

Nino Buić, AVETAE

# VET system in the Republic of Croatia

PAFO 2024, Zagreb



Agencija za  
strukovno obrazovanje  
i obrazovanje odraslih





**1**

# **General information**

# Croatia

Area: 56,594 km<sup>2</sup>

Population: 3.9 M

Declaration of Independence: October 8, 1991

Capital city: Zagreb

Member of the EU: July 1, 2013

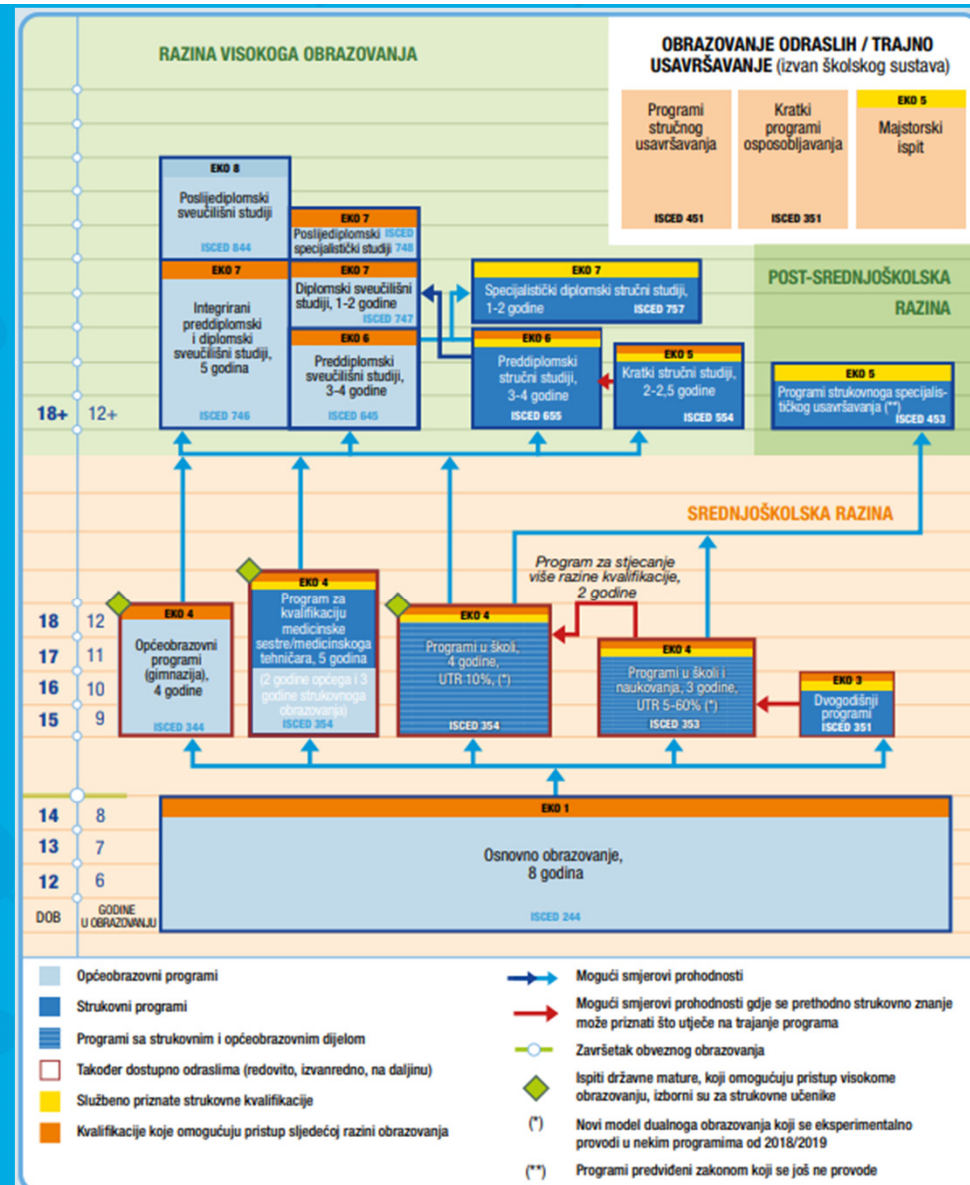
Divided into 20 counties and the city of Zagreb



# Education system

The education system in the Republic of Croatia consists of:

- early and preschool education
- of primary education (304,951)
- secondary education (145,976)
- higher education (151,827)





2

# **Vocational education and training**

# Vocational education

Education in vocational schools lasts from **one to five years**, and the duration depends on the type of educational program, that is, the vocational curriculum for a specific profession or qualification.

After completing the vocational school, it is possible to enter the **labor market** or, subject to certain conditions, **to continue education** at the secondary school level or at HE.

# Main features

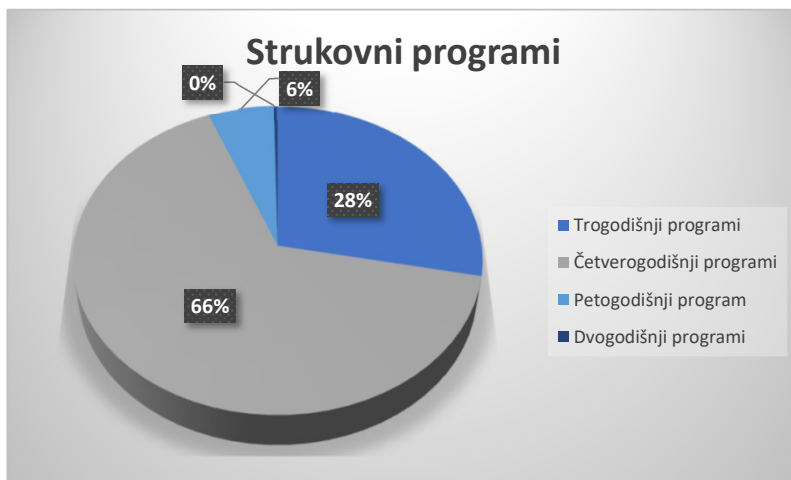
Regular VET is financed from public sources and is **free**. All VET programs combine **professional and general competences**, in different degrees; all involve WBL, of varying duration and type.

The entry point is the completion of compulsory education at the age of 14 or 15.

Almost **70% of students are in regular VET** . About 2/3 of VET students attend 4-year school programs, with less than one-third in 3-year programs. Only one program lasts 5 years and leads to a general nurse qualification.

Four-year, mostly school-based VET programs, with a WBL share of around 10%, as well as a dual model with a WBL share of around 70%, lead to qualifications at the level of CROQF 4.2/ EQF 4 and enable progression to HE (after the state matura exams).

In 2020, about **80% of graduates of four- and five-year programs took the state matriculation exams** , and about 50% enrolled in higher education after completing high school education.



## Number of students in secondary school

Gymnasium - 42,925

Vocational schools - 102,754

## Number of students in VET

Two-year - 330

Three-year - 28,889

Four-year-old - 67,662

Five-year - 5,837

## Interesting points

In 2020, about **54% of graduates of four-year vocational education enrolled in tertiary education** after completing secondary education.

Participation in VET is one of the highest in the EU (70% compared to the EU-27 average of 47.3% in 2022). **The Republic of Croatia has the lowest early school leaving rate in the EU** (2.3% in 2022, compared to the EU27 average of 9.6%)

**Self-evaluation** in VET is part of the QA system. Support measures have been introduced to improve self-assessment, including school visits, upgrades to the e-Quality online tool and feedback reports with recommendations.

Croatia is establishing a network of **25 RCKs** .

**WorldSkills Croatia** competition in 2019 launched a reformed VET student competition model and became the leading national event for the promotion of VET.

# Challenges

Priorities for the development of VET are aimed at increasing its **relevance, quality, attractiveness and internationalization** .

**Reform efforts** are underway to address issues of outdated curricula, skills mismatches, the quality of work-based learning and apprenticeships, and the public image of VET.

**Curriculum reform** is aimed at a comprehensive redesign in accordance with the needs of the labor market, learning outcomes, work-based learning, modern teaching and modular and flexible provision.

# Challenges

**Youth unemployment** - higher compared to EU27 18,4% vs 14,6% in 03/2024.

The share of young people (aged 15 to 24) who are neither employed nor in education and training (**NEET**) was 11.8% in 2019, but increased to 14.4% in 2022.

