

A bridge to the future
European policy for vocational education and training 2002-10
National policy report – Lithuania



This report is one of a set of European country reports on VET policy development prepared within Cedefop's ReferNet network. Refernet is a European network of national networks providing information and analysis on national VET to Cedefop and disseminating information on European VET and Cedefop work to stakeholders in the EU Member States, Norway and Iceland. The report has been produced by Refernet Lithuania as a contribution to Cedefop's fourth policy report which reviews progress in VET towards the policy goals of the Copenhagen process. The opinions expressed in this national report are not necessarily those of Cedefop.

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Preface

The "Copenhagen process" was launched as the contribution of Vocational Education and Training (VET) to the challenges identified in the Lisbon-Agenda. In the Copenhagen Declaration, approved on 30 November 2002, the ministers responsible for VET in 31 European countries (EU Member States, candidate countries, EFTA-EEA countries), the European social partners and the European Commission agreed on enhanced European cooperation in VET. The policy priorities were further reviewed in the Maastricht Communiqué, (2004) the Helsinki Communiqué (2006) and Bordeaux Communiqué (2008).

This Policy Report forms part of the Cedefop ReferNet 2010 work programme. It outlines Lithuania's progress in VET in priority areas agreed in the Copenhagen process and provides examples of initiatives to illustrate this progress and to explain the rationale behind. The report follows a common template provided by Cedefop and is structured around the following 9 themes:

- Socioeconomic Challenges for Future VET Policy Development;
- Economic Crisis – VET Policies as Recovery Measures;
- Impact and Implications of the Joint Work on European Principles and Tools;
- Strengthening the Links between VET and the Labour Market;
- Addressing Equity, Social Inclusion and Active Citizenship;
- Quality, Excellence and Attractiveness of VET;
- Enhancing Creativity and Innovation;
- Financing VET;
- Progress in Modernising European VET Systems in the Copenhagen Process and Priorities for Future Cooperation.

The national ReferNet policy reports will be one of the main sources Cedefop will use to produce the Cedefop's fourth policy report which reviews progress in VET towards the policy goals of the Copenhagen process. National reports of ReferNet member states are available from the homepages of the national coordinators of the network. More information about the ReferNet network and its products may be found at the homepage of ReferNet Lithuania (<http://www.kpmplc.lt.refernet>).

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THEME 1: SOCIOECONOMIC CHALLENGES FOR FUTURE VET POLICY DEVELOPMENT

1.1 Impact of globalisation on VET

The vocational education and training (VET) curricula are drafted following the respective VET standards and the general requirements established by the Ministry of Education and Science. With the aim to respond to the challenges of the globalisation, the provisions for **key competences training** are included in the training goals established in VET standards. Annually approved general VET plans establish what part of training should be devoted to those subjects developing general competences. For example, foreign language subjects (1st and 2nd) are included in vocational training programmes for the persons who have no lower-secondary education and those aiming for the upper-secondary education. A special focus is on developing **entrepreneurship**. The Basics of Economics and Business (*ekonomikos ir verslo pagrindų dalykas*) is included in all vocational training programmes. Also, the students gain business skills and knowledge when participating in the activities of the Practical Training Firms (*verslo praktinio mokymo firmos*) and *the Students' Training Companies (mokomosios moksleivių bendrovės)* (see Section 7.1).

VET institutions are eligible for funding from natural and legal persons for the services provided. Rather often education institutions establish school companies, hotels, workshops where their students may carry out practical training. For instance, VšĮ Alanta Technology and Business School owns 49% of the private company Alantos agroservisas shares. This company provides services and produces and processes agricultural products. The students have the opportunity to practise their skills at the meat processing manufactory, in the shops or the training workshops that belong to the company. These measures help to improve **the preparation of the learners for the real labour market**.

1.2 Impact of technological progress on VET

With the aim to detect and react to the possible **skill gaps** that may occur due to various factors, including the changes in technologies, methodology for identification of “Future Skill Needs” was prepared in 2005-2008. When carrying out sectoral studies the recommendations for the update of the training content were developed. With the help of the EU financial support in 2003-2004 and 2005-2008, 10 sectors were studied (for more details on the identification of future skill needs and sectoral studies please refer to Section – 4.1).

During the analysed period considerable funding was allocated for the **renewal of infrastructure** to meet the current technological requirements. For example, the EU structural support was allocated for VET institutions infrastructure development projects: “The Modernisation of the Constructors Training Base” (Vilnius Builders’ Training Centre, Project value – 1449940 Euro), “The Modernisation of the VET Facilities in the field of Construction” (Alytus Vocational Education and Training Centre, Project value – 1231214 Euro), “The Modernisation the VET Facilities for Car Mechanics” (Vilnius School of Car Mechanics and Tailors, Project value – 808669.8 Euro), “The Modernisation of the Training Facilities in the field of Construction” (Alytus VET centre, Project value – 1231214 Euro), “The Renewal of Basic Equipment and Training Infrastructure in the Utena Regional Vocational Education and Training Centre” (Utena Regional Vocational Education and Training Centre, Project value – 791155 Euro). Also, the funds for the renewal of VET

infrastructure are foreseen in the Practical VET Resources Development Programme (*Praktinio profesinio mokymo išteklių plėtros programa, 2007*). In 2009 according to this programme 8 agreements for the establishment of sectoral practical training centres were signed. They will be equipped with the latest technologies and equipment. The centres will be open to students and teachers from VET and higher education institutions.

VET curricula compliance to the needs of economy is ensured through the VET standards following which the VET providers draft vocational training programmes. The standards are developed in cooperation with the employers. Before the approval of standards on the national level, they are endorsed by the tripartite Industrial Legal Bodies (*Ūkio šakų ekspertų grupės*) (see 4.1 Section). In such a way it is ensured that the competencies in the Standards are defined with regard to the technological progress in sectors. Once the Standard is approved, the related formal vocational training programmes have to be updated accordingly.

The change in the technologies also determines the need to update the **VET teachers' competencies**. The first national level initiative was implemented in 2003-2004 under the Phare 2001 programme. The methodology for the identification of strategic (technological) competencies and preparation of qualification development modules was drafted and the technological competencies of the VET teachers in the field of construction were updated. In 2005-2008 with the support of ESF technological competencies of vocational teachers were updated in agriculture, transport, mechanics and metal work sectors. Moreover, the VET teacher technological competence development is approved as one of the two priority areas of VET teachers' professional development for 2008–2010.

Within the national level project “VET Teacher Training Programme on ICT Introduction in VET”, vocational teachers were trained to apply innovative ICT-based training methods in education process. 12 distance learning courses were prepared when implementing the Project, vocational teachers were trained to apply 24 new computer training tools, innovative “learning through activities” education method and distance learning as such.

1.3 Impact of demographic change and international migration on VET

According to the Statistics Lithuania in 2002–2009 the number of children aged 0–14 declined by almost one forth. For this reason, the volume of learning is expected to decrease already in the upcoming years. On the other hand, ageing of the society has become an important concern for Lithuania typically as for other European countries. Based on the official forecasts, in 2025 persons over 60 will constitute almost one forth of all population. It is likely that under these circumstances demand for continuing training should increase.

Due to these reasons it is important to focus on the tools for increasing the **attractiveness of vocational education and training** among the youth and the adults. One of the main aims – to achieve, that students would increasingly enrol in vocational education and training and would complete lower and upper secondary education through the VET stream. Even though the number of those choosing VET programmes have slightly increased in the recent years, the attractiveness of vocational education and training remains very low as compared to the EU-27 average (in 2007 there were 26.4% of the pupils in upper secondary education enrolled in VET stream; the EU-27 average – 51.5%).

The promotion of VET attractiveness receives a lot of attention in Lithuania. The foreseen measures include the implementation of modular vocational education and training, bringing closer secondary education and vocational education and training, the development of opportunities for VET graduates to enter higher education (see Section 6.4), the establishment of sectoral practical training centres (see Section 6.2), the development of teachers

competencies (see Section 6.5), the development of financial incentives to encourage private investment into education (tax incentives, etc) (see section 8.1), further reorganisation of state-run VET schools into self-governing institutions (see Section 8.4). In addition, the measures for encouragement of adults and groups at risk to participate in education are foreseen (see Section 5.1).

While in 2006-2008 the **emigration of residents** was decreasing, in 2009 it started rising again. According to the assessment of the Eurostat, Lithuania is among the 4 EU member states with a negative net migration rate (the difference in the number of the emigrants and the immigrants divided by 1,000 inhabitants). In 2008 this indicator in Lithuania was – 2.3. The number of the immigrants has been increasing since 2003. Most of them are the Lithuanians coming back to Lithuania. Foreign citizens are guaranteed primary, lower and upper secondary education as well as access to special education and higher education programmes and vocational training programmes leading to initial qualification. The measures for training of migrants are described in section 5.1.

1.4 Impact of greening of economy on VET

With the aim to ensure sustainable education conditions, to improve the quality of formal, non-formal and informal education and to raise public awareness, **National Sustainable Education Development Programme for 2007–2015** (*Nacionalinė darnaus vystymosi švietimo 2007-2015 metų programa, 2007*) was approved, which also includes the environmental issues. The programme sets out the following measures: inclusion of sustainable development provisions into the education and training programmes, including VET, improving of related teachers competencies, preparation of methodological material, organisation of non-formal education events, education of elderly people, etc.

Since 2006 **education consultant** training programme “Society Sustainable Development and Development of Interdisciplinary Competencies” (*Visuomenės darnaus vystymosi ir jo ugdyimo tarpdalykinių kompetencijų plėtra*) is carried out. It aims at training school teams competent to implement education models oriented towards the sustainable development and to share this experience with their colleagues. In addition, a civil servants training programme “Sustainable Development in Lithuania” is being implemented.

As it is established in the general VET plans, environmental issues are included into all formal **vocational training programmes**. Also, separate study programmes were developed for ecological farming as well as the VET standards for training of environmental employees. Many short qualification development programmes are prepared for company managers and specialists involved in dealing with environmental issues.

Example

1. Title of policy/ measure: **Green Diploma** (*Žaliojo diplomas*)

2. Description

Green diploma is a document, proving the relevant professional preparation and qualification of a farmer or an agricultural enterprise. Its structure is defined by the Ministry of Agriculture and it gives a right for farmers and agriculture enterprises to participate in practical training of agriculture specialists. Green diploma evidences application of advanced technologies. It is also one of the priority criteria for receiving support according to 2007-2013 rural development plan measure “Modernisation of Agriculture” (*Žemės ūkio valdų modernizavimas*).

Applicants to the diploma must prove a relevant competence of person responsible for practical training and a relevant technological-technical level of the farm (correspondence to technical sanitary requirements, waste management and compliance with environmental requirements, storage, usage

and transportation of fertilisers and chemical substances according to technological and environmental requirements, level of technologies, etc.)

The document is issued for a period of 5 years. Holders of diploma sign the agreement with Chamber of Agriculture to organise practical placement for learners, and the person responsible for practical training is obliged to participate in related training courses.

In 2006–2009 green diplomas were awarded for 200 farmers or farms. List of holders of green diploma is disseminated for training providers in agriculture field, it is published on the website of Chamber of Agriculture and website of Programme *Leader* and Farmer’s Methodology Training Centre.

Target groups: farmers, agriculture enterprises and learners.

3. Level of operation and key actors involved

Operation: national level.

Key actors: Chamber of Agriculture, Programme *Leader* and Farmer’s Methodology Training Centre.

4. Evaluation and conclusions

Green diploma encourages farmers and agriculture enterprises to follow the innovations and improve their qualification. Applicants to the diploma are required to have finished training courses, the responsible person is obliged to participate in related training courses. The initiative motivates farmers and agriculture enterprises to take part in training of agriculture employers and, in accordance, contributes to enhancing quality of practical training.

5. Source

Chambers of Agriculture: <http://www.zur.lt/index.php?-2040350452>

Programme *Leader* and Farmer’s Methodology Training Centre: <http://www.zmmc.lt/lt/zemdirbiu-mokymai/aliojo-diplomo-kiai.html>

1.5 Other challenges for VET

In Lithuanian labour market, the number of qualified and unqualified workers (when upper secondary or lower education is sufficient to perform the work) exceeds the number of specialists (professionals, technicians and associated professional, clerical support workers) several times. However, a number of graduates from tertiary education (ISCED 5-6) approximately 4 times exceeds number of graduates from ISCED 3-4 vocational and pre-vocational programmes.

Another challenge is a rather low participation of adults in education and training. As compared to the EU average, a significantly smaller number of adults participate in education: in Lithuania share of the population aged 25-64 participating in education is 4.9%, whereas the EU-27 average is 9.5%.

THEME 2:

ECONOMIC CRISIS – VET POLICIES AS RECOVERY MEASURES

2.1 Initiatives for recovery

The influence of economic crisis in Lithuania:

- Annual growth rate of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2002-2007 was around 8%. In 2008 the GDP growth slowed down to 3% and, in 2009, according to preliminary data, it was 15% lower than in previous year.
- According to labour force survey data, the unemployment rate in 2002-2007 decreased from 13.8% to 4.3%. In 2009, according to the preliminary data of Statistics Lithuania, it amounted to 13.6%. According to the Lithuanian Labour Exchange, in 2009 the number of the unemployed registered in the territorial Labour Exchange Offices increased by 72.4% as compared to 2008.

The Government of Republic of Lithuania has developed a **Plan for Stimulation of Economy** (*Ekonomikos skatinimo planas*) in 2009 with the aim to improve business conditions, to retain jobs and to reduce social tension in the society. The plan consists of five parts: expanding business financing opportunities, increasing energy efficiency in the buildings, faster implementation of EU structural support, improvement of business environment (*Saulėtekis*), promoting export and investments. The expected benefit of the plan to the residents:

- opportunity to continue work;
- opportunity to pay less for heating and have more income for personal expenses;
- warm kindergartens, schools, hospitals and foster care institutions.

The plan foresees that the Government and the municipalities will implement public buildings renovation and insulation programme (value - 260 million Euro), especially focusing on the renovation of schools. The funding for the programme will be allocated from the EU structural funds.

With the aim to promote entrepreneurship, self-employment and the creation of new jobs, Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund (*Verslumo skatinimo fondas*) was established at the end of 2009. It aims at creating conditions for micro and small companies and natural persons to start up their businesses and for the social companies to develop the existing businesses. It is planned that the funds allocated from the Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund will enable to organise training for more than 5,000 persons, of whom 1200 will receive loans for the start up or development of the existing businesses. The micro-loans firstly will be granted to vulnerable social groups – unemployed, young people up to the age of 29, pre-retirement age people, and those elder than 50 years of age.

State Governance Improvement Commission (The Sunset Commission - *Saulėlydžio komisija*) was established at the beginning of 2009. Its task is to carry out the review of the state institutions (including education institutions) functions and activities with the aim to improve their efficiency and reduce their expenditures. For instance, in 2009 the decision was made to close down the Qualification Authority under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and to readdress its functions to the Ministry of Education and Science. Due to this reason the corresponding changes in the Law on VET were adopted and Methodological

Centre for Vocational Education and Training (as of 2010 – Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre) was entitled to manage the qualification system.

In 2009 the **new edition of the Law on Support for Employment** was approved (came into force on 1 August 2009). The Amendments to the Law aim at reducing the negative impact of the economic downturn on the growth of the unemployment, creating conditions for retaining jobs and involving more persons into the active labour market policy measures. For example, the Law provides that public works may be organised for the employees of companies facing economic difficulties in order to retain their jobs. The employers receive subsidies for the salaries of these employees. The Law expanded the groups of those eligible for subsidies to create new jobs when starting-up their business (disabled people, large family parents, etc). The Law also provides that the training grant may be awarded not only to the unemployed people but also to those employees who have been given a notice of dismissal. Significant support is established to the residents who are taking care of their family members due to various circumstances and cannot find a proper job. The employers who have offered a job for persons qualified as social worker assistants after the special training course are eligible for the subsidies to cover their salaries.

Measures for the development of VET are further continued. For example:

- **Implementation of 2007-2013 Human Resources Development Operational Programme** (*Žmogiškųjų išteklių plėtros programa, 2007*). Based on the programme, EU and national budget funding will be allocated for the development of human resources in enterprises and public sector, reorientation of workforce in rural areas from agriculture to other activities, integration of jobseekers to the labour market and etc. One of the areas of the support is the strengthening of key competencies and especially entrepreneurship (for more details on measures for strengthening entrepreneurship please refer to the example below).
- **Implementation of 2007-2013 Cohesion Promotion Operational Programme** (*Sanglaudos skatinimo veikslių programa, 2007*). Based on the programme, EU and national budget funding will be allocated for the development of VET infrastructure and modernisation of adult education institutions, etc.
- **Implementation of Practical VET Resources Development Programme** (*Praktinio profesinio mokymo išteklių plėtros programa, 2007*). The programme is oriented towards the improvement of practical VET quality and improvement of the preparation of the learners for the real labour market. The Programme foresees activities for the development of modular VET system, further development of VET quality assurance system, the development of the VET infrastructure, including the creation of sectoral practical training centres network, etc. (see Section 8.3).
- **Implementation of provisions set in the new edition of Law on VET** (new edition was approved in 2007 replacing the previous Law effective since 1997), for example, the development of qualifications system, the reform of VET providers network (see Section 8.4).

Implementation of these measures should contribute to the relieve of consequences of the crisis.

