



MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

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# ReferNet 2024

# Partnership forum

Zagreb, 14 May 2024



**One of the fundamental goals of the Government of the Republic of Croatia within the framework of the National Recovery and Resilience Program 2021-2026 is to create, through reforms and financial investments, a quality educational infrastructure and a breakthrough in education, in order to continuously prepare young people for the challenges and jobs of the future.**



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Croatia is one of the EU member states with the largest participation in VET.

In the 2023/24 academic year 70% VET students of the total secondary school population.

304 VET providers which, on average, have 400 students in an average of 10 different educational programmes, which is extremely demanding in financial, human resources and organizational terms.

Indicators show there is still a mismatch between skills  
our market needs.



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# Regional centres of competences in VET



**Regional centres of competence** are places of VET excellence where programmes of regular vocational education, teacher training and lifelong learning will be implemented, as well as other forms of formal and non-formal education (work-based learning, competitions, knowledge and skills presentations, etc.)

The basic features of centres of competence are innovative learning models, and excellence of teachers, lecturers and workplace mentors, as well as high-quality infrastructure, constructive and creative cooperation with social partners, the public sector, businesses, and other interested institutions of the wider community.



# Setting the Scene

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## Smart Specialisation Strategy- 2016-2020

Identified the sectors of agriculture, mechanical engineering, tourism and hospitality, electrical engineering and information technology, and health care as advanced in the context of contributing to the further development of the regions



# Setting the Scene

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- ❑ **Law on VET**
- ❑ **Decision on the Network of Regional Centers of Competence in Vocational Education (Official Gazette, No. 45/2018)**
- ❑ **In July 2018, 25 institutions were appointed in 19 counties in the (sub)sectors: tourism and hospitality, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering and computing, agriculture and healthcare for a period of 5 years with the possibility of re-appointment for the period from 2018-2023.**



# Areas of investment

## European regional development fund (ERDF)

- Reconstruction and adaptation of buildings and teaching premises – infrastructural investment
- purchase of specialized equipment

## European social fund (ESF)

- Investment in human capital ('soft activities')
- Networking with stakeholders and international cooperation
- WBL provisions development
- Career guidance and counselling activities
- Preparation and implementation of different educational programmes
- Professional development of teachers



# Funding

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**European regional development  
fund (ERDF)**

**European social fund (ESF)**

**Available: 100.338.750 euros**

**Available: 160.298.294 euros**



# IMPROVEMENTS

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- ❑ Cooperation with education and labor market stakeholders at the national and international level
- ❑ School capacities such as new spatial capacities of schools, upgrading the existing capacities, reconstruction/renovation/adaptation of existing school capacities, enabling accessibility for students with disabilities
- ❑ Material conditions such as highly specialized equipment, machines, devices, tools, ICT equipment (hardware and software)



# IMPROVEMENTS

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- ❑ Further development, cooperation, and connection with the labor market relevance
- ❑ Increased competence and competitiveness of VET teachers, professional associates, mentors at employers, students and participants of adult education (employed and unemployed) through education and professional development and the exchange of best practices
- ❑ Increased attractiveness of vocational education and training



# IMPROVEMENTS

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53 occupational standards, 56 qualification standards, 50 vocational curricula, 17 subject curricula, modernized 43 education programs/vocational curricula, developed 35 partial qualifications and micro-qualifications, 127 adult education programs and 100 informal adult education programs



# CHALLENGES

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- Sustainability
- Demographic trends



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