**Demographics** are reducing the number of students, especially in three-year programs. Apprenticeship programs (JMOs) have been hardest hit, losing half of their students in the last 8 years.

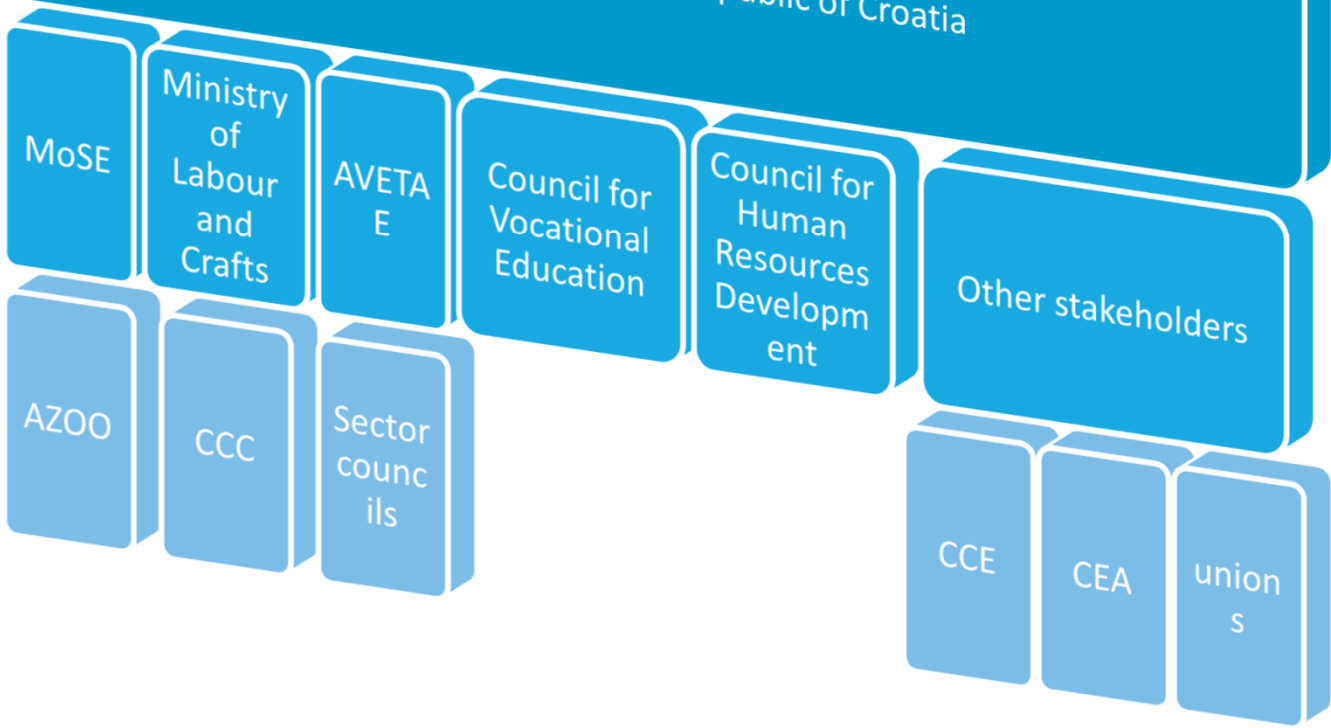
**Participation in adult learning** in 2022 was 4.4%, which places Croatia at the bottom of the EU ranking despite tax incentives available to entrepreneurs for education and training costs and VAT exemptions for adult education providers. The main activities on **the promotion of lifelong learning** in Croatia through the activities of AVETAE + voucher scheme