Example

<p>1. Title of policy/ measure: EU financial support for 2007-2013 aimed at strengthening entrepreneurship skills</p>
<p>2. Description</p> <p>With the aim of strengthening entrepreneurship skills of different groups of population (students, employees), numerous projects were implemented with the 2004–2006 EU financial support. Enhancing of entrepreneurship is further supported according to 2007-2013 Human Resources Development Operational Programme. One of its measures – “Promotion of Entrepreneurship” – aims at creating conditions for micro and small companies and natural persons to start up their businesses and for the social companies to develop the existing businesses what would contribute to encouraging entrepreneurship and self-employment. According to this measure Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund (<i>Verslumo skatinimo fondas</i>) was established at the end of 2009. The measure is implemented by joint stock company “Investicijų ir verslo garantijos” (INVEGA). It is planned that by 2015, 100 new jobs will be created, 5,000 persons will participate in training of whom 1200 will receive loans for the start up or development of the existing businesses. The micro-loans firstly will be granted to vulnerable social groups – unemployed, young people up to the age of 29, pre-retirement age people, and those elder than 50 years of age.</p> <p>Strengthening of entrepreneurship skills will be supported through other measures, for instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Within the measure “Development of Learners Basic Competencies in the System of Formal and Non-formal Education” (<i>Besimokančiųjų pagrindinių kompetencijų ugdymas formaliojo ir neformaliojo švietimo sistemoje</i>) it is planned that by 2015 some 6400 adults will participate in non-formal education programmes.• Within the measure “Development and Introduction of Methods for Language Teaching and Entrepreneurship Development as well as Innovative Education Methods” (<i>Kalbų mokymo, verslumo ugdymo ir inovatyvių švietimo metodų kūrimas ir diegimas</i>) is is planned to create, implement and improve entrepreneurship education tools, to update education content, to focus it towards the development of key competencies, the diversity of programmes and innovation promotion.• The measure “Reorientation of Workforce in Rural Areas from Agriculture to other Activities” (<i>Kaimo vietovių darbo jėgos persiorientavimas iš žemės ūkio į kitas veiklas</i>) aims at improving skills of persons leaving agriculture sector to integrate them into the labour market, to encourage them to participate in alternative to agriculture activities. It is planned that by 2015, 20,000 persons will participate in training.• The measure “Development of Human Resources in Enterprises” (<i>Žmogiškųjų išteklių tobulinimas įmonėse</i>) aims at improving the qualification, skills and knowledge of company employees and managers, to improve employees skills to adapt to the needs of the company and the changes of the labour market. <p><i>Target groups:</i> socially vulnerable groups, adults, employees.</p>
<p>3. Level of operation and key actors involved</p> <p>Operation: national, regional, local, institutional level.</p> <p>Projects are carried out with a view of implementing Long-term Development Strategy of the State (2002) and the Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (2003).</p> <p>Key actors: Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Ministry of Agriculture, state and municipal institutions, private physical persons, associations.</p>
<p>4. Evaluation and conclusions</p> <p>It is believed that strengthening of entrepreneurship skills will help population to adapt to the changes of the market, will increase their opportunities to participate in labour market and seek for quality employment. In consequence population’s social isolation will decrease, participation in the society and quality of life will increase.</p>
<p>5. Source</p> <p>Website dedicated to the 2007-2013 EU Support in Lithuania: http://www.esparama.lt</p>

THEME 3:

IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE JOINT WORK ON EUROPEAN PRINCIPLES AND TOOLS

3.1 Impact of joint work on European principles and tools on national LLL policies and practices and VET developments

Impact of the European tools and principles on the national level occurs in several aspects. First, European tools and principles are one of the factors for updating **legal framework**. For example, measures for *qualifications transparency, comparability, as well as for continuation of training and territorial and professional mobility* are included into the Strategy for Assuring Lifelong Learning (*Mokymosi visą gyvenimą užtikrinimo strategija*) (first document was approved in 2004, in 2008 the Strategy was updated). The strategy foresees the development of tools for the assessment and recognition of non-formal and informal learning. The new edition of Law on VET (*Profesinio mokymo įstatymas*) was approved in 2007. It establishes legal preconditions for the implementation of qualifications system and sets out principles for creation, management and award of qualifications.

Second, European initiatives influence the decisions regarding priorities for **funding** of VET developments. For example, in 2005-2008, a national level project was carried out with the support from European Social Fund (ESF) to prepare for the implementation of *the national qualifications system*. As a result, a draft model of the national qualifications framework was prepared. It foresees 8 qualifications levels similar to those defined in the European Qualifications Framework. The development of modern quality assurance system in line with the EU strategic guidelines was the aim of another national level project “*Development and Implementation of Common Quality Assurance System in Vocational Education and Training*” (*Vieningos profesinio mokymo kokybės užtikrinimo sistemos sukūrimas ir įdiegimas*). During the project the quality assurance concept and model for both, initial VET and continuing training, as well as other guiding materials were prepared.

Third, common European principles are used for the development of **national instruments** for qualifications transparency. For example, Europass certificate supplements are prepared for all formal vocational training programmes. They are published in Open Information, Counselling and Guidance System (AIKOS, <http://www.aikos.smm.lt>) and are accessible for everyone. They assist in search for learning and employment opportunities both in Lithuania and in Europe.

The main strengths in developing European tools and principles on transparency are the strengthening of cooperation among different VET actors on the national and European levels; increased awareness of VET specialists about VET developments in other countries; and increased awareness of the society about European initiatives, such as qualifications framework, Europass, recognition of non-formal learning, etc.

3.2 Promoting geographical mobility of learners/apprentices and teachers/trainers in VET

Among the main measures to increase geographical mobility in VET are the *Leonardo da Vinci* programme projects implemented in the framework of Lifelong learning programme. Leonardo da Vinci mobility projects are aimed at the mobility of VET students and specialists as well as company employees. The projects participants may visit any country out of 31 European countries participating in the programme. During the projects they develop

their qualification, are introduced to the national systems of education, VET innovations, etc. The priorities of the projects for 2007-2009 are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. National priorities of Leonardo da Vinci mobility projects for 2007-2009

2007	2008	2009
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • update of VET teacher technological competencies; • professional development of qualifications of company employees (especially supervisors of apprentices); • improvement of VET curricula; • strengthening of foreign language teaching at VET level; • thematic areas: construction, wood, and furniture processing, transport, mechatronics, metal and plastic goods manufacturing, services and tourism sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integration of socially excluded groups into the labour market; • improvement of entrepreneurship education; • application of information technologies in VET education; • preparation for Skills competitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of qualifications of vocational guidance and counselling specialists; • promoting cooperation between VET education and labour market; • energy, environmental and mechanical engineering sectors.

Source: Education Exchanges Support Foundation

The table below presents the Education Exchanges Support Foundation (*Švietimo mainų paramos fondas*, national agency responsible for implementing EU Lifelong Learning) data about the projects that were funded in 2002-2009. Based on the information from Education Exchanges Support Foundation, each year more than 1,000 VET students and specialists participate in *Leonardo da Vinci* mobility projects.

In 2009 the number of projects participants slightly decreased as with the aim to improve the quality of mobility, the daily allowances allocated to participants were raised.

Table 2: Leonardo da Vinci mobility projects and their participants in 2002-2009

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008*	2009*
Number of mobility projects that received funding	56	58	59	65	78	65	78	74
Students	142	155	308	286	444	493	527	496
Teachers and other specialists	283	283	408	531	674	512	555	432
Companies	3	3	4	4	4	10	7	11

* preliminary data

Source: Education Exchanges Support Foundation

According to the programme impact assessment survey and the monitoring report of activities, the periods abroad give opportunity for the mobility projects participants to apply their knowledge, to get acquainted with new equipment and the requirements for employees in foreign companies. Vocational teachers improve their professional skills, are acquainted with teaching methods and the technologies used abroad. Projects results are used for

updating the training programmes, preparation of new training modules, material and other training resources.

The projects also create conditions for VET students to have practical placement abroad and this period is recognised being part of training programme for the majority of participants. For example, Kaunas Food Industry School implemented a mobility project “Improvement of Meat Processors’ Competencies During an International Production Placement”. During the project final year students of meat processing training programme spent 10 weeks at Roskilde Danish Meat Trade College.

The mobility projects are implemented under bilateral and multilateral agreements. For example, in 2005 a declaration of intent was signed between Quebec’s Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sports (le Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport) and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania. It was also agreed to support the exchange of students, teachers and management staff, and to promote cooperation among training institutions in training programmes, pedagogical, scientific and technical research, and learning materials. Bilateral relations among the VET providers in Lithuania and Quebec were made (Alytus Vocational Education and Training Centre and Quebec Capital Hotels School/ l’École hôtelière de la Capitale à Québec/): it is planned to create new methods for the implementation of bilingual education and to foresee the opportunities for students practical placement in the partner country.

It should be noted that almost all VET institutions have signed cooperation agreements with the foreign education institutions (from Byelorussia, Germany, Norway and other EU countries). The cooperation activities include exchange of students and teachers delegations, participation in partners’ skills competitions.

THEME 4: STRENGTHENING THE LINKS BETWEEN VET AND THE LABOUR MARKET

4.1 Identifying and anticipating skill needs

Provisions for identifying and anticipating skill needs are included in the main legal documents developed in 2002-2009. For example,

- The Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (*Valstybinės švietimo strategijos 2003–2012 metų nuostatos*, 2003) set out that one of the measures for assuring effectiveness and sustainability of education development is the creation of a system enabling continuous matching of qualifications offered by the Lithuanian education institutions with their demand on the labour market. With the aim of monitoring the implementation of Strategy provisions, the education monitoring indicators were approved in 2006. They are published in Education Management Information System (*Švietimo valdymo informacinė sistema*, <http://www.svis.smm.lt/>).
- The National Lisbon Strategy Implementation Programme for 2005-2007 (*Nacionalinės Lisabonos strategijos įgyvendinimo 2005-2007 programa*) included the measures for creating the methodology for the medium-term forecasts of the need of the qualified force in the labour market, performing forecasting of labour market needs, developing VET standards and training programmes in compliance with the needs of the economy, etc. Continuation of these activities is foreseen under the 2008–2010 programme.
- *The new edition of Law on VET* (2007) sets out that VET programmes must correspond occupational standards or relevant VET standards. It also foresees the implementation of skills needs identification research.

In Lithuania skill needs identification is performed by combining different methods: some of them are used for collecting data for statistical analysis while the others – for expert assessment. Skill needs are evaluated in the course of developing VET standards and vocational training programmes, by carrying out sectoral studies, as well as by making labour market forecasts.

The **development of a VET standard** starts with a qualitative analysis of the specific sector-related information. On the basis of its results draft questionnaires for identifying activity areas and competencies are drawn up. The draft questionnaires are discussed, modified and agreed with employers. Finalised questionnaires are used in carrying out employer and employee surveys of the sector leading companies.

The development of **VET programmes** includes research of the skilled labour force needs on the local level. Studies are carried out using different methodologies which are freely chosen by those developing programmes. Skilled labour force needs are identified by a qualitative analysis of documents (training programmes, labour exchange (employment service) publications, etc.) and employer surveys. It should also be noted that planning of student enrolment to state funded VET programmes for the acquisition of first qualification is done at local and regional level. The minister of education and science approves the student enrolment plan to state funded VET programmes after receiving the county governor application which should be coordinated with regional county VET council.

Sectoral studies are carried out based on a uniform methodology to ensure comparability of study results across economic sectors on the national and international level. Research

encompasses analysis of international literature and available national sector-specific information (labour supply and demand, training provision, etc.), postal survey and interviews with company representatives as well as discussion of trends revealed by the study and formulation of recommendations in focus groups. The future forecasts are developed using regression and autoregression models, data on general development trends in the Lithuanian economy and historical statistical data. In 2005-2008 the methodology for **early identification of future skill needs** has been prepared and piloted. It is comprised of monitoring and detail research sections. Regular future skills monitoring is based on a fixed set of indicators, established in accordance to the systematically gathered information. This allows timely identifying current and future problems related to skill needs as well as making relevant decisions to eliminate the established problems. The detailed research is carried out in a certain economy sector (where the greatest shortage of skills was identified) assessing the interaction of economic development and innovations, as well as the skills and jobs.

Methodology for **labour market forecasts** includes the following steps: quantitative analysis of demographic and macroeconomic indicators; identification of the demand for occupations and the necessary skills by using employer surveys; making the forecast on the basis of obtained results, using the focus group method, and identification of vocational training needs.

In the process of developing tools for identifying and anticipating skill needs, good practice of other countries was adopted. For example, labour market forecasts are carried out according to the methodology developed in collaboration with the Swedish National Labour Market Board experts. The methodology for sectoral studies has been developed in collaboration with experienced Irish experts.

In 2005-2008, a national level project was carried out with the support from European Social Fund to prepare for the implementation of the national qualifications system. As a result, a draft model of the national qualifications framework was prepared. It foresees 8 qualifications levels similar to those defined in the European Qualifications Framework. New edition of Law on VET (2007) established legal preconditions for the implementation of qualifications system and set out principles for creation, management and award of qualifications. It defined that qualification is competence based and that competencies needed for acquiring a qualification are defined by occupational standards. The latter should be prepared on the basis of skills needs research.

Example

<p>1. <i>Title of policy/ measure: VET standards (profesinio rengimo standartai)</i></p>
<p>2. <i>Description</i></p> <p>VET curricula in Lithuania are competence-based, with clearly defined training objectives. Seeking for a close correspondence between VET and the needs of the economy, a particular emphasis is put on the identification of skill needs. One of the measures applied – the development of VET standards (<i>profesinio rengimo standartas</i>). VET standards are the basis to develop VET programmes and assess achievement of students. They are comprised of the following parts: short description of occupation; occupational purpose; areas of activity; competencies and their range; training objectives; assessment of competencies; key competencies; and final assessment of qualification. Thus, VET standard joins occupational standard and training standard.</p> <p>VET standards are developed following the structure approved by the ministers of education and science and social security and labour (2003). Standard development steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals for standard development can be suggested by any enterprise or a person. Proposals are discussed with Industrial Lead Bodies (<i>ūtkio šakų ekspertų grupės</i>) equally representing

<p>employers, trade unions and education providers. The list of standards to be prepared is drafted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For each standard a group of 3-5 members representing employers and education providers is created. The development of standard is coordinated by Methodological Centre for VET (as of January 2010 – Qualifications and VET Development Centre). • The draft standards are evaluated by experts from education institutions and social partners (Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Crafts and Chambers of Agriculture). • The draft standards are endorsed by related Industrial Lead Body. Further they are approved by the ministers of education and science and social security and labour. <p>After approval of standards, the related formal VET programmes have to be updated accordingly. The first standards were developed in 1998. It should be noted that a VET standards concept was designed following the experience of Germany. Presently 169 standards are legitimated in 18 educational fields, of which 77 standards are designed for ISCED 2-4 level programmes and 92 standards – for ISCED 5 level college programmes (higher education study programmes focussed on preparing the students for professional activity).</p> <p>For the development of standards system the support from EU funds was used: 55 standards were prepared within the framework of Phare 2001 programme project "Framework of Qualifications Standards" (2003–2004), 101 standard was prepared within the ESF national level project "Development of the System of VET Standards" (2005–2008).</p>
<p><i>3. Level of operation and key actors involved</i></p> <p>Operation: national level.</p> <p>Standards are developed with a view of implementing the Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (2003) and the Law on VET (1997, new edition - 2007).</p> <p>Key actors: Industrial Lead Bodies, Ministries of Education and Science and Social Security and Labour, Methodological Centre for VET (as of January 2010 – Qualifications and VET Development Centre), social partners.</p>
<p><i>4. Evaluation and conclusions</i></p> <p>VET standards contribute to VET quality assurance. They define the main training and assessment parameters and thus transparency and comparability of qualifications is developed. Participation of social partners contributes to assuring correspondence between curricula and technological progress.</p>
<p><i>5. Source</i></p> <p>Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministro ir Lietuvos Respublikos socialinės apsaugos ir darbo ministro 2003 m. gegužės 30 d. įsakymas Nr. ISAK-771/A1-91 "Dėl Profesinio rengimo standarto struktūros ir Profesinio rengimo standartų rengimo, atnaujinimo ir įteisinimo nuostatų patvirtinimo" [Order of minister of education and science and of minister of social security and labour regarding the approval of VET standard structure and VET standard preparation, updating and legitimation] . <i>Valstybės žinios</i>, 2003, Nr. 56-2512</p> <p>Website of project "Development of the System of VET Standards (<i>Nacionalinės profesinio rengimo standartų sistemos plėtra</i>): http://projektai.pmmc.lt</p> <p>List of legitimated standards: http://www.kpmc.lt/Standartai/iteisinti.html</p>

4.2 Integrating skill needs of the labour market into VET provision

The correspondence of qualifications awarded to the needs of the economy and their comparability and transparency is assured through **VET standards**. VET standards are the basis to develop VET programmes and assess achievements of students (see example 4.1). After approval of standards, the related formal vocational training programmes have to be updated accordingly.

VET programmes are developed by VET providers, in cooperation with representatives of employers. When developing programmes, providers follow VET standards and the general requirements approved by the Minister for Education and Science. The training programme comprises two parts: the *standardised* part, common to the entire country, which defines the areas of professional activity, competencies, training objectives and provisions for the assessment of competences (the standardised part of the programme is automatically transferred from the relevant VET standard); and the *optional* part, covering teaching methods, subject programmes, training facilities, etc.

Sectoral studies provide specific sector-oriented recommendations, which address issues of training policy, vocational guidance and counselling, and VET curriculum. Their outcomes are also used for other activities, for example, for planning EU support for VET development. The outcomes of pilot future skill needs research were applied when forecasting the number of VET and higher education students in 2009.

Labour market forecasts are made based on the analysis of economic and demographic indicators and employer surveys. Vocational training needs are determined for one year and “The Barometer of Employment Opportunities” is produced on the basis of the results obtained. This activity has been performed in Lithuania systemically since 1995.

Example

1. Title of policy/ measure: **Development of IVET programmes**

2. Description

Since 1990, curriculum development is the responsibility of the VET providers. VET programme is developed in accordance with a certain VET standard (see example 4.1) and general requirements, which are established by the Ministry of Education and Science. The development of programme comprises the following steps:

- Before starting the development of the programme, VET institution provides a request for approval of the programme to the Ministry of Education and Science. The request includes the justification of the demand for training.
- Ministry of Education and Science assesses the demand for the programme and provides its conclusions to VET institution;
- VET provider comprises a working group of at least 3 persons one of which is representative of employers. The training programme comprises two parts: the *standardised* part, common to the entire country, which defines the areas of professional activity, competencies, training objectives and provisions for the assessment of competences (the standardised part of the programme is automatically transferred from the relevant VET standard); and the *optional* part, covering teaching methods, subject programmes, training facilities, etc. The latter is developed taking into account resources of the provider;
- A newly drafted VET programme is subject for approval by the competent employer organisation (e.g. the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts). Next, experts (vocational teachers, employers) evaluate the quality of the programme, and, in the case of positive assessment, the programme is entered on the Register of Study and Training Programmes. A VET provider is entitled to implement a registered training programme if his resources are sufficient for implementation.

Main characteristics of the programme defined in the Description of IVET Programmes Development and Legitimation and general VET plans are as follows:

- practical training comprises 60-70% of the total time allocated to teaching vocational subjects; practical training in a company or a school-based workshop simulating working conditions is obligatory during the last year of training and it should take up to 15 weeks;
- specialisation subjects may comprise 10-15% of the total time allocated to teaching vocational

<p>subjects;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • programmes should contain fundamentals of economy and business as well as civil security subjects; • environment, IT, foreign languages should be either integrated into the vocational subjects or developed as separate modules; • in order to react to innovations in the economy and to reflect better local needs, VET institutions have the right to independently change the content by up to 10%.
<p><i>3. Level of operation and key actors involved</i></p> <p>Operation: institutional level.</p> <p>VET programmes are developed with a view of implementing the Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (2003) and the Law on VET (1997, new edition - 2007).</p> <p>Key actors: Ministry of Education and Science, Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Crafts and Chambers of Agriculture, Methodological Centre for VET (as of January 2010 – Qualifications and VET Development Centre), VET providers.</p>
<p><i>4. Evaluation and conclusions</i></p> <p>Decentralised development of VET curriculum decreases costs for programmes development and allows to make better use of resources possessed by VET providers. Teachers participating in the development of VET programmes improve their qualification and, in consequence, VET quality is enhanced. Adjustment of programmes to resources of individual provider may have a negative impact on training quality and recognition of learning outcomes when moving from one institution to another. In addition, existing procedure for programmes development is insufficiently flexible for timely adjustment of curriculum to the changing needs of the economy. In order to respond to these challenges the curriculum reform, i.e. modularisation of VET, is foreseen.</p>
<p><i>5. Source</i></p> <p>Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministro 2006 m. sausio 17 d. įsakymas Nr. ISAK-90 „Dėl Pagrindinio profesinio mokymo programų rengimo ir įteisinimo tvarkos aprašo patvirtinimo“ [Order of minister of education and science regarding approval of procedure of IVET programmes development and legitimation]. <i>Valstybės žinios</i>, 2006, Nr. 8-302</p> <p>Profesinio mokymo metodikos centras. Profesinio mokymo kokybės užtikrinimo Lietuvoje ir kitose šalyse studija [The study of quality assurance in VET in Lithuania and other countries]. Available from Internet: http://projektai.pmmc.lt/get.php?f.1019</p> <p>Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministro 2009 m. birželio 10 d. įsakymas Nr. ISAK-1218 „Dėl 2009–2011 metų bendrųjų profesinio mokymo planų patvirtinimo“ [Order of minister of education and science regarding the approval of the General vocational education and training plans]. <i>Valstybės žinios</i>, 2009, Nr. 73-2989</p> <p>Open Information, Counselling and Guidance System (AIKOS), Study and training programmes: http://www.aikos.smm.lt/aikos/programos.htm</p>

4.3 Involving labour market actors in VET

At the national level, representatives of state and municipal institutions, employer and business organisations and employee organisations are members of the Vocational Education and Training Council (*Profesinio mokymo taryba*) functioning as an advisory body for the Ministry of Education and Science and other governmental institutions in making decisions regarding strategic questions in VET. Another national level advisory body is Lithuanian Vocational Guidance Council (*Profesinio orientavimo taryba*). It unites vocational guidance and counselling practitioners, various education providers, social partners, labour market institutions, nongovernmental youth and adults organisations.

With the aim of ensuring the uniform assessment of VET graduates' readiness for practical activity, the function of the final qualification assessment is delegated to social partners. Delegation of responsibilities for the organisation and implementation of competencies assessment was finalised in 2003.

At the regional level the county VET Councils (*apskritis profesinio mokymo tarybos*) play advisory role in VET issues (assess the applications of VET providers to the state-funded VET programmes, analyse the demand for VET programmes and the demand for VET provision, etc).

At the sectoral level the Industrial Lead bodies (*Ūkio šakų ekspertų grupės*) are the main consultative bodies of the Ministry of Education and Science in developing VET standards and VET curricula. They equally represent the social partners related to VET: employers, trade unions and education providers. There are 14 Industrial Legal Bodies established at the Methodological Centre for Vocational Education and Training.

Cooperation at institutional level is especially encouraged: employers take part in defining training needs and preparing particular training programmes (see example 4.2), they also participate in managing VET providers, for example, by being members of schools councils.

VET management decentralisation started in 2003 through the reorganisation of state-run VET schools into self-governing institutions (*viešoji įstaiga*). This enables enterprises and social partners to become stakeholders of VET institutions and thus participate in managing them. The development of partnerships in initial VET is also encouraged by the obligation to organize for every student of vocational school a practical training in enterprises on a real working terms. According to national regulations a duration of this phase of practical training should last from 8 to 15 weeks depending on programme length.

Example

<p>1. <i>Title of policy/ measure: Self-governing institutions (viešosios įstaigos)</i></p>
<p>2. <i>Description</i></p> <p>With the aim of ensuring a larger autonomy of VET institutions and more active participation of employers and regional and municipal governments representatives in the management of VET, the reorganisation of state-run VET institutions into self-governing institutions was started in 2003. This enables municipal institutions, enterprises and other stakeholders to become shareholders of VET providers.</p> <p>The main administrative body in a self-governing institution is the general meeting of shareholders, with each shareholder having a single vote. Thus, the municipality, social partners and other stakeholders, being equal partners, gain the right to take part in administering the institution alongside its founder (the Ministry of Education and Science). This enables them to respond effectively to the needs of a particular region, as well as to the changing requirements for the qualification of graduates. The status of a self-governing institution changes essentially the approach of an enterprise towards the VET institution, because the material and the other values transferred to a VET institution are considered to remain the capital of the enterprise. The enterprise further manages its capital as an investment in the training of its future workers. This gives a VET institution the chance to make use of the company's equipment and its specialists' experience.</p> <p>Currently 13 VET providers have a status of self-governing institution.</p>
<p>3. <i>Level of operation and key actors involved</i></p> <p>Operation: local, institutional level.</p> <p>VET providers are reorganised to self-governing institutions in accordance with the resolution of Government concerning decentralisation and deconcentration of the functions of the centrally governed institutions, the Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (2003), order of</p>

Minister of Education and Science regarding the programme of experimental transfer of state-run vocational schools to self-governing institutions and General Plan for Reorganisation of the Network of State Vocational Schools (2005).

Key actors: VET institutions, Ministry of Education and Science, associated employers organisations, enterprises, regional and municipal institutions.

4. Evaluation and conclusions

The experience of self-governing institutions proved to be efficient and relevant. The change of status results in more active participation of social partners, regional and municipal institutions in management of VET providers and solving VET issues, it also increases VET providers financial independence, opportunities and quality of practical VET, it positively changes students attitude towards training institution. In addition, the standing of VET institution and its recognition at regional level improves. The initiative is continued further.

5. Source

Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministro 2003 m. birželio 30 d. įsakymas Nr. ISAK-929 „Dėl Valstybinių profesinio mokymo įstaigų eksperimentinės pertvarkymo į viešąsias įstaigas programos patvirtinimo“ [Order of the minister of education and science regarding the approval of the programme of experimental transfer of state-run vocational schools to self-governing institutions]. *Valstybės žinios*, 2003, Nr. 56-533

Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministro 2005 m. birželio 14 d. įsakymas Nr. ISAK-1096 „Dėl Švietimo ir mokslo ministerijos įsteigtų profesinių mokyklų tinklo pertvarkos 2005-2012 metų bendrojo plano patvirtinimo“ [Order of the minister of education and science regarding the approval of general plan for reorganisation of the network of state vocational schools]. *Valstybės žinios*, 2005, Nr. 109-3989

Juozas Baranauskas. Decentralization of School Governing Opens New Possibilities:
http://www.kpmc.lt/refernet/docs/01_2005-04-28_Baranausko_angl.doc

4.4 Promoting workplace learning

The requirements for vocational training programmes set out that practical training should comprise 60% to 70% of the total time allocated to teaching vocational subjects. During the last year of training practical training in a company or a school-based workshop simulating working conditions is obligatory and should take 8-15 weeks depending on the duration of training programme. The new edition of the Law on VET (2007) legitimated apprenticeship as a form for VET organisation.

With the aim of improving preparation of learners to practical activity **Practical VET Resources Development Programme** (*Praktinio profesinio mokymo išteklių plėtros programa*) was approved in 2007. The programme outlines activities for VET development until 2013. It foresees activities for the development of modular VET system, further development of VET quality assurance system, the development of the VET infrastructure, including the creation of sectoral practical training centres network, the improvement of vocational teachers' technological competencies and upgrading of adult learners key competences. The implementation of the programme will be funded from national budget ESF funding. For more details about the programme please refer to Section 8.3.

When preparing for the establishment of **sectoral practical training centres (SPTC)** Sectoral practical training centres concept (2007) and Sectoral practical training centres development programme (2008) were approved. In 2009, 8 agreements for the establishment of SPTC were signed. The main aim of the SPTC is to assure that learners, using the latest technologies and equipment, gain practical skills matching the needs of the labour market.

These centres are open to students from VET, higher education institutions, employees from sector enterprises, vocational teachers and others.

Enterprises and social partners may be the stakeholders of self-governing VET institutions. Reorganisation of state-run VET institutions to self-governing institutions started in 2003. Currently 13 VET providers have a status of self-governing institution and the initiative is continued further. The change of status results in a more flexible management structures, increase of opportunities for VET institutions to participate in international projects, strengthening of links between providers and employers and positive changes in students attitude towards training institution. In addition, the standing of VET institution and its recognition at regional level improves.

The opportunities to use ESF funding for the qualification development and the organisation of workplace learning intensified **the training of employees in companies**. For example, one of the Single Programming Document measures was “Development of Labour Force Competence and Ability to Adapt to Changes”. Based on the information from the Assessment report of effectiveness of the EU structural funds’ support¹, around 21 thousand employees in public sector and around 47 thousand employees in industry and business companies participated in training under this measure. Further support for training of employees is foreseen in the ESF programming period 2007-2013 according to Human Resources Development Operational Programme. For example, it is planned that under the measure “Development of Human Resources in Enterprises” 40 thousand persons will participate in training, of which 33 thousand will participate in courses for the acquisition or improvement of vocational qualification.

Recognition of skills acquired at the workplace

In 2008 the Description of Procedure for Recognition of Prior Learning Achievements (*Ankstesnio mokymosi pasiekimų užskaitymo tvarkos aprašas*) was approved. It regulates that skills gained by work experience are recognised after evaluating them according to the assessment requirements defined in the training programme. The assessment is done by vocational teachers working in the VET institution who may consult representatives from related enterprises if needed.

Example

1. Title of policy/ measure: **Sectoral practical training centres** (*sektoriniai praktinio mokymo centrai*)

2. Description

With the aim of creating practical training basis corresponding to the current needs of individual sectors and equipped with the newest practical training facilities the establishment of sectoral practical training centres (SPTC) framework was started. The establishment of SPTC is one of the activity groups of Practical VET Resources Development Programme (*Praktinio profesinio mokymo išteklių plėtros programa*, 2007, see example 8.3).

On the basis of VET services demand and supply analysis, Sectoral Practical Training Centres Concept was prepared and approved in 2007. Sectoral Practical Training Centres Development Programme was approved in 2008. It describes SPTC projects selection procedure, the list of VET institutions submitting the projects, the main projects eligibility criteria.

In 2009, 8 agreements for the establishment of SPTC were signed in the following sectors:

¹ ES struktūrinės paramos, skirtos pagal Lietuvos 2004–2006 m. Bendrąjį programavimo dokumentą darbo jėgos kompetencijai didinti, efektyvumo vertinimas: rezultatai, kiekybiniai ir kokybiniai pokyčiai, rekomendacijos ateičiai [Assessment report of effectiveness of the EU Structural Funds’ support for labour force competence: results, quantitative and qualitative changes, recommendation for future]

engineering industry, railway transport, wood technologies and furniture production, haircut, beauty and related services, tailoring and textile production, hotels, restaurants and trade, wholesale and retail trade, agriculture. When creating SPTCs investments focus on the efficiently operating schools which will be obliged to implement quality related changes: to implement modular training programmes, to increase CVT services, to regularly update trainers and education managers qualification, to implement quality management system, to increase services effectiveness. The establishment of centres will be funded from 2007-2013 Cohesion Promotion Operational Programme.

The main aim of the SPTC is to assure that learners, using the latest technologies and equipment, gain practical skills matching the needs of the labour market. These centres are open to students from VET, higher education institutions, employees from sector enterprises, vocational teachers and others. It is foreseen that 6 months after the end of projects 2,000 persons will use activities of these centres.

Target groups: VET institutions, learners.

3. Level of operation and key actors involved

Operation: sectoral, regional level.

SPTC are established with a view of implementing the Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (2003), Strategy for Ensuring Lifelong Learning (2008), Practical VET Resources Development Programme (2007).

Key actors: Ministry of Education and Science, VET institutions.

4. Evaluation and conclusions

The establishment of sectoral practical training centres is based on a comprehensive analysis of situation. The establishment of SPTC is one of activity groups of Practical VET Resources Development Programme (2007, see example 8.3). The programme is aimed at improving capacities for practical VET, including VET teachers training to work in SPTC, development of training resources, etc.

5. Source

Viešosios politikos institutas. Projektas „Sektorinių praktinio mokymo centrų plėtros studija“. Pasiūlymai sektorinių praktinio mokymo centrų kūrimo koncepcijai [Project “Sectoral Practical Training Centres Development Study”. Proposals for Concept of Sectoral Practical Training Centres], 2007. Available from internet: http://www.smm.lt/svietimo_bukle/docs/tyrimai/es/Pasiulymai%20Sektoriniu%20praktinio%20mokymo%20centru%20kurimo%20KONCEPCIJAI.pdf

Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministro 2007 m. gegužės 31 d. įsakymas Nr. ISAK-1039 „Dėl Sektorinių praktinio mokymo centrų kūrimo koncepcijos patvirtinimo“ [Order of minister of education and science regarding the approval of the conception for the establishment of the sectoral practical training centres]. *Valstybės žinios*, 2007, Nr. 62-2383

Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministro 2008 m. gegužės 22 d. įsakymas Nr. ISAK-1463 „Dėl Sektorinių praktinio mokymo centrų plėtros programos“ [Order of minister of education and science regarding the approval of sectoral practical training centres development programme]. *Valstybės žinios*, 2008, Nr. 81-3226

Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministro 2007 m. gruodžio 3 d. įsakymas Nr. ISAK-2333 „Dėl Praktinio profesinio mokymo išteklių plėtros programos patvirtinimo“ [Order of minister of education and science regarding the approval of Practical VET resources development programme]. *Valstybės žinios*, 2008, Nr. 7-259

THEME 5: ADDRESSING EQUITY, SOCIAL INCLUSION AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

5.1 Addressing equity in VET

General provisions

Lithuanian strategic education documents set out the enforcement of the equal opportunities principle as one of the key objectives. For example, according to *Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (Valstybinės švietimo strategijos 2003–2012 metų nuostatos, 2003)* the development of an accessible system of continuous education system that guarantees lifelong learning and social justice in education is among the three main key aims in the development of education system in 2003-2012. The new edition of Law on VET (2007) provides that the vocational education system is *socially just, it ensures equality of persons without prejudice to their gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or attitudes; it guarantees to every person the acquisition of a primary qualification and creates conditions to improve the acquired qualification or to acquire a new one.*

Vocational training programmes are developed for persons of different age and education. Students are provided with the possibilities to acquire the lower and upper secondary education together with vocational qualification. Persons with special needs may study according to specifically tailored VET curricula and to acquire a qualification. Currently approximately one third of VET institutions provide training adapted for persons with special needs. In addition there is a number of specialised education institutions (e.g., Vilnius Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the Deaf and the Aurally Impaired, Lithuanian Rehabilitation Vocational Training Centre).

