### Further information


---

**Spotlight on VET LATVIA**

**Education and training in figures**

- **Upper secondary students (ISCED 2011 level 3) enrolled in vocational and general programmes**
  - % of all students in upper secondary education, 2014

- **Lifelong learning**
  - % of population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training, 2015

- **Early leavers from education and training**
  - % of early leavers from education and training, 2015

- **Employment rates of young graduates**
  - % of 20 to 24 year-olds no longer in education and training, 2015
Vocational education and training (VET) in Latvia

At upper secondary level:
- (a) three-year programmes (ISCED-P 353) lead to a VET certificate at EQF level 3 but do not give the right to enter higher education. Students who want to continue their studies at higher education level may attend one-year bridging programmes.
- (b) four-year programmes (ISCED-P 345) lead to a secondary VET diploma (ISCED-P 453) at the end. Students also take four State exams at the end of the programme.
- (c) one- to two-year programmes (ISCED-P 453 and 454) lead to a certificate of vocational qualification at EQF levels 3 and 4.

At secondary level:
- (a) the national term refers to ‘vocational education’ (1st year), one- to two-year programmes (ISCED-P 354) lead to a certificate of vocational qualification at EQF level 3.
- (b) second-level university programmes (four to six years) (ISCED-P 655, 656, 657, 756 and 757) lead to a professional qualification and professional teacher or master degree, or a professional higher education qualification.

Formal continuing VET (CVET) programmes enable adults with education/work experience to attain a State-recognized professional qualification in 480 to 1 280 hours, depending on the field of study. Shorter professional development programmes are also available for pupils in these programmes.

The Ministry of Education and Science is the main body responsible for VET's legal framework, including VET that provides programmes for adults. Other stakeholders, including VET that provides programmes for adults, are involved in the implementation of new strategies, including VET that provides programmes for adults.

Initial VET is centralized and highly regulated, with the role of schools being State-owned and run; two-thirds of young people gain competence centre and were incorporated into the Development/implementation of new programmes, VET attractiveness is increasing. More young people use ISCED-P 453 programmes for fast access to the labour market than before. These programmes are jointly financed by the Youth Guarantee and the European Social Fund.

The national qualifications framework was established and linked to the European qualifications framework (EQF) in 2011. It includes all formal qualifications.

A validation system for professional competences acquired outside formal education has existed since 2011, allowing direct acquisition of EQF levels 2 to 4.

Another challenge is to increase adult participation in learning by strengthening the role of the State in adult education. The implementation plan for a new adult education governance model (2016) supports a sustainable adult education system with shared responsibilities between stakeholders, including VET that provides programmes for adults.

Reforming VET and adult learning are national policy priorities. Recent reforms aim at:
- (a) promoting VET quality;
- (b) ensuring its relevance to labour market needs;
- (c) efficient use of resources to raise VET attractiveness.

In 2013, several projects jointly financed by the European Social Fund have raised VET’s attractiveness and quality. They have covered modern infrastructure, equipment and programmes (introducing modules), social partnership in designing and implementing education policy, introducing sectoral qualifications frameworks, drafting occupational standards for key professions, and raising VET teachers’ competences. Modular programmes are to be piloted to gather more evidence for policy makers. Since 2013, work-based learning has gained legal basis as one form of VET implementation. The scheme includes flexible curricula (accreditation system) and promotes sharing responsibilities of teaching and training between school and enterprises. Vocational education develops the curricula and participate in ensuring the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in workshops. Companies provide both theoretical and practical training in a real workplace environment and pay or provide allowances or wages to students.

Ensuring access guidance and counselling for young people, and putting in place ECVET and EQAVET systems for better quality and portability; are challenges that need aligning stakeholder opinions and expansion promotion. Other challenges include motivating employers to cooperate with VET providers, for example by financing the workplace and promoting continuing training for employees. The 2014-2020 education and training strategy includes these as mentioned above and other challenges by continuing education and training (supported by EU funds) including modernisation of new EU-level instruments.

Another challenge is to increase adult participation in learning by strengthening the role of the State in adult education. The implementation plan for a new adult education governance model (2016) supports a sustainable adult education system with shared responsibilities between stakeholders, including VET that provides programmes for adults.

And policy responses

Reforming VET and adult learning are national policy priorities. Recent reforms aim at:
- (a) promoting VET quality;
- (b) ensuring its relevance to labour market needs;
- (c) efficient use of resources to raise VET attractiveness.

In 2013, several projects jointly financed by the European Social Fund have raised VET’s attractiveness and quality. They have covered modern infrastructure, equipment and programmes (introducing modules), social partnership in designing and implementing education policy, introducing sectoral qualifications frameworks, drafting occupational standards for key professions, and raising VET teachers’ competences. Modular programmes are to be piloted to gather more evidence for policy makers. Since 2013, work-based learning has gained legal basis as one form of VET implementation. The scheme includes flexible curricula (accreditation system) and promotes sharing responsibilities of teaching and training between school and enterprises. Vocational education develops the curricula and participate in ensuring the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in workshops. Companies provide both theoretical and practical training in a real workplace environment and pay or provide allowances or wages to students.

Ensuring access guidance and counselling for young people, and putting in place ECVET and EQAVET systems for better quality and portability; are challenges that need aligning stakeholder opinions and expansion promotion. Other challenges include motivating employers to cooperate with VET providers, for example by financing the workplace and promoting continuing training for employees. The 2014-2020 education and training strategy includes these as mentioned above and other challenges by continuing education and training (supported by EU funds) including modernisation of new EU-level instruments.

Another challenge is to increase adult participation in learning by strengthening the role of the State in adult education. The implementation plan for a new adult education governance model (2016) supports a sustainable adult education system with shared responsibilities between stakeholders, including VET that provides programmes for adults.

Reforming VET and adult learning are national policy priorities. Recent reforms aim at:
- (a) promoting VET quality;
- (b) ensuring its relevance to labour market needs;
- (c) efficient use of resources to raise VET attractiveness.

In 2013, several projects jointly financed by the European Social Fund have raised VET’s attractiveness and quality. They have covered modern infrastructure, equipment and programmes (introducing modules), social partnership in designing and implementing education policy, introducing sectoral qualifications frameworks, drafting occupational standards for key professions, and raising VET teachers’ competences. Modular programmes are to be piloted to gather more evidence for policy makers. Since 2013, work-based learning has gained legal basis as one form of VET implementation. The scheme includes flexible curricula (accreditation system) and promotes sharing responsibilities of teaching and training between school and enterprises. Vocational education develops the curricula and participate in ensuring the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in workshops. Companies provide both theoretical and practical training in a real workplace environment and pay or provide allowances or wages to students.

Ensuring access guidance and counselling for young people, and putting in place ECVET and EQAVET systems for better quality and portability; are challenges that need aligning stakeholder opinions and expansion promotion. