](#).

ReferNet Hungary, & Cedefop. (2019, July 4). [Hungary: modernising vocational schools to meet 21st century sectoral skill needs](#). *National news on VET*.

ReferNet Hungary, & Cedefop. (2021, July 14). [Hungary: increasing VET attractiveness for learners and companies](#). *National news on VET*.

ReferNet Hungary, & Cedefop. (2022, July 12). [Hungary: supporting digital transition of VET](#). *National news on VET*.

ReferNet Hungary, & Cedefop. (2023a, March 2). [Hungary: quality management system in VET](#). *National news on VET*.

ReferNet Hungary, & Cedefop. (2023, August 7). [Hungary: developing a career tracking system for VET and adult learning graduates](#). *National news on VET*.

ReferNet Hungary, & Cedefop. (2024, September 26). [Hungary: more opportunities for at-risk learners through flexible programmes](#). *National news on VET*.

ReferNet Hungary, & Cedefop. (2025, January 9). [Hungary: certified technician training boosts VET excellence](#). *National news on VET*.