Residents of Lithuania are also provided with the possibilities to study using the distance learning facilities what is specifically important for adults seeking to develop their qualification. As part of the development of the distance learning services, the Lithuanian Distance Education Network (LieDM) was established in 1998 and is currently joining 77 institutions: universities, colleges, adult education centred, and VET institutions. The network currently provides access to more than 10 master level formal study programmes and more than 1070 formal and non-formal learning courses in various areas, e.g. accountancy, management, design and etc. (list and registration to the courses: <http://www.liedm.lt> and <http://www.lvu.lt>).

In 2004 the Open Information, Counselling and Guidance System (AIKOS; <http://www.aikos.smm.lt>) was started with a view to improving the presentation and dissemination of the **information on learning possibilities**. Users of AIKOS (students, employees, and others) may find learning and personal professional career-related information on occupations, qualifications, study and training programmes, education and training institutions, admission rules, training licences, Europass certificate supplements, training and employment statistics, etc. The AIKOS portal is available in a special version for the disabled. Portal information is updated each day. In seeking to ensure the accessibility of vocational information services across all of Lithuania, a network of Vocational Information Points (VIPs, *profesinio informavimo taškai*) has been established by the Ministry of Education and Science. At the moment, there are around 700 VIPs in general education and vocational schools, libraries and labour exchanges.

Within the period concerned (2002-2009) considerable attention was devoted to the enhancement of the vocational training accessibility. For example,

- *Development of the possibilities to recognise the prior learning achievements.* The first legal acts describing the procedures for the recognition of knowledge and skills acquired outside formal education were adopted in 2001-2002. Provisions for the recognition of prior learning have been included into the new edition of the Law on VET in 2007. In 2008 the Description of Procedure for Recognition of Prior Learning Achievements (*Ankstesnio mokymosi pasiekimų užskaitymo tvarkos aprašas*) was approved.
- *Strategy for Ensuring Lifelong Learning* and its Action Plan were approved (first document approved in 2004, updated in 2008 focusing on VET and continuing education of adults). In the area of the learning accessibility enhancement the 2008 strategy action plan envisages the following measures: increasing the flexibility and quality of VET services by adapting the VET curricula according to the needs of different target groups, implementing new VET and qualification development programmes for adults, developing distance and e-learning services and the system for modular VET programmes, further optimisation of the overall network of VET and continuing training providers, improving its management and strengthening the management decentralisation.
- In 2007, the *new edition of the Law on VET* was approved. The new edition of Law is an important development as it establishes legal preconditions for the implementation of the qualifications system, for the bridging initial and continuing VET and for expanding VET organisation forms (establishing that training may be organised in apprenticeship form).
- *Practical VET Resources Development Programme* was approved in 2007. It foresees the creation of sectoral practical training centres network, further development of qualifications system, modularisation of VET curricula, what should facilitate mobility between individual training programmes and education sectors. Additionally the programme foresees upgrading of adult learners key competences and the improvement of vocational teachers' technological competencies. For more details about the programme please refer to Section 8.3.
- *The reform of the VET providers* network aims at the optimal and efficient use of training funds and resources. Among priority activities is further optimisation of the network of initial and continuing VET institutions and the development of possibilities to provide high quality general education together with a vocational qualification (see Section 8.4).

Measures designed to facilitate the involvement of socially vulnerable population groups into VET

Early school-leavers

In Lithuania the rate of early school-leavers (the share of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education and training) is considerably lower as compared to other European countries (in 2008, the Lithuanian indicator was 7.4%, EU-27 average – 14.9%). This provides evidence that the measures enforced in addressing the problem proved to be effective.

First, efforts are made to encourage young people to stay in the education system as long as possible and to provide them with possibilities to acquire the **lower or upper secondary education in a variety of ways**. For instance, for those who have not acquired lower or upper secondary education VET providers create possibilities to acquire it together with a vocational qualification.

Young people (from 12 to 17 years old) who prefer practical activities, have learning difficulties, lack motivation and need assistance in resocialisation may also choose education in **youth schools** (*jaunimo mokykla*). These are specialised lower secondary education schools providing general lower secondary education together with pre-vocational training. Youth School Conception (*Jaunimo mokyklos koncepcija*) was approved in 2005. It defined the objectives and tasks of the schools, pupil admission terms, and the provisions on the organisation and financing of the education process. At the beginning of the 2008/2009 school year there were 20 youth schools operating in Lithuania. The Description of the Procedure for Pre-Vocational Training (2007) defined pre-vocational training as training-practical activity, helping trainees to raise their learning motivation, to understand the meaning of work, to get acquainted with current occupations, developing key competencies and providing knowledge on how to acquire a profession. With a view to maintaining the continuity of education the pre-vocational training programmes should be coordinated with other formal VET programmes provided in the region concerned.

On the other hand, as part of the efforts addressing the dropouts problem, within recent years significant attention has been devoted to the **modernisation of the general education curricula** and strengthening of links between the general education and vocational training. The national level project “Opening up Possibilities of Choosing the Learning Profile for 14-19-Year Old Pupils” (*Mokymosi krypties pasirinkimo galimybių didinimas 14-19 metų mokiniams*) has been implemented since 2005. The first stage of the project (2005-2008) was dedicated to the development of the model for the selection of learning directions for youth aged 14-19 and preparation of subject programmes with elements of technological and artistic skills training. The second stage of the project started in 2009 and is referred to as “deeper differentiation and individualisation of the learning process”. To increase the flexibility of the education process the project includes the tasks to develop and test certain subject programmes in general education (applicable both in general education and vocational schools). Another task of the project will be to create methodological guidelines for the development of vocational and entrepreneurship competencies, and to upgrade the contents of subjects for teaching technological skills. The outcomes of the project are expected to increase the choice possibilities for 14-19 year olds, facilitate the individualisation of education, application of knowledge in practice and career planning, and reduction of learning load and the number of dropouts.

It should also be noted that other projects for **preventing** early school leaving are implemented with support the EU funds. These cover a number of different activities including the creation of attractive learning environment, development and implementation of new programmes in vocational schools.

Unqualified persons

In general Lithuania has one of the highest percentages in Europe of its population aged 25–64 having completed at least upper-secondary education. Within the structure of the population by educational level the share of persons with at most lower-secondary education decreased from 15% to 9% in 2002-2008. Among the main reasons affecting such reduction are participation in education and changes in the legal basis. For instance, since 2005, previously acquired education certified by seven, eight, nine years’ or incomplete education certificates is considered to be equal to lower-secondary education. Also in 2007, procedures governing flexible learning forms were updated. These changes in the legal basis contributed to creating more favourable conditions to seek secondary education and/or acquire a vocational qualification.

Older people

In 2004, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved the National Strategy for Overcoming Population Aging Outcomes (*Nacionalinė gyventojų senėjimo pasekmių įveikimo strategija*). The Strategy provides for various activities designed to facilitate the involvement of older age people in VET, for instance, to develop and implement continuing vocational training programmes for older people including strengthening of general skills, to facilitate the development of teaching competencies for education specialists working with older age people. The implementation of the Strategy included a research on the identification of the demand for VET and counselling programmes for older people. The results of the research are used for updating and designing new programmes for older age people (including distance learning programmes). For example, the non-formal training programme “Social integration of older age people” was updated.

Since 2005 the Ministry of Education and Science has been organising tenders for *the projects of non-formal education of adults*. In 2007-2008 support was provided to 20 projects for non-formal education of older age people. Some older people training initiatives, such as promotion of IT literacy and entrepreneurship are also supported from the EU funds.

Migrants

Emigrants. The Economic Migration Regulation Strategy (*Ekonominės migracijos reguliavimo strategija*) and the Strategy action plan for 2007-2008 were approved in 2007 and updated in 2009. Activities in the area of education and vocational training focus on formation of the principles for the validation of education, Lituianistic education abroad and studies of foreign students of Lithuanian descent in Lithuanian higher educational establishments. In addition, the special programme for Lithuanians residing abroad and seeking employment in Lithuania was drafted and approved in 2008. The programme provides for information and counselling of migrants, job search and inclusion into active labour market policy measures (including VET).

Immigrants. The provisions of the Law on Education (2003) stipulate that aliens having a permanent or provisional residence permit in the Republic of Lithuania are guaranteed the primary, lower and upper secondary education and the accessibility to the programmes of special education, higher education studies or vocational education and training leading to the first qualification.

The Description of the Provision of Support for the Integration of Aliens Granted Asylum in the Republic of Lithuania (Lietuvos valstybės paramos teikimo užsieniečių, gavusių prieglobstį Lietuvos Respublikoje, integracijai tvarkos aprašas) was approved in 2004 and in 2009 was laid down in a new version. According to the document, aliens being granted asylum in Lithuania are offered the career assessment, vocational training or job-search courses.

Since 2007 the *European Fund for Integration for Third-Country Nationals* (EIF) programme is being implemented according to which 40 support provision agreements were signed by the end of 2009. The projects are targeted primarily to introduce the newly arrived third country nationals to the Lithuanian society, promote the admission of high qualification and qualified third country nationals and their integration process, strengthen tolerance and approval of integration on the part of the Lithuanian society. The complete list of the projects is available at: <http://esf.socmin.lt/index.php?-926554457>. Training of immigrants is also supported from the World Bank, European Refugee Fund and other funds.

Disabled

As has been already noted earlier in this Section, people with disabilities are provided with the conditions to study according to specifically tailored vocational training programmes and to acquire a qualification.

The National 2003-2012 Program for Social Integration of People with Disability (Nacionalinė žmonių su negalia socialinės integracijos 2003-2012 metų programa) approved in 2003 provides for the measures to adapt the vocational training and distance learning programmes for various groups of people with disability, to create and implement targeted programmes, to organise vocational rehabilitation, training and retraining in centres adjusted for rehabilitation. Within the period reviewed significant progress was achieved in developing the vocational rehabilitation services targeted to foster and restore the working capacity and employability of persons with disabilities. For example, the *2007-2012 Strategy for the Development of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (Profesinės reabilitacijos paslaugų plėtros 2007-2012 metų strategija)* was approved in 2007 and set out long-term objectives for the development of the system of vocational rehabilitation, i.e. improve the legislative framework of the system of vocational rehabilitation, ensure better accessibility, variety and quality of vocational rehabilitation services.

In 2005-2008, a number of projects was implemented with support from European Social Fund and national funding in developing the training of the disabled persons under the measure “Social Integration and Prevention of Social Exclusion” of the Single Programming Document. The projects were targeted to develop training programmes and organise education, to train vocational rehabilitation specialists, to improve of qualification of disabled employees, etc. The Lithuanian Labour Exchange projects targeted for people with disability are described in the example.

The EU structural support was used to upgrade learning facilities in different educational institutions and to adapt them for the needs of the disabled. For example, within the project “*Development of the Vocational Rehabilitation Infrastructure for the Disabled in Alytus County*” the environment of Alytus Vocational Training Centre was adapted for the needs of the disabled and special training facilities were arranged for the acquisition of cabinet maker, food preparation worker and other occupations. As part of the project “*The Development of the Infrastructure of the Labour Market Training Network for Meeting the Needs of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled*” the Vilnius Žirmūnų labour market training centre in Vilnius and its branch in Druskininkai established the instructional cafe-bar, a simulated hotel unit and the theoretical knowledge testing classroom.

The initiatives targeted for the disabled will be further funded in the ESF programming period 2007-2013 under the measures “Establishment and Implementation of the Vocational Rehabilitation System for the Disabled” and “Establishment and Implementation of the Vocational Rehabilitation Programmes for the Disabled, Training of Specialists” according to Human Resources Development Operational Programme. In 2007-2013, 10 new vocational rehabilitation centres for the disabled will be established under the priority “Quality and Availability of Public Services” of the Cohesion Promotion Operational Programme.

Prisoners and ex-prisoners

The 2004-2007 Programme for Social Adaptation of the Convicted and Persons Released from Imprisonment Institutions was approved in 2004. In 2009 The Resolution on the Organisation of General Education and Vocational Training of Detained and Convicted

Persons Serving Custodial Sentence was approved to define the terms for the organisation of vocational training in detention institutions.

According to the Activity Report of the Prison Department under the Ministry of Justice vocational school divisions are operational in all penitentiary institutions (see <http://www.kalejimudepartamentas.lt>). At the end of 2008 around 16% of all persons in custodial institutions were attending some vocational training courses (e.g. computer-operators, hairdressers, joiners and etc.). The convicted also can undertake tertiary level study courses. For example, in 2008 this opportunity was used by 7 convicted persons.

Furthermore, a number of convicted persons and persons released from conviction institutions are enrolled in targeted training programmes and projects. For example, in 2005–2008 the Lithuanian Labour Exchange implemented several ESF projects covering such activities as vocational training and courses in IT, foreign languages and driving skills.

Different initiatives targeting persons with disabilities will be further financed under the measure “Integration of Persons at Social Risk and Socially Excluded Persons into the Labour Market” according to 2007-2013 Human Resources Development Operational Programme.

Unemployed

In 2006 the Law on Support for Employment was approved replacing the Law on Support for the Unemployed effective since 1996. The Law introduced new labour market policy measures supporting employment (for example, job rotation, subsidised employment, subsidised job creation) and amended the funding of the measures supporting the employment: increased education grant for the unemployed and introduced a number of different subsidies to the unemployed who were employed, and the wage compensation subsidies for the employers. In 2009, the new edition of the Law on Support for Employment was approved that came into force on 1 August 2009. The Amendments to the Law aim at reducing the negative impact of the economic downturn on the growth of the unemployment, creating conditions for retaining jobs and involving more persons into the active labour market policy measures (see Section 2.1).

The principal institution responsible for the implementation of active and passive labour market measures is the Lithuanian Labour Exchange (LLE). Among other measures the LLE conducts surveys of employers with a view to establishing the need for vocational training of the unemployed. Training services are procured by way of public tender.

In 2005-2008 within the frameworks of the projects funded by the European Social Fund and the national budget under the measures “Development of Employability” and “Prevention of Social Exclusion and Social Integration” around 30,000 unemployed were enrolled in various training courses (based on information of <http://www.esparama.lt>). The trainees participated in the entrepreneurship and computer literacy training programmes, acquired professional qualifications for working in service and other sectors. Training of the unemployed will be further continued and supported under the measure “Integration of Jobseekers into the Labour Market” of the 2007-2013 Human Resources Development Operational Programme.

National minorities

The employment, unemployment, poverty and other social inclusion indicators in respect of national minorities normally are no different from the national average indicators. However, the persons of the Roma nationality are facing different situation and their integration into the society and labour market remains an outstanding problem. According to the data provided by the Statistics Lithuania at the beginning of 2009, the population of Roma in Lithuania

totalled 2,300 (0.1% of the total population). The majority of people of Roma nationality have poor, if any, educational background, no vocational qualification, which combined with the unfavourable attitude of employers towards them makes it very difficult for the Roma to integrate into the labour market.

The objective of social integration of persons of Roma nationality is pursued within the framework of a number of public programmes (“Programme for the Integration of Roma into Lithuanian Society” 2000-2004, and 2008-2010). Among other objectives of the 2008-2010 programme are education of the Roma children, youth and adults and their integration into the labour market. The Programme envisages the following measures: to encourage persons of Roma nationality to continue studying at vocational and higher education schools, to provide them with the most necessary assistance, to organise the courses of the State official language and computer literacy, to organise the qualification improvement courses for teachers working with Roma nationality children, to organise adult education and to adapt vocational training programmes for the unemployed, etc.

A number of targeted projects have been implemented with the aim of developing the provision of training services to Roma nationals and enhancing their integration into the labour market. For instance, in 2005-2008 the support from the European Social Fund enabled the implementation of the project “Development of Support Mechanism of Roma Integration into the Labour Market” during which representatives of the Roma community were enrolled into the driver's training courses. Also the project “Turn to the Roma: Innovative Measures of the Roma Participation in the Labour Market” implemented under the measure “Integration of Persons at Social Risk and Socially Excluded Persons into the Labour Market” of the 2007-2013 Human Resources Development Operational Programme aims at creating a set of measures designed to include Roma nationality persons into the labour market and to promote their social participation. Certain employment and business intermediation services will be offered to Romas in addition to workplace learning and social skills development. The project “Development of Support Mechanism of Roma Integration into the Labour Market” under the EQUAL programme is described in the example.

Examples

1. Title of policy/ measure: Creation and Testing of the Mechanism of Integration of the Roma People into the Labour Market, 2005–2010 (*Romų integracijos į darbo rinką mechanizmo sukūrimas ir išbandymas*)

2. Description

The analysis of ethnical minorities integration situation reveals that one of the most problematic minorities in Lithuania in terms of integration is Roma population. The main problems impeding their integration are lack of profession and education, insufficient wish of Roma population to integrate into the society, negative stereotypes of the society, unemployment and reluctance from employers side to employ Roma people, poor knowledge of state language, poverty, isolated life.

The goal of EQUAL programme project “Creation and Testing of the Mechanism of Integration of the Roma People into the Labour Market” is to create and test the mechanism of the integration of the Roma people into the labour market and to apply good practice to at least one of the regions of Lithuania. Project was prepared in 2004 and its implementation in 2005-2010 covers 3 stages. In the course of the project, the following solutions were offered to tackle the Roma issues:

- training of work and additional skills;
- breaking of the inveterate stereotypes through direct, personal communication as well as the mass media;
- changing the employers’ negative notions and motivation of their actions;

- acquisition of the new experiences of communication and cooperation by the Roma themselves.
- Roma women were offered the flower composition maker/ the florist courses, Roma men participated in transport vehicle repair mechanics and artistic programme salesman training programmes. In addition, personal readiness and job search, computer literacy, social skills development, Lithuanian and English language and driver courses were organised.

Target group: Roma people living in Vilnius and surrounding regions.

3. Level of operation and key actors involved

Operation: regional level.