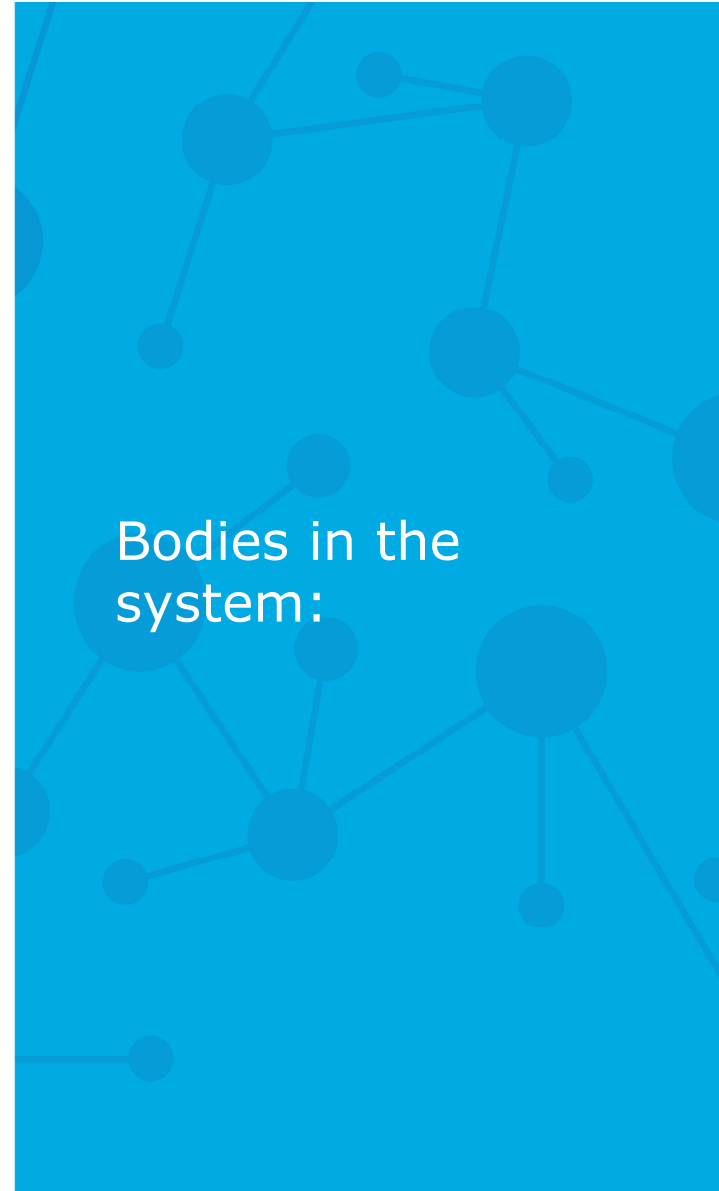
3

# Management

# The VET system in the Republic of Croatia



Bodies in the system:





4

**Teachers**

In VET there are:

- teachers of general subjects
- teachers of professional-theoretical content,
- teachers of work-based learning,
- vocational teachers and
- teaching assistants.

Teachers of general subjects, such as mathematics and English, are qualified according to the general regulations on teachers issued by the Ministry of Education.

This requires graduate university or professional studies and pedagogical competences.

# CPD

Teachers, teachers and professional associates can advance to the following positions:

- Mentor
- Adviser
- Excellent advisor

In-service teacher training provided by AVETAE



5

# Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education

# Agency

## Establishment:

July 1, 2010 - Law on the Agency for Vocational Education and Training (Official Gazette 24/10)

It was created by the merger of two agencies that operated separately, the Agency for Vocational Education (2005) and the Agency for Adult Education (2006).

## Structure:

- Board of Directors, director
- Organizational unit, departments, departments
- C approx. 180 employees

# AVETAE tasks

- Professional training of teachers
- Professional examination and advancement of teachers in the profession
- Professional and pedagogical monitoring of the work of schools
- Skills competitions
- Development of vocational curricula (*methodology, Guidelines,...*)
- QA of VET, management of self-evaluation of VET and self-evaluation and external evaluation of AE institutions
- Development of OS, QA, management body of CROQF and sector councils
- Project preparation and management
- Level 2 Intermediate Body
- International cooperation
- Projects



# International cooperation

Cooperation with international institutions:

- European Center for the Development of Vocational Education (CEDEFOP)
- European Training Foundation (ETF)
- UNESCO-UNEVOC
- OECD
- WorldSkills International, WorldSkills Europe



Active involvement in processes and policies at the EU level

- EQF, EQAVET, ACVT, DG VT, EPALE

**Agencija za strukovno obrazovanje i  
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Garićgradska ulica 18  
10000 Zagreb  
[www.asoo.hr](http://www.asoo.hr)



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