Project is related to the implementation of programmes for Roma population integration into the society.

Key actors: Lithuanian Children Fund, the Department of National Minorities and Lithuanians Living Abroad under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, municipal administrations, Lithuanian Labour market Training Authority under MSSS, Roma community centre, Lithuanian gypsies community „Čigonų laužas“, local labour market exchanges.

4. Evaluation and conclusions

Project is designed to create mechanism of integration of the Roma people into the labour market which can be applied on the national level. Implementation of the project is ongoing.

5. Source

Europos Bendrijų iniciatyvos EQUAL projektas „Romų integracijos į darbo rinką mechanizmo sukūrimas ir išbandymas“=European Union EQUAL Initiative Project “The Creation and Testing of the Mechanism of Integration of the Roma People into the Labour Market”, 2007

1. Title of policy/ measure: **Projects “Integration of the Disabled into the Labour Market in order to Prevent Social Exclusion” (2005–2007), “Promotion of Social Integration of the Disabled “ (2006–2008)**

2. Description

Based on the data of Lithuanian Labour Exchange, disabled unemployed have more difficulties in getting employed as compared to persons having no disability. In addition, disabled unemployed more passively participate in VET programmes, a rather big share of them make insufficient efforts to search for a job, they do not use all subsidies and privileges available to them.

With the aim of helping the disabled to integrate into the society and labour market, to develop their self-confidence, to encourage independence in job search, Lithuanian Labour Exchange in 2005-2008 implemented European Social Fund Projects “Integration of the Disabled into the Labour Market in order to Prevent Social Exclusion” (*Asmenų su negalia integracija į darbo rinką, siekiant išvengti socialinės atskirties*) and “Promotion of Social Integration of the Disabled” (*Neįgalųjų socialinės integracijos skatinimas*).

The main activities of the projects:

- participation in programme for self-confidence development and professional motivation;
- individual psychological counselling sessions;
- vocational education and training;
- development of long-term unemployed skills;
- public works;
- subsidised employment (employers who employ disabled persons receive wage subsidies);
- entrepreneurship courses (during these courses disabled are familiarised with tax payment exemptions, procedures for developing business plan, they have possibilities to acquire business certificate on easy terms and to create job).

More than 2,000 disabled participated in projects activities. The disabled were enrolled to VET courses leading to marketable professions (driver, tailor, accountant, decorator and bricklayer, cook, etc.). 100 subsidised jobs were created to help disabled to return to labour market. 300 persons participated in subsidised employment programme.

3. Level of operation and key actors involved

Operation: national, local.

Projects were implemented in the framework of the Law on Social Integration of the Disabled (2005), the National 2003-2012 Program for Social Integration of People with Disability (2003), 2007-2010 Strategy for the Development of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (2007).

Key actors: national and local exchanges.

4. Evaluation and conclusions

Based on the report “Assessment of Active Labour Market Policy Measures applied for the Disabled and Proposals for the Effectiveness of the Measures” (*Neigaliesiems taikomų aktyvių darbo rinkos politikos priemonių vertinimas ir pasiūlymų parengimas priemonių efektyvumui didinti*), participation in these measures helps the disabled to retain links with labour market and the society. Participation in the project has become an important part of social integration into the society. Knowledge and skills gained during vocational training as well as acquired or improved qualification helps the participants to more successfully integrate into the labour market. On the one hand, inclusion into the measures increases self-confidence, on the other hand, employers value disabled employees more highly. In 2002–2007 the number of disabled participating in active labour market policy measures increased almost 3 times, whereas as number of participants in VET – almost 5 times. The projects described are one of the key factors for this change.

The remaining challenges: negative attitude of employers towards employing the disabled persons, unwillingness of some of the disabled to change the situation (registration in the labour exchanges for receiving social benefits), the increased unemployment level.

5. Source

Mokslinio tyrimo santrauka. Neigaliesiems taikomų aktyvių darbo rinkos politikos priemonių vertinimas ir pasiūlymų parengimas priemonių efektyvumui didinti [Assessment of Active Labour Market Policy Measures applied for the Disabled and Proposals for the Effectiveness of the Measures]. Available from internet:

http://www.ldb.lt/Informacija/Apie/Documents/mtyrimas_neigaliuju_ADRPP_20080723.pdf

Lithuanian Labour Exchange: <http://www.ldb.lt>

5.2 Support services for groups at risk

Vocational guidance and counselling

The vision for the coherent vocational guidance system and guidelines for its long-term development are defined in the Vocational Guidance Strategy (2003) and its Action Plan approved in 2004. In these documents socially vulnerable groups are designated as one of the key target groups.

The National Programme for Vocational Guidance within Education System (*Nacionalinė profesinio orientavimo švietimo sistemoje programa*) approved in 2007 defined the activities for the further development of the system until 2013. The assessment of the progress and efficiency of the Programme will involve monitoring of participation of persons at risk and persons with special needs in the activities under the Programme. A number of projects facilitating the further development of the vocational guidance and counselling system were implemented in 2005-2008. They resulted in the development of normative documents, training programmes and methodologies for vocational guidance specialists, training of

vocational guidance specialists, establishment of 700 vocational information points and update of Open Information, Counselling and Guidance System (AIKOS). Additionally, AIKOS portal is available in a special version for the disabled.

Job-seekers are provided information on the situation in the labour market at *territorial labour exchanges* (total 46), where they can also find information on forecasted developments, available vacancies, choice of professions and vocational training. For the provision of services the territorial Labour Exchanges opened youth, labour and vocational information centres. Also 72 SIP (self information search) and PIC (vocational information centres) terminals are opened to assist job-seekers. SIP terminals are designed to facilitate independent search of information about professions and available jobs, and PIC provides a possibility to familiarise with a specific profession, perform career tests and find some useful guidance. The most recent SIP terminal was opened early in 2010 in the Vilnius Roma community centre with a view to reducing the social exclusion of the Roma national minority.

Those wishing to arrive to Lithuania for employment or residence, or seeking to emigrate to the EU/EEE countries may receive information on the work and education opportunities in Lithuania and Europe at the EURES employment bureaus in Lithuania. At the territorial Labour Exchanges throughout Lithuania 10 EURES bureaus have been functioning since 2003 with EURES advisers providing consultations; also the relevant information is accessible at the website EURES Lietuva.

Information and guidance services for people with special needs are also provided at territorial labour market training and counselling services (currently 7 such services operational in major Lithuanian cities. These institutions offer career planning, competitiveness in the labour market, self-confidence building and active job search programmes tailored for people with special needs. The support granted from the EU structural funds enabled to improve training programmes for vocational rehabilitation consultants and implement regional projects.

5.3 Active citizenship

The *Long-term Programme of Citizenship and National Identity Education 2006-2010 (Ilgalaikė pilietinio ir tautinio ugdymo programa)* was approved in 2006 and provided for a number of measures, including a targeted updating of the citizenship and national identity education curricula in the general, vocational and higher education schools, development of competence of teachers and trainers in the area concerned, strengthening of school self-governance, and enhancement of participation in public and political life. As part of the programme implementation each year tenders for the support of citizenship and national identity education projects are announced. Since 2005, the Ministry of Education and Science has been organising tenders for non-formal education of adults with their principal priorities related to the development of civic consciousness, meeting the educational needs of local communities and enhancement of public awareness.

VET providers play an active role in **addressing problems** faced by the communities by developing vocational training programmes. In order to reflect better local needs, VET institutions have the right to independently change the contents of a vocational training curriculum up to 10% and to allocate about 15% of the total time spent on teaching vocational subjects to specialisation.

The fundamentals of citizenship education are included as part of **vocational training curricula** for trainees seeking to acquire lower-secondary education. For persons having

higher than lower-secondary education the active citizenship position (ability to participate in political social and cultural life) is developed within other subjects, also by participating in different competitions, such as skills competitions, general skills competitions. As part of the initiatives of developing the active citizenship vocational training institutions also organise different events and celebrations to commemorate dates of national significance (e.g., February the 16th – Restoration of Lithuanian Independence Day).

Furthermore, the active citizenship position is fostered by developing and strengthening self-governance of schools. The Law on Education (2003) stipulates that each school must have at least two self-governance institutions – the Teachers’ Council and the School Council. Furthermore, other councils may be established, such as those of pupils or parents. The self-governance bodies within schools jointly address the school activity and funding issues and, within their competence defined in the school regulations pass decisions and exercise influence upon the decisions and resolution taken by the Head of the school, carry out the public oversight over management of the school. The Teacher’s Council is composed of the management of the school, all teachers working at the school and other personnel, while the School Council is composed of the teaching personnel, representatives from the administration, pupils, parents and the principal of the school. For more information about Schools Councils please refer to the example.

Example

<p><i>1. Title of policy/ measure:</i> Schools Councils in VET schools</p>
<p><i>2. Description</i></p> <p>With the aim of raising awareness of the society and encouraging it to participate in VET management, self-governance bodies are being established in VET institutions (legitimated in the Law on Education in 2003). <i>School council</i> – highest school’s self-management body representing the pupils, teachers, parents and the local community. School councils are elected for period of 2-3 years. Their variety, competencies and formation principles are defined by schools regulations. School councils may implement various functions, for instance they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider and approve the education strategy and the areas of improvement; • consider and approve employee material incentive provisions; • consider and approve grant and benefit payment procedure for the students; • deal with students’ VET practise organisation at the workplace, their payment, employment issues; • submit proposals to the administration on the improvement of the VET material basis; • control household and financial activity of training institution; • establish the procedure of education quality assurance and control education quality; • deal with social and cultural issues of the institution community. <p>School councils are established in all vocational schools.</p>
<p><i>3. Level of operation and key actors involved</i></p> <p>Operation: institutional level.</p> <p>School councils are established with a view to implement Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 and the Law on Education (2003).</p> <p>Key actors: training institutions, local and school community.</p>

4. Evaluation and conclusions

School and local communities are enabled to actively participate in the life of training institution. Existence of school-councils is one of the factors for embedding democratic relations in the institution and for shaping management culture oriented towards education development.

5. Source

Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo įstatymo pakeitimo įstatymas [Law on the amendment of Law on education]. *Valstybės žinios*, 2003, Nr. 63-2853

Roles, Responsibilities and Partnerships in the Management of Educational Institutions Offering Vocational Training in Québec and Lithuania. Results of a literature review and consultations with target educational institutions.

THEME 6:

QUALITY, EXCELLENCE AND ATTRACTIVENESS OF VET

6.1 Improving the quality of VET

The principles for the VET quality assurance have been established in the new edition of *the Law on VET* (2007). The amended Law legitimated the internal and external assessment of the managerial and pedagogical performance of VET providers and defined the responsibilities for the quality assurance.

At the national level VET quality is assured by implementing the following measures:

- *Development and approval of VET standards.* VET standards are the basis to develop VET programmes and assess achievements of pupils and students. The VET standard is comprised of the following parts: general description of occupation; occupational purpose; areas of activity; competencies and their range; training objectives; assessment of competencies; key competencies; and final assessment of qualification. After approval of new or amended VET standards, programmes must be revised accordingly (see Section 4.1).
- *Development and registration of training programmes.* Since 1990, curriculum development is the responsibility of the VET providers. They have to ensure VET programme is being developed in accordance with a certain VET standard and general requirements, which are established by the Ministry of Education and Science. A newly drafted VET programme is subject for approval by the competent employer organisation (e.g. the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts). Next, experts (vocational teachers, employers) evaluate the quality of the programme, and, in the case of positive assessment, the programme is entered on the Register of Study and Training Programmes. A VET provider is entitled to implement a registered training programme if his resources are sufficient for implementation (for more information on training programmes preparation, please refer to example 4.2).
- *Supervision of training provision.* Since the internal quality assurance system in Lithuanian vocational training institutions is still in the process of development an important role is assigned to the supervision of the training quality. There are several institutions and authorities involved in supervision: The respective departments at the Ministry of Education of Science are engaged in the supervision of the training process and performance, while the County Governor's Administration Office is in charge of the state supervision of VET institutions (e.g., supervision of the performance of institutions and the compliance with the conditions for the provision of VET curricula, supervision of the organisation and implementation of qualification exams). The National Audit Office (*Valstybės kontrolė*) conducts selective examinations of training institutions which includes the analysis of the efficiency of their performance. Other public bodies authorised to exercise control can also perform thematic inspections.
- *Independent assessment of qualification.* From 2003 social partners are responsible for the final qualification examination. They delegate employers' representatives to the qualification exam commission, take part in preparing tasks and tests for the exams. A qualification exam commission is formed from 3 members representing employers, employees and VET providers.

As established in the new edition of the Law on VET the principal liability for the enhancement of training quality lies with VET providers. It is their duty to ensure the quality

of VET, to create the learning conditions established in VET curricula, to ensure continuous renewal of the curriculum and methods, and to create conditions for teachers and other staff to improve their qualification. Vocation training institutions have been encouraged already years ago to develop and implement their internal quality assurance systems. The first initiative in this direction was undertaken in 2000 with the drafting and publishing of the “Handbook for Quality Assurance in Vocational Schools” within the framework of PHARE VET Reform Programme. Since then a number of teachers training institutions have been systematically organising training for schools staff on the issues related to the development of the internal quality assurance systems. An external quality assessment model was developed in 2003-2005 as an outcome of the PHARE 2001 project “Framework of Qualifications Standards” and subsequently tested in vocational schools.

Within the framework of national ESF project “Development and Implementation of the Common Quality Assurance System in VET” (2005-2008) the *Concept of VET Quality Assurance System in Lithuania* was developed. The Concept is applicable both for initial and continuing (including the non-formal education) VET. The Concept was developed on the basis of the Study of Quality Assurance in VET in Lithuania and Other Countries (2007) and considering the Common Quality Assurance Framework (*CQAF*) for VET in Europe. The following goal was established for the VET quality assurance system: to ensure the ongoing VET quality improvement by reconciling the needs of the world of work, the individual and the society. A number of other products were delivered as a result of the project (such as assessment methodologies, glossary of terms and other tools) and human resources needed for the development of the VET quality assurance system were prepared. The continuity of the project will be ensured through the measures of the *Practical VET Resources Development Programme*, which foresees the activities for developing internal VET quality assurance mechanisms as well as developing external assessment (see Section 8.3).

6.2 Promoting excellence in VET

With the aim of enhancing quality of VET and its correspondence to the needs of the economy *Practical VET Resources Development Programme* was approved. It foresees the activities for the development of modular VET system, further development of VET quality assurance system (covering implementation of internal quality assurance tools and external assessment), the development of the VET infrastructure, including the creation of sectoral practical training centres network. Additionally the programme foresees the improvement of vocational teachers’ technological competencies and upgrading of adult learners key competences. The implementation of the programme will be funded from national budget and ESF funding. For more details about the programme please refer to Section 8.3.

When preparing for the establishment of **sectoral practical training centres (SPTC)** Sectoral practical training centres concept (2007) and Sectoral practical training centres development programme (2008) were approved. In 2009, 8 agreements for the establishment of SPTC were signed. The main aim of the SPTC is to assure that learners, using the latest technologies and equipment, gain practical skills matching the needs of the labour market. These centres are open to students from VET, higher education institutions, employees from sector enterprises, vocational teachers and others.

Example: sectoral practical training centres (see example 4.4)

6.3 Higher level qualifications in VET

VET at tertiary level delivers college education programmes (ISCED 5B, *koleginės programos*) which are designed for those having the maturity certificate and wishing to obtain non-university higher education. These are the higher education study programmes focussed on preparing the students for professional activity. The duration of studies is 3-4 years. Upon graduation from the college study programmes, the students receive professional bachelor degree (*profesinis bakalaūras*) or professional bachelor degree and vocational qualification.

The establishment of the colleges was provided in the White Papers on Vocational Education and Training and Higher Education (1999). In 2000 the Law on Higher Education (*Aukštojo mokslo įstatymas*) was approved, which legitimated the establishment of colleges. In 2002 the Government approved the principles and plan for establishing state college network in Lithuania (the document was updated in 2007).

The establishment of colleges started in 2000 and was finalised in 2004. The colleges were established in the basis of professional colleges (*aukštesnioji mokykla*) implementing post-secondary studies not leading to tertiary education (ISCED 4, 5). Moreover, the college studies are education sector where the private segment is the strongest: almost half (12 of 27) of Lithuanian colleges are non-public, and around 30% of all students at college level study in them.

College programmes are developed based on Guidelines for a Subject Area (*Studijų krypties reglamentas*) and the appropriate VET Standards. VET standards define areas of professional activity, competencies, training objectives and provisions for the assessment of competences. In such a way the college programmes are competence based.

In 2009 the Law on Science and Studies (*Mokslo ir studijų įstatymas*) was adopted, it replaced the previous version of the Law on Science and Study (1991) and the Law on Higher Education (2000) that regulated the system of higher education. This law establishes science and study quality assurance principles, the award and recognition of higher education qualification and science degrees, science and study institutional management, activity organisation and monitoring, science and study financing. After adoption of the Law, the higher education funding was reformed: as of 2009 the major part of the state funding for studies (also in the colleges) are allocated through the “study basket”. It is planned that this approach will encourage the higher education establishments to use more efficiently tax payers money concentrating on the improvement of education quality.

6.4 Improving horizontal and vertical permeability of education and training systems

The development of the flexible and open structure of education, uniting the general education, vocational education and training, studies, formal and informal education and self-education into the single area of education is provided in the Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (*Valstybinės švietimo strategijos 2003–2012 metų nuostatos, 2003*).

The activities aimed at the development of qualification system and implementation of Practical VET Resources Development Programme (see Section 8.3) will contribute towards the improvement of horizontal and vertical transition between the pathways of education.

Measures for bringing **general education and vocational education and training closer:**

- *The conditions are set to obtain lower and upper secondary education in VET schools.* Students are provided with the possibilities to acquire the lower and upper secondary education together with vocational qualifications. Also, from 2000 through the accreditation of upper secondary general education programmes, technological gymnasiums have been set up at vocational schools. They provide upper secondary and pre-vocational education (more about pre-vocational education – in Section 5.1). Graduates are awarded a matura certificate. Then they can choose either to stay in a VET institution and continue their training according to VET programmes, or to enter higher education.
- *Subjects of technologies and VET programmes modules in general upper-secondary school curricula.* Students have opportunities to deepen their knowledge on technologies in specific sectors and to develop their practical skills and in such a way to acquire at least a part of skills necessary for professional qualification at the general education school. The following technology subject programmes are designed: construction and wood processing technologies, applied arts, crafts and design technologies, textile and clothing technologies, tourism and nutrition technologies, business and management technologies, photography, graphic design, film and visual art, computer music technologies. In 2008 a procedure was approved establishing principles to recognise these modules as a part of VET programme, when continuing education. Also, there are cases when VET programme modules are included into the general education curriculum.
- *Technology Matura exam.* In 2009 some of the schools piloted technology Matura exam, whereas in 2010 the exam will be organised in the entire country. The exam may be taken by the general education school pupils, also by the VET students.
- *Modernisation of the general education curricula.* Within the Project “Opening up Possibilities of Choosing the Learning Profile for 14-19-Year Old Pupils” it is planned to draft and pilot certain subject programmes in general education (applicable both in general education and VET). For more details about the Project see Section 5.1.

Measures to improve **mobility between VET and higher education**:

- *Improved conditions for VET graduates to enter higher education.* In 2009 a Description of Procedure for Ranking of the Best Graduates from Upper Secondary General Education Programmes was approved. It defines the selection criteria and procedure for ranking of graduates who apply for higher education and wish that their studies were funded from the State budget. This document introduces a novelty that applicants to higher education institutions who have graduated VET programme under the same field of education exceptionally well or have graduated VET programme under the same field of education and have not less than one year of work experience according to the qualification acquired are awarded additional points. This increases their opportunities to receive the “study baskets” (i.e. funding for studies from the State budget). In 2010 another novelty was introduced that those who are the candidates to the state funded places instead of the three Matura exams may have passed two Matura exams and a final qualification exam which is taken upon the completion of the VET programme.
- *Interinstitutional cooperation.* A number of vocational schools cooperate with higher education institutions (colleges, universities) when drafting their study programmes that foresee the continuity of VET programme at tertiary level. For example, Public Institution Alanta Technology and Business School is cooperating with the Utena College and the school graduates may study in shortened study programme at Utena College and obtain the professional bachelor degree.

Conditions for horizontal mobility:

- Pupils of VET institutions have opportunities to transfer to another VET school or to choose another VET programme. As it is established in the *Description of the Procedure for Recognition of Prior Learning Achievements* (2008), **prior learning** may be recognised for entrants to VET being as a part of the training programme after evaluating prior learning achievements compliance to the requirements defined in the training programme.
- **The study results** of the persons who graduated from higher education study programmes or are currently studying at higher education establishments and are wishing to continue their studies in other higher education institutions are recognised with regard to the *Study Result Recognition Procedure* approved in 2003. The study results are recognised based on the assessment of documents, such as diplomas, certificates, subject descriptors and etc.

6.5 Teachers and trainers

In the period concerned the policy focus has been on reforming teachers' pre-service and in-service training systems. Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (2003) foresee the development of an integral teacher training and qualification upgrading system oriented towards the changing role of a teacher in knowledge society and the new competences and values that are necessary for a contemporary teacher.

Legal developments

Regulation of teachers training:

- Guidelines for teachers training are set out in the Concept for Teachers Training (*Pedagogų rengimo koncepcija, 2004*) and the National Reform Programme for Teachers Initial and Continuing Training (*Valstybinė pedagogų rengimo ir kvalifikacijos tobulinimo pertvarkos programa, 2006*).
- The models for teachers training, requirements and composition of pedagogy studies as well as requirements for providers of pedagogy studies were finally defined in Teachers Training Regulation (*Pedagogų rengimo reglamentas, 2008*, the document was amended in 2010). The 2010 edition of the document stipulates that teacher qualification may be acquired together with professional qualification in higher education institutions that do not focus on pedagogy studies (at bachelor or master level studies). Moreover, teacher qualification may be acquired for teaching one or two subjects or performance of additional pedagogical role (e.g. career consultant). Persons with higher education level qualification wishing to become vocational teachers will have opportunity to acquire it according to study programmes not leading to particular degree. It is also foreseen to recognise prior learning and prior pedagogical practice.

Regulation of qualification development:

- The Law of Education (2003) states that each teacher can participate in in-service training of their choice for 5 days per year.
- In 2007 the Regulations for Vocational Teachers Qualification Improvement (*Profesijos mokytojų kvalifikacijos tobulinimo nuostatai*) were adopted. The document regulates the goals and objectives as well as methods of vocational teachers' qualification development, defines responsibilities of institutions engaged in the process and funding arrangements. It is outlined that teachers qualification is developed according to non-

formal programmes and informally. It is recommended that qualification development programmes would be modularised and would target at concrete competencies. Non-formal and informal learning of vocational teachers may be recognized following the procedures, defined by the Government.

- In 2008 priority areas of teachers' professional development were approved (*Prioritetinės valstybinių ir savivaldybių mokyklų vadovų, jų pavaduotojų ugdymui, ugdymą organizuojančių skyrių vedėjų, mokytojų, profesijos mokytojų, pagalbos mokiniui specialistų kvalifikacijos tobulinimo kryptys 2008-2010 metams*). For vocational teachers, the two priority areas for professional development are the preparation of modular training programmes and related training resources and the development of technological competencies.

Requirements for qualification:

- In 2005 the qualification requirements for teachers in pre-school, primary, general, secondary, special and VET programmes were approved (*Kvalifikacinių reikalavimų mokytojams, dirbantiems pagal ikimokyklinio, priešmokyklinio, neformaliojo vaikų švietimo, pradinio, pagrindinio, vidurinio, specialiojo ugdymo ir profesinio mokymo programas aprašas*). The Decree stated that if a person wishes to become a teacher of VET school, he/she must have a pedagogical qualification or have attended the pedagogical-psychological minimum programme. This requirement increased demand for pedagogical courses.
- In 2007 Description of Teacher Occupation Competence (*Mokytojo profesijos kompetencijos aprašas*) was approved. The document describes general cultural, professional, general and special teacher competencies and aims at defining single criteria for pre-service and in-service teachers training.

Increase of salaries for teachers:

- With the aim of increasing the attractiveness of teachers occupation, improving quality of education and social situation of teachers Government has approved Long-term programme for increasing teachers' salaries (*Ilgalaikė pedagoginių darbuotojų darbo užmokesčio didinimo programa*) in 2008. The programme envisages a plan for increase of teachers' salaries. For instance, in 2008 salaries of vocational teachers were raised by 25%. Due to economic downturn, the amendments to the programme were adopted in 2009. However it is committed to further increase salaries with regard to the State financial capacities and changes of average monthly salaries.

Standard of Vocational Teacher

Professional standard for VET teacher (*Profesijos mokytojų profesijos standartas*) was developed and agreed by the Collegium of the Ministry of Education and Science in 2001. It describes the competency-based requirements for VET teachers taking into account legal regulations of that period and research outcomes (e.g. Leonardo da Vinci programme project). The Standard sets out the objectives of the VET teacher profession and distinguishes five VET teacher qualification categories that reflect the direction and sequence of their career. It also describes the type of competencies that teachers must have to teach in VET schools and outlines the objectives of the profession as well as the main work areas.

The standard is used for developing VET teachers training programmes, e.g. on its basis VET teachers training programme "Vocational Pedagogics" (*Profesinė pedagogika*) of Vytautas Magnus University was updated.

Practical implementation of initiatives for VET teachers qualification

Continuing training services offer is enhanced by projects implemented with the support from European structural and other funds. In the period concerned, the projects were targeted at the development of VET teachers technological and pedagogical competences as well as key skills. Examples of projects:

- In 2003-2004 one of the first initiatives for developing VET teachers technological competencies was implemented under Phare 2001 programme (Strategical Competences for Construction Sector Vocational Teachers: Developing of Experience - *Strateginių kompetencijų suteikimas statybinių profesijų mokytojams: patirties modeliavimas*). The methodology for the identification of strategic (technological) competencies and preparation of qualification development modules was drafted and the technological competencies of the VET teachers in the field of construction were updated. In 2005-2008 with the support of ESF technological competencies of vocational teachers were updated in agriculture, transport, mechanics and metal work sectors. It should be noted that the initiatives for teachers technological competencies development will be further continued through the Practical VET Resources Development Programme (see Section 8.3). These initiatives are described in detail in the example below.
- In the framework of project “Enlargement of VET Teachers Training Network into other Lithuanian Regions” (*Profesijos pedagogų rengimo tinklo išplėtimas į Lietuvos regionus*) the study programme “Vocational Pedagogics” (*Profesinė pedagogika*) was renewed and the training was expanded from Kaunas Vytautas Magnus University into other regions: Vilnius Pedagogical, Klaipėda and Šiauliai universities. The programme is being implemented since 2002 and is oriented towards the development of VET teachers pedagogical competencies. Its aim is to award participants with a qualification of vocational teacher and to encourage them to project, implement and assess training content in a competent way. The project also resulted in preparing and accrediting mentors training programme.
- In the framework of the project “The Development of Lithuanian VET Institutions Vocational Teachers Competences System” (*Lietuvos profesinio rengimo institucijų profesijos mokytojų kompetencijų sistemos plėtra, 2005-2008*) 12 modules for teachers key competences development were designed. They included: innovations in management, particularities of adults education, pedagogical applied research, development of key competences, self-analysis of teachers, and methodology for work with special needs students, etc. A national project “VET Teachers Training Programme on ICT Introduction in VET” (*IKT diegimo profesiniame mokyme profesijos mokytojų rengimo programa*) aimed at training vocational teachers to effectively apply innovative training methods and forms in education process based on ICT (the project is described in example 7.2).

Certification of vocational teachers

Teachers certification (pedagogų atestacija) is implemented in order to motivate them to improve their qualification. Based on the assessment of practical activity and professional development, vocational teachers are awarded one of 4 qualification categories: vocational teacher, senior vocational teacher, vocational teacher-methodologist and vocational teacher-expert. The certification procedure encourage qualification development (participation in qualification development events is one of the principle requirements for those seeking a higher qualification category what, in turn, influences salary) and, thereby, enhancement of VET quality.

Vocational teachers' certification is organised according to the general certification procedure. During the analysed period certification regulations were reviewed and updated (new document was adopted in 2008).

Example

<p>1. Title of policy/ measure: Development of VET teachers technological competence</p>
<p>2. Description</p> <p>The fast change in the technologies determines the need to update the VET teachers' competencies. For this reason Phare 2001 programme project "Strategical Competences for Construction Sector Vocational Teachers: Developing of Experience" (<i>Strateginių kompetencijų suteikimas statybinių profesijų mokytojams: patirties modeliavimas</i>) was carried out in 2003-2004. The project resulted in developing the methodology for the identification of strategic (technological) competencies and preparation of qualification development modules and in developing 7 modules for improving subject and pedagogical qualification. They were piloted in the construction sector. The pilot group – vocational teachers.</p> <p>The initiative was further continued using ESF resources and in 2005-2008 experience was transferred into 3 other sectors. Project "Update of Strategical Competencies for Vocational Teachers: development of experience" (<i>Strateginių kompetencijų suteikimas profesijos mokytojams: patirties plėtra</i>) was targeted at agriculture, transport, mechanics and metal work sectors vocational teachers. During the project 17 qualification development modules in technologies and 1 in pedagogy field were prepared (for instance, in mechanics and metal work sector: new metal processing devices and tools, fast methods for metal processing; in transport sector: new technologies for car painting, diagnosis of modern car managing systems; in agriculture sector: plants protection, ecological agriculture). The training according to these modules was organised for vocational teachers from all schools in related sectors.</p> <p>The projects experience will be further applied while implementing Practical VET Resources Development Programme (see example 8.3). One of the activity groups of the programme is dedicated for development and implementation of system for VET teachers technological competencies improvement. According to the programme it is foreseen that 580 teachers will participate in related training courses.</p>
<p>3. Level of operation and key actors involved</p> <p>Operation: sectoral level.</p> <p>Development of VET teachers technological competencies is in-line with the Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (2003), teachers pre-service and in-service training reform documents, Practical VET Resources Development Programme (2007). VET teacher technological competence development is approved as one of the two priority areas of VET teachers' professional development for 2008–2010.</p> <p>Key actors: study and training institutions, social partners, Methodological Centre for VET (as of January 2010 – Qualifications and VET Development Centre).</p>
<p>4. Evaluation and conclusions</p> <p>The methodology for the identification of strategic (technological) competencies and preparation of qualification development modules applied in these projects may be transferred to other sectors of the economy. The described projects covered all training institutions in the related sectors, their representatives who participated in training were encouraged to disseminate the experience acquired to their colleagues.</p>
<p>5. Source</p> <p>Profesinio mokymo metodikos centras. Strateginių kompetencijų suteikimas profesijos mokytojams: patirties plėtra. Baigiamosios konferencijos medžiaga [Update of strategical competencies for vocational teachers: development of experience. Final conference paper], 2008</p> <p>Website of project "Update of Strategical Competencies for Vocational Teachers: Development of Experience (<i>Strateginių kompetencijų suteikimas profesijos mokytojams: patirties plėtra</i>): http://projektai.pmmc.lt</p>

THEME 7: ENHANCING CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

7.1 Creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship in VET

The Provisions of the National Education Strategy for 2003-2012 (2003) note that education should contribute to the strengthening of creative powers of the society and help an individual to understand the contemporary world, to acquire cultural and social competences and to become an independent, active and responsible person who is willing and able to learn and create a new life of his own and of the society. In addition the Strategy calls for the development of general competences, information culture, entrepreneurship, and notes that a continued updating of the conveyance of the education content is absolutely requisite for the assurance of the education quality development. The major focus of strategic documents is on the development and promotion of entrepreneurship: Economic Literacy and Entrepreneurship Development Strategy (*Ekonominio raštingumo ir verslumo ugdymo strategija*) was approved in 2004, and the National Entrepreneurship Development and Promotion Programme for the Youth for 2008-2010 (*Nacionalinė jaunimo verslumo ugdymo ir skatinimo 2008-2010 metų programa*) was approved in 2008. The Action Plan of the Programme includes such tasks as to draft and publish the methodological guidelines for promotion of entrepreneurship, to establish practical training firms, to develop model of students' training companies in different type schools, to initiate establishment of such companies, to draft the entrepreneurship training programme for teachers and organize the training.

The formal vocation training programmes are competence based. VET programmes are developed by VET providers, in cooperation with representatives of employers. When developing programmes, providers follow VET standards and the general requirements approved by the Minister for Education and Science (programme development process is described in Example 4.2). The provisions for **key competencies training** (including creativity, initiative, learning to learn) are included in the training goals established in VET standards. Annually approved general VET plans establish what part of training should be devoted to those subjects developing general competences. For example, foreign language subjects (1st and 2nd) are included in vocational training programmes for the persons who have no lower-secondary education and those aiming for the upper-secondary education. In order to react to innovations in the economy and to reflect better local needs, VET institutions have the right to independently change the content by up to 10%. Additionally, specialisation subjects may comprise 10% to 15% of the total time allocated to teaching vocational subjects. A special focus is on developing **entrepreneurship**. The Basics of Economics and Business is included in all vocational training programmes. Also, the students gain business skills and knowledge when participating in the activities of the Practical Training Firms (*verslo praktinio mokymo firmos*) and *the Students' Training Companies (mokomosios moksleivių bendrovės)*. Practical Training Firms are firms that imitate the activities of really operating companies. The Students' Training Companies are established according to Lithuanian Junior Achievement programme. In a short term period students practically experience all stages of company creation, from establishment to closing down. They assess the market, make decision regarding the business, accumulate capital by selling stocks, produce and sell their production, manage the accounting. Compared to really operating companies, students companies have a limited capital, operate a limited period, and its accountancy is simplified.

Practical training is organised in various environments: in the school, the school facilities and directly in companies. It is preferred that during the last year of training trainees would have practical placement in a real company from 8 to 15 weeks depending on the length of programmes. The new edition of the Law on VET (2007) expanded the variety of training organisation forms (established that VET may be organised in apprenticeship form).

The procedure for the organisation of the final qualification assessment also contributes to promotion of creativity. From 2003 social partners are responsible for the final qualification examination. They delegate employers' representatives to the qualification exam commission, take part in preparing tasks and tests for the exams. A qualification exam commission is formed from 3 members representing employers, employees and VET providers. The qualification examination is composed of the theoretical and practical assessment parts. Support from the EU structural funds in 2005-2008 helped to prepare the methodology for compiling the qualification exams tasks, a computerised task creation programme and pilot examination tasks.

Creativity, innovativeness and entrepreneurship are also promoted and encouraged by organising skills competitions. As indicated by the data provided by VET institutions over 200 competitions of different levels were organised in 2009. The majority of such competitions are organised on school level, regional and national level competitions are rather frequent too. The competitions target demonstration and assessment of general skills and competencies (for example, "The Young Businessman Competition", "The Most Literate Future Employee", Fairs of Practical Training Firms, etc.) and demonstration and assessment of professional competencies. In cooperation with employees skills competitions are incorporated into international and national excellence championships that are arranged during various exhibitions in Lithuania. For example, a competition of VET students is organised within the framework of the Baltic Championship of Hairdressers and Makeup Specialists at the international beauty industry fair „Cinderella“ (*Pelenė*). Teams of Lithuanian trainees also participate in different international sectoral competitions both in Lithuania and abroad.

Example

<p><i>1. Title of policy/ measure:</i> Skills competition for hairdressers and makeup specialists</p>
<p><i>2. Description</i></p> <p>From 2007 a hairdressers and makeup specialists skills competition for VET students is organised under the Baltic Championship of Hairdressers and Makeup Specialists during the international beauty industry fair "Cinderella" (<i>Pelenė</i>).</p> <p>During the competition students of hairdressers and decorative cosmetics training programmes are given creative tasks, for accomplishment of which accurate preparation, flexibility, ability to work independently and fast orientation in situation are needed. For instance, in 2010 competition future hairdressers had to demonstrate a long hair haircut "Reliefs" and future visagists – a cocktail podium make-up. Similarly as in adults championship, contest participants are evaluated by international level judges, beauty services sector experts.</p> <p>All Lithuanian vocational schools preparing hairdressers and make-up specialists participate in this competition. Number of participants is growing: in 2007 competition there were 19 students, in 2010 – 32 students. In 2010 for the first time representatives from Latvia Jalgava vocational school participated in the competition.</p>

3. Level of operation and key actors involved

Operation: sectoral level.

Key actors: journal „Hair+“, Hair and Beauty Care Methodological commission, Ministry of Education and Science.

4. Evaluation and conclusions

The competition is an excellent occasion for the future beauty specialists to develop their creativity, to demonstrate practical skills, to receive a comprehensive evaluation and to compare personal skills with those of students from other schools and professionals. Vocational teachers are given an opportunity to know about the newest tendencies in the sector, the requirements of employers for future specialists and to exchange good experience with other schools and employers. Employers, while observing participants of competition, are familiarised with training of specialists, they also can make contacts with training institutions.

The approach that students skills competition is organised during the sectoral fair and championship of professionals contributes to raising visibility of such an event because the fair “Cinderella” is widely promoted by mass media. This contributes to increasing the attractiveness of both, the hairdressers and makeup specialists profession and vocational education and training in Lithuania. On the other hand, costs for organisation and participation in the competition are decreased: the competition is organised in the same basis as championship of professionals, organisers of the competition provide all necessary means. It is foreseen to transfer such a skills competition organisation experience into other sectors (construction, agriculture, etc.).

5. Source

Ministry of Education and Science: <http://www.smm.lt>

7.2 Improving quality of teaching

The principal liability for the enhancement of training quality lies with VET providers. It is their duty to ensure the quality of VET, to create the learning conditions established in VET curricula, to ensure continuous renewal of the curriculum and methods, and to create conditions for teachers and other staff to improve their qualification.

With the aim of enhancing quality of vocational training Practical VET Resources Development Programme (*Praktinio profesinio mokymo išteklių plėtros programa*) was approved in 2007. The Programme is described in detail in Section 8.3. The Programme envisages the establishment of the network of sectoral practical training centres equipped with the most modern equipment, also the introduction of innovative IT-based training and learning methods.

Innovative pedagogies

Teachers independently choose methods for training and assessment of their trainees. Teacher qualification improvement institutions regularly organise different training courses designed to introduce new teaching methods. As pointed out in the Assessment report of effectiveness of the EU structural funds' support², the introduction of innovative training and learning methods and forms was one the most popular project areas implemented with the EU support in 2005-2008.

Introduction of new technologies

² ES struktūrinės paramos, skirtos pagal Lietuvos 2004–2006 m. Bendrąjį programavimo dokumentą darbo jėgos kompetencijai didinti, efektyvumo vertinimas: rezultatai, kiekybiniai ir kokybiniai pokyčiai, rekomendacijos ateičiai [Assessment report of effectiveness of the EU Structural Funds' support for labour force competence: results, quantitative and qualitative changes, recommendation for future]

With a view to improving the use of information and communication technologies in vocational training in the period concerned the Strategy for the Introduction of Information and Communication Technologies in VET (2004), and the Strategy for the Introduction of Information and Communication Technologies in General Education and Vocational Training in 2008-2010 (2008) were adopted. The latter provides for the development of the digital curricula, modern training and learning tools, enhancement of hardware and software provision to schools and development of competence of school communities to facilitate the ICT education and training. In addition, the requirements for computer literacy of teachers were approved in 2007. The document stipulates that teachers should acquire fundamentals of technological literacy corresponding to the basic level of the General Computer Literacy Standard (approved in 2004) and the educational competence of ICT application.

Introduction of new technologies into VET was a scope of many projects. For example, the national level project “VET Teacher Training Programme on ICT Introduction in VET” was implemented in 2005-2008. It aimed at training vocational teachers to effectively apply innovative training methods and forms in education process based on ICT. 12 distance learning courses were prepared when implementing the Project, vocational teachers were trained to apply 24 new computer training tools, innovative “learning through activities” education method and distance learning as such.

Another example of the project – project “The Development of Distance Learning and its Integration into Traditional Training within the Labour Market Training System”. In the course of the project 60 distance learning courses for adults training were developed or updated, vocational teachers were enrolled into training for the designing of ICT and distance learning courses.

Partnership of VET providers in exchanging best practice and testing new tools and instruction methods

Starting with 2003, a number of teachers’ good practice exhibitions are organised and used to present the best methodological outputs of vocational teachers as well as successful projects of VET institutions. In 2006, 11 methodological commissions of vocational teachers were established at the Teacher Professional Development Centre. The principal objectives of such commissions are to ensure the methodological and subject cooperation of vocational teachers, to promote pedagogical innovations and to enhance professional excellence of teachers. Meetings of such commissions are dedicated to discussing issues related to curricula and methods. They also provide a possibility for fruitful exchange of good practice and demonstration of methodological products.

The Association of Innovative Vocational Training Institutions (*Lietuvos inovatyvių profesinio rengimo įstaigų asociacija*) established in 2005 currently unites 33 vocational training institutions. The principal objectives pursued by the Association are to unite and join vocational training institutions for innovative activities, facilitate professional development of teachers, generalise and promote the innovative experience.

The National Association of Teachers of Economics (*Respublikinė ekonomikos mokytojų asociacija*) active since 2006 at the moment joins teachers from general education schools and vocational training institutions. Members of this Association design educational programmes for promotion of knowledge in economics and entrepreneurship, draft and publish textbooks and methodological tools.

Example

1. *Title of policy/ measure: VET Teacher Training Programme on ICT Introduction in VET, 2005–2007 (IKT diegimo profesiniame mokyme profesijos mokytojų rengimo programa)*

2. Description

With the aim of creating conditions for students and teachers to use modern information technologies, information technologies are consistently introduced into education institutions. Therefore it is important to ensure a relevant level of teachers' computer literacy. In 2005-2007 a project "VET Teacher Training Programme on ICT Introduction in VET" (*IKT diegimo profesiniame mokyme profesijos mokytojų rengimo programa*) was implemented the focus of which was ICT skills of vocational teachers. It aimed at improving vocational teachers qualification by using ICT.

Project activities covered:

- by way of survey 12 specialities were selected identified as having the highest effect of ICT implementation;
- 48 teachers-consultants in ICT implementation were trained;
- by the way of survey computerised training tools suitable for VET in 12 chosen specialities were selected;
- 24 computerised training tools were acquired and 12 training material packages were developed;
- by way of survey a virtual training environment suitable for VET was chosen and purchased. VET teachers were trained to apply the computerised training tools and the virtual training environment in education process.

75 VET institutions participated in the project. The certificates of training courses graduation were awarded to 1,368 vocational teachers.

3. Level of operation and key actors involved

Operation: national level.

The project was carried out with a view of implementing the Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (2003), Strategy for implementation of ICT into VET system.

Key actors: Centre of Information Technologies of Education, VET providers.

4. Evaluation and conclusions

Based on the Report on the Project Impact Assessment for VET project participants positively assess the impact of the project upon their ITC competences, also the impact of computerised training tools acquired within the project for education process and their applicability in further daily practical pedagogical activities. The project also was a significant contribution to the reduction of regional differences. As a result of the project, the computerised training tools were introduced in all Lithuanian VET institutions thus reducing inequalities in VET provision.

The remaining challenges: due to constantly developing information technologies, ICT introduction/update in VET should become an uninterrupted process. The survey of vocational teachers showed that only one third of all vocational teachers actually use virtual learning environments. This should be taken into account when preparing training courses and further developing the project.

5. Source

Švietimo informacinių technologijų centras. Informacinių ir komunikacinių technologijų diegimas profesiniame mokyme: gerosios patirties sklaida [ICT introduction into VET: dissemination of good experience], 2008

Matematikos ir informatikos institutas. Projekto „IKT diegimo profesiniame mokyme profesijos mokytojų rengimo programa“ įtaka profesinio mokymo kaitai šalies profesinėse mokyklose. Mokslinio tyrimo ataskaita [Impact of project "VET Teacher Training Programme on ICT Introduction in VET" on VET change in vocational schools. Report of scientific research], 2008. Available from internet: <http://profprogr.emokykla.lt/images/docs/1pmtyrimoataskaita2008.pdf>
Website of the project "VET Teacher Training Programme on ICT Introduction in VET": <http://profprogr.emokykla.lt/content/view/8/9/lang.lt/>

7.3 Innovation-friendly institutions

Several activity groups may be identified that contribute to the creation of innovation-friendly learning environment:

- *Implementation of new technologies and development of new training and learning methods* (see Section 7.2).
- *Transfer of foreign expertise, dissemination of national experience.* Institutional cooperation with foreign partners is fostered by bilateral initiatives and implementation of common projects (Phare, Leonardo da Vinci). Mobility, transfer of innovations and partnership projects under the Leonardo da Vinci programme promote the creation of an innovative learning environment: experience exchange enables further improvements in curricula and training methods, development of methodological and training materials.

In 2005 a declaration of intent was signed between Quebec's Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sports (le Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport) and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania. The ministries expressed their interest in exchanging experience in areas such as the development of VET standards and programmes, VET quality assurance, the organisation of training, etc. It was also agreed to support the exchange of students, teachers and management staff, and to promote cooperation among training institutions in training programmes, pedagogical, scientific and technical research, and learning materials.

- *Bringing general education and VET closer.* Since 2000 *technological gymnasiums* have been set up at vocational schools. They provide upper secondary and pre-vocational education. Openness of VET and general education is also promoted by possibilities to acquire lower and upper secondary education with vocational qualification. The implementation of VET and general education programmes in the same school facilitates more flexible teaching processes, schools are more open towards new ideas.
- *Reform of state-run VET schools to self-governing institutions.* As already mentioned, in 2003, the decentralisation of VET management started through a change of status of state-run vocational schools to self-governing institutions. This change enables different stakeholders (enterprises, social partners, regional and municipal government, etc.) to participate in the management and funding of VET providers. Thus more flexible management structures are created, relations between VET institutions and employers are strengthened, in consequence, openness of training providers to labour market needs and new technologies is increased.

7.4 Encouraging partnership

The information on partnership between VET providers and social partners is presented in Section 4.3.

The partnership of VET providers is encouraged and reinforced by participation in the activities of different associations. For example, organisations and institutions active in the area of adult education have joined into the *Lithuanian Association of Adult Education (Lietuvos suaugusiųjų švietimo asociacija)*. The Association was established in 1992 and currently joins 112 individual and 40 collective members. For 10 years at the initiative of the Association the Week of Adult Education is organised. The 2009 week was dedicated for creativity and innovation in learning and teaching, in education, art, culture, business and social connections and in everyday human life. Having launched the events in many places of the country the purpose of the action was to transform the views of the adults from the

traditional into the creative, to develop the understanding of the creativity and innovations concept, to establish cultural and creative industries among representatives of education, culture, art and business, to support their partnership and cooperation, to develop local, regional and international creativity and innovations promotion strategies.

The Association of Principals of Vocational Schools (*Profesinių mokyklų direktorių asociacija*) was established in 2004, today it represents the interests of vocational schools, organises qualification development and cultural events, study visits to other vocational schools in Lithuania and abroad.

The Lithuanian Association of Innovative Vocational Training Institutions and the National Association of Teachers of Economics are presented in Section 7.2.

THEME 8: FINANCING VET

8.1 Improving efficiency, equity, levels of VET funding

The Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (*Valstybinės švietimo strategijos 2003–2012 metų nuostatos, 2003*) set out the guidelines for the reform of education funding and use of resources. For instance, the Strategy foresees that education should be funded from different sources, the funds allocation principle “money follow a pupil” should be gradually implemented in all sectors of education and that financial incentives to encourage private capital investment into education should be used.

The provisions for VET funding are stipulated in the new edition of Law on VET (2007), which specifies that VET is funded from central and local government budgets, the Employment Fund, social partners and other legal sources.

IVET is funded from the state budget in accordance with a methodology for calculating training costs for each student.² The unit costs (the so-called “pupil’s basket”) include allocations for staff salaries and social insurance, the in-service training of teachers and funding for the acquisition of professional and technical literature, and manuals and other learning materials. The funding for the maintenance of training facilities is also allocated in accordance with this methodology. Additionally, VET providers, under the approved Government investment, may receive funding from the State budget for the development and construction of training facilities, etc. VET providers (whose main activity is vocational training) may receive income from physical and legal entities for services provided (e.g. training courses, rent of premises). This income should be used for educational and training purposes.

Continuing training is usually funded by enterprises, the Employment Fund or other funds, or the learner. According to national legislation, in certain cases training can be sponsored by the State. For instance, a number of ministries and other public organisations receive funds from the State budget for the implementation of qualification development programmes for employees in their sector (for example, the training of social workers, lawyers, defence personnel, healthcare specialists, and others).

The training of unemployed and those who received a notice of dismissal is funded following the procedure set out in the Law on Support of Employment. The Law was approved in 2006 and replaced the Law on Support for the Unemployed effective since 1996. The current law established new employment support measures (job rotation, supported employment, support for the acquisition of professional skills and support for self-employment). It also changed funding mechanisms: increased education grant for the unemployed and introduced a number of different subsidies to the unemployed who were employed, wage compensation subsidies for the employers. In 2009, the new edition of the Law on Support for Employment was approved that came into force on 1 August 2009. The Amendments to the Law aim at reducing the negative impact of the economic downturn on the growth of the unemployment, creating conditions for retaining jobs and involving more persons into the active labour market policy measures (see Section 2.1).

With the aim of increasing the attractiveness of teachers occupation, improving quality of education and social situation of teachers Government approved Long-term programme for increasing teachers’ salaries (*Ilgalaikė pedagoginių darbuotojų darbo užmokesčio didinimo programa*) in 2008. The programme envisages a plan for increase of teachers’ salaries. For

² „Student’s basket“ approach was introduced in 2004

instance, in 2008 salaries of vocational teachers were raised by 25%. Due to economic downturn, the amendments to the programme were adopted in 2009. However it is committed to further increase salaries with regard to the State financial capacities and changes of average monthly salaries.

Seeking to increase adults participation in education, in the period considered **the incentives to encourage private capital investment** were developed:

- *Tax incentives for individuals for VET* were introduced in 2008 after amending the Law on Personal Income Tax. Up to 2007, only payments for higher education leading to a degree were eligible for tax deduction.
- Additionally, since 2003 the Law on Personal Income Tax allows the residents of Lithuania, after the end of the tax period, to direct the amount not exceeding 2% of their income tax to legal entities that are entitled to charity and sponsorship under the Law on Charity and Sponsorship. VET institutions are among the potential recipients of this support.
- *Tax incentives for legal entities for IVET* have been in place since 2005. The Law on Corporate Income Tax stipulates that some staff training costs can be deducted from the calculated amount of corporate income tax.
- *Payback clauses for individuals and employers were both introduced in 2005*. The Labour Code provides general conditions for an employer to claim compensation from an employee for the costs for training over the previous year if they leave the job earlier than the predetermined period.

It should be noted that in the current period a high focus is on **reforming higher education funding**. In 2009 the Law on Studies and Science was approved establishing new mechanisms for university and college studies (oriented towards practical activity) funding. The Law introduced a “study basket approach” – state funding fully covering studying costs for best graduates of upper-secondary education. In 2009 a Description of Procedure for Ranking of the Best Graduates from Upper Secondary General Education Programmes was approved. This document establishes some privileges making easier for graduates from VET to enter higher education programmes (see Section 6.3).

8.2 Use of Lifelong Learning Programme funds

EU Lifelong Learning Programme in Lithuania is administered by Education Exchanges Support Foundation (*Švietimo mainų paramos fondas*). Based on its data, in 2002-2009 more than 700 different projects were implemented (see the table 3).

Table 3. Funding of Leonardo da Vinci programme projects in 2002–2009, thous. EUR

Year	Mobility projects		Procedure B projects (transfer of innovation)		Partnership projects		Preparatory visits	
	Amount, EUR	No of projects	Amount, EUR	No of projects	Amount, EUR	No of projects	Amount, EUR	No of projects
2002	593.7	56	711.8	4	-	-	-	-
2003	609.6	58	819.8	4	-	-	-	-
2004	1 226.6	59	1 183.8	6	-	-	-	-
2005	1 323	65	958.7	4	-	-	-	-
2006	1 572.8	78	899.3	4	-	-	-	-
2007	1 289.6	65	1 171.8	5	-	-	25.9	34

2008	1 394.1	78	1 164.6	5	197	16	38.8	39
2009	1 558.5	74	1 126.2	6	186	14	18.8	18
		533		38		30		91

Source: Education Exchanges Support Foundation

Mobility projects provide for a possibility to visit 31 European countries participating in the programme for the purpose of improving qualification, better familiarisation with national education systems and the novelties in vocational training area. For more details about mobility projects, please see Section 3.2.

Transfer of Innovations projects (until 2007 – Pilot projects) are the multilateral projects focusing upon the adaptation of previously developed and successfully implemented project results to the needs of new target groups and users or their transfer and integration into other education systems, sectors, countries. To summarise the information about projects funded 2002-2009, the focus of projects in VET area is:

- the development of training programmes (examples of projects: *Development of Programmes for Training of European Level Welding Specialists, Transfer of Competencies for Vocational Training in Ecological Agrarian Sector of Baltic States, Development of European Modular Training Programs for Decorator/Painter and their Adjustment in Lithuanian and European VET Institutions*);
- the development of tools for quality assurance (examples of projects: *Development of Internal Quality Assurance System for Practical Training in VET Institution, Curriculum Development for External Quality Assessment Experts Training*);
- the improvement of vocational teachers qualification (examples of projects: *Development of Systems for Vocational Teacher Qualification Improvement, Empowerment of Vocational Education and Training by Improving E-learning Competences of Teachers and Trainers*);
- the development of vocational guidance and counselling (examples of projects: *Overcoming Intercultural and Linguistic Barriers in Continuously Accessible Vocational Guidance and Counselling, Meeting the Needs of Employment: European Curriculum Guidelines for Lifelong Vocational Counsellor in the line with the Challenges of EU Enlargement*);
- the development of validation of prior learning (examples of projects: *Facilitating Access to Lifelong Learning through the Development of Recognition Procedure of Non-formal and Informal Learning, Transfer of Innovative Methodology for Assessment of VET Teachers' Prior Learning, Innovative Tools and Procedures for Non-formal and Informal Learning Validation*).

Partnership projects is a framework for small-scale cooperation activities between organisations working in the field of vocational education and training which will be cooperating on themes of mutual interest to the participating organisations. Partnership may be intended for continuation of cooperation based on mobility projects or this may be a first step to the Transfer of Innovations projects.

Table 4: The priorities of Leonardo da Vinci programme projects

2007	2008	2009
Mobility projects		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • update of VET teacher technological competencies; • professional development of qualifications of company employees (especially supervisors of apprentices); • improvement of VET curricula; • strengthening of foreign language teaching at VET level; • thematic areas: construction, wood, and furniture processing, transport, mechatronics, metal and plastic goods manufacturing, services and tourism sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integration of socially excluded groups into the labour market; • improvement of entrepreneurship education; • application of information technologies in VET education; • preparation for Skills competitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of qualifications of vocational guidance and counselling specialists; • promoting cooperation between VET education and labour market; • energy, environmental and mechanical engineering sectors.
Transfer of Innovations projects		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improvement of the quality of vocational training systems and practical training; • continuous development of vocational teachers; • development of up-to-date and innovative e-learning content; • transfer of credits in the vocational training systems; • recognition of informal and independent learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improvement of skills and competencies of vocational teachers, instructors and practical training supervisors; • improving of quality and increasing the appeal of the vocational training systems; • transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications; • improvement of skills of adults participating in the labour market; • improvement of skills of persons from risk groups; • improvement of training environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications; • improvement of quality and increasing the attractiveness of the vocational training system; • improvement of skills and competencies of vocational teachers, instructors and practical training supervisors; • improvement of skills of adults participating in the labour market; • improvement of skills of persons from risk groups.
Partnership projects		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improvement of quality and increasing the attractiveness of the vocational training system; • improvement of VET tools; • strengthening of mutual learning. 	

8.3 Use of other EU funds

In 2001-2003 within the framework of **PHARE 2000** Economic and Social Cohesion Programme (ESC) more than 4 million Euro were allocated for different projects in 3 target regions from Human Resources Development fund. The implementation of projects helped to prepare for implementation of distance training.

Implementation of **PHARE 2001** ESC grant scheme programme “VET for Economic and Social Cohesion” (*Profesinis rengimas siekiant ekonominės ir socialinės sanglaudos*, value 4.2 million Euro) in 2003-2005 resulted in preparation of strategic documents (Strategy for Ensuring Lifelong Learning, Vocational Guidance and Counselling Strategy, concept of new edition of Law on VET). The programme also supported various initiatives of initial and continuing VET (preparation of training programmes, employees training, etc.). It should be noted that PHARE 2001 projects enabled to pilot or improve activities (for instance, development of training resources, VET standards, upgrading of teachers qualification) which were further multiplied at system level with the support from European structural funds.

After accession of Lithuania to European Union, 2004-2006 EU structural support for education and training under Single Programming Document³ equalled to 170 million Euro (see table 5). In this period the largest European structural fund investments were in the areas of the *development of national qualifications system* (shaping of VET standards system, preparation for introduction of national qualification system), *development of quality assurance system* (development of VET quality assurance concept, improving of skills and competencies assessment system, update of training programmes), *introduction of innovative training and learning methods* and designing training materials, *improving of teachers training*, modernisation of VET infrastructure according to the needs of current technologies (see Section 1.2), *development of vocational guidance and counselling system* (preparation of normative documents, specialists training, infrastructure development) and enhancement of *adults participation in education* (around 21 thousand employees in public sector and around 47 thousand employees in industry and business companies participated in training). Projects helped to prepare for *future priority actions* (development of qualifications system and implementation of quality assurance system).

It is foreseen that in **2007–2013** more than 1 billion Euro will be allocated for education and training. Main VET area priorities for the next ESF period are the improvement of practical training, development of guidance and counselling system, development of qualifications system, improvement of VET quality and reform of VET curricula by modularisation of training. Additionally, funding for VET is allocated through different measures the responsibility for which is delegated to various ministries.

Table 5. EU structural support for education and training in 2004-2006 and 2007-2013, million Euro

Area	Period	
	2004-2006	2007-2013
Science and knowledge society	46	485
Higher education	47	212
VET and qualification systems	63	255
General education	16	196

Source: Ministry of Education and Science Department of the European Union Assistance Coordination

With the aim to plan and assist rational implementation of EU structural funds for the programming period 2007-2013, *Practical VET Resources Development Programme* and *The*

³ The Single Programming Document (*Bendrasis programavimo dokumentas, 2004*) established guidelines for human resources development and their implementation with the support from European structural funds in 2004-2006

National Programme for Vocational Guidance within Education System were approved in 2007.

Practical VET Resources Development Programme (Praktinio profesinio mokymo išteklių plėtros programa) foresees the activities for the development of modular VET system, further development of VET quality assurance system, the development of the VET infrastructure, including the creation of sectoral practical training centres network. Additionally the programme foresees the improvement of vocational teachers' technological competencies and upgrading of adult learners key competences. The programme is described in the example.

The National Programme for Vocational Guidance within Education System (Nacionalinė profesinio orientavimo švietimo sistemoje programa) foresees the development and introduction of an integral vocational guidance model and infrastructure at general education, VET and higher education institutions, the development of vocational guidance and counselling measures, the development of qualification of guidance and counselling specialists, further development of Open Information, Guidance and Counselling System (AIKOS) and etc.

Example

1. Title of policy/ measure: **Practical VET Resources Development Programme (Praktinio profesinio mokymo išteklių plėtros programa)**

2. Description

With the aim of improving practical VET, in 2007 Practical VET Resources Development Programme was approved. It covers several activity groups including the development of modular VET system, development of sectoral practical training centres infrastructure, development and implementation of system for VET teachers technological competencies improvement, introduction of internal VET quality assurance tools in VET institutions and external assessment of VET quality.

The programme was prepared taking into account provisions set in Lithuanian and EU strategic documents, Sectoral Practical Training Centres Concept (2007, see example 4.4).

The general aim of the programme –to increase correspondence of VET to the needs of the labour market.

Special aims:

- to increase flexibility of VET;
- to improve quality of VET;
- to improve readiness of learners for practical activity;
- to create conditions for VET teachers to regularly improve their qualification;
- to enhance accessibility of VET;
- to create conditions for learners to improve their skills to adapt to social environment.

When implementing the programme it is foreseen:

- to develop and implement modularised VET model and to prepare modular VET programmes in 25 educational fields;
- to create sectoral practical training centres infrastructure;
- to provide VET teachers and lectures with technological competencies needed to work in a new sector oriented practical training centres (it is foreseen that 580 teachers will participate in related training courses);
- to develop adult education system, oriented towards learners key competences (it is foreseen that 4,000 adults will participate in training courses);

- to develop internal VET quality assurance systems in vocational schools and to carry out external VET quality assessment (60 institutions, which implement quality assurance systems, 90 programmes evaluated by external assessment).

3. Level of operation and key actors involved

Operation: national, sectoral, local, institutional level.

The programme was prepared with a view to implementing the Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (2003), Strategy for Ensuring Lifelong Learning (2008), Concept for Developing VET Regional Infrastructure for Adults and Youth (2008), Sectoral Practical Training Centres Concept (2007), Sectoral Practical Training Centres Development Programme (2008).

Key actors: social partners, Qualifications and VET Development Centre, Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, Education Development Centre, VET and other institutions.

4. Evaluation and conclusions

Concrete measures are foreseen and funds for their implementation are scheduled, what will allow to improve quality of VET and will create conditions for innovative and creative VET provision.

5. Source

Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministro 2007 m. gruodžio 3 d. įsakymas Nr. ISAK-2333 „Dėl Praktinio profesinio mokymo išteklių plėtros programos patvirtinimo“ [Order of minister of education and science regarding the approval of Practical VET resources development programme]. *Valstybės žinios*, 2008, Nr. 7-259

8.4 Improving VET governance

The Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (*Valstybinės švietimo strategijos 2003–2012 metų nuostatos, 2003*) set out that one of the key aims of developing education in 2003–2012 is to develop an efficient and consistent education system which is based on the responsible management, targeted funding and rational use of resources.

The main features of the **reform of the VET providers network**, which was started in 2000, are the establishment and development of higher education institutions providing college studies, and the establishment and development of multi-functional regional vocational training centres through mergers of vocational schools in the corresponding regions. These steps were completed in 2004. With the aim of ensuring accessibility of VET and general education programmes, and creating favourable conditions for improving VET quality as well as more efficient usage of the resources possessed, the General Plan for Reorganisation of the Network of State Vocational Schools was adopted in 2005 with amendments in 2009 (*Bendrasis švietimo ir mokslo ministerijos įsteigtų profesinių mokyklų tinklo pertvarkos planas*). The plan envisages measures **for optimisation of vocational schools network** until year 2012.

In order to **bring general education and VET closer**, since 2000 technological gymnasiums have been set up at vocational schools. They provide upper secondary and pre-vocational education (more about pre-vocational training – in Section 5.1). Graduates are awarded a matura certificate. Then they can choose either to stay in a VET institution and continue their training according to VET programmes, or to enter higher education.

In 2003, the decentralisation of VET management started through a change of status of state-run vocational schools to self-governing institutions. This change enables different stakeholders (enterprises, social partners, regional and municipal government, etc) to participate in the management and funding of VET providers. The new status also increases their financial independence.

In 2008 integration of IVET and labour market training (oriented towards training of the unemployed) was started, with the aim of **optimising network of IVET and CVET providers** and making VET administration more effective.

The establishment of the *sectoral practical training centres* (SPTC) framework is one of the recent priorities. The main aim of the SPTC is to assure that learners, using the latest technologies and equipment, gain practical skills matching the needs of the labour market. These centres are open to students from VET, higher education institutions, employees from sector enterprises, vocational teachers and others. In 2009, 8 agreements for the establishment of SPTC were signed.

After approving Vocational Guidance and Counselling Strategy (*Profesinio orientavimo strategija*) and its Action plan the development of vocational guidance and counselling infrastructure was started. In 2004 the Open Information, Counselling and Guidance System (AIKOS; <http://www.aikos.smm.lt>) was started with a view to improving the presentation and dissemination of the information on learning possibilities. In seeking to ensure the accessibility of vocational information services across all of Lithuania, a network of Vocational Information Points (VIPs, *profesinio informavimo taškai*) has been established by the Ministry of Education and Science. At the moment, there are around 700 VIPs in general education and vocational schools, libraries and labour exchanges. To ensure participation of the key players in guidance and counselling system development the Lithuanian Vocational Guidance Council (*Profesinio orientavimo taryba*) was established in 2006. The advisory body consists of representatives of the Ministries of Education and Science and Social Security and Labour, association of municipalities, social partners (representing both employers and employees' interests), associations representing education providers and institutions providing vocational guidance services, the Euroguidance project, and other organisations.

The new edition of Law on VET (2007) created legal preconditions for the implementation of qualifications system. Qualifications Authority under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania was established in December 2007 to implement functions of designing, managing and awarding of qualifications as defined in the Law on VET. Due to the economic downturn and the recommendation of State Governance Improvement Commission (The Sunset Commission), the decision was made to close down the Qualification Authority and to readdress its functions to the Ministry of Education and Science (see Section 2.1).

THEME 9: PROGRESS IN MODERNISING EUROPEAN VET SYSTEMS IN THE COPENHAGEN PROCESS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE COOPERATION

9.1 Impact of European cooperation in VET on development of national VET policies

Cooperation with other countries has encouraged and initiated a number of VET developments. For example, a VET standards concept was designed following the experience of Germany, and a methodology for sectoral studies was developed in cooperation with Irish experts.

Participation in international networks ensures the relevant implementation in Lithuania of European Union initiatives, such as the creation of a qualifications framework for lifelong learning, the establishment of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training, VET quality assurance, and others. This is an opportunity to compare VET in different countries, and to share good practice in specific areas. Implementation of European principles and tools in Lithuania is described in Section 3.1.

9.2 Governance, cooperation and ownership of the different actors in the Copenhagen process at European level

Lithuanian representatives participate in various international networks, as for example the European Network for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (ENQA-VET), European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN), CEDEFOP networks (ReferNet, TTnet, Skillsnet), UNESCO-UNEVOC, Eurydice. In the framework of these networks, Lithuanian representatives participate in working groups (e.g., members of ENQA-VET thematic groups on Quality Indicators and Making VET more attractive), participate and organise *peer learning activities*. For instance, one of the ELGPN peer-learning activities took place in Vilnius in 2009 and focused on Career management skills development “Integration of career management skills in curricula at secondary level and in higher education”. During the event the questions on Career management skills development at VET level were also discussed.

9.3 External dimension of European cooperation in VET

Cooperation with countries beyond EU borders covers exchange of good experience among countries and signing bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements. For instance, in 2004 in cooperation with European Training Foundation the visit of Kyrgyzstan delegation was organised to familiarise them with Lithuanian VET policy and experience in VET standards development. The main topics of the visit were the role of IVET in developing competitiveness of the labour market, social partnership, methods of labour market research, development and implementation of VET standards. The delegation of 10 members consisted of representatives of Ministries, departments and other bodies dealing with VET issues. The visits were organised to the Ministries of Education and Science and Social Security and Labour, VET providers, Vytautas Magnus University Centre for Vocational Education and Research, social partners.

In 2005 a declaration of intent was signed between Quebec’s Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sports (le Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport) and the Ministry of Education

and Science of the Republic of Lithuania. It was agreed to support the exchange of students, teachers and management staff, and to promote cooperation among training institutions in training programmes, pedagogical, scientific and technical research, and learning materials. The experts cooperated in preparing 2 studies (The Division of Responsibilities for Training Programs Leading to a Trade or an Occupation Offered in Different Education Systems; Roles, Responsibilities and Partnerships in the Management of Educational Institutions Offering Vocational Training in Québec and Lithuania), furthermore visits for Ministerial delegations were organised and Quebec partners have given the rights of adaptation and translation of methodological materials. Additionally, bilateral relations among the VET providers in Lithuania and Quebec were made (Alytus Vocational Education and Training Centre and Quebec Capital Hotels School/ l'École hôtelière de la Capitale à Québec/): it is planned to create new methods for the implementation of bilingual education and to foresee the opportunities for students practical placement in the partner country.

In 2005 Protocol of Intent was signed among Lithuanian, Estonian and Latvian adult education institutions and Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijan adult education organizations. It is intended to implement joint activities in adult education and lifelong learning, to promote exchange of experts and specialists, to conduct research and comparative analysis, to promote co-operation among non-governmental organizations, adult education and VET institutions, other organizations.

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<http://profprogr.emokykla.lt/content/view/8/9/lang,lt/>

10.3 List of acronyms

AIKOS – Open Information, Counselling and Guidance System (*Atvira informavimo, konsultavimo ir orientavimo sistema*)

LLE – Lithuanian Labour Exchange at the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (*Lietuvos darbo birža prie Socialinės apsaugos ir darbo ministerijos*)

CVET – continuing vocational education and training

ESF – European Social Fund

GDP – gross domestic product

ICT – information and communication technologies

ISCED – International Standard Classification of Education

IVET – initial vocational education and training

LieDM – Lithuanian Distance Learning Network (*Lietuvos nuotolinio mokymosi tinklas*)

LLL – lifelong learning

MES – Ministry of Education and Science (*Švietimo ir mokslo ministerija*)

MSSL – Ministry of Social Security and Labour (*Socialinės apsaugos ir darbo ministerija*)

VET – vocational education and training

VIPs – Vocational Information Points (*Profesinio informavimo taškai*)

SPTC – sectoral practical training centres (*Sektoriniai praktinio mokymo centrai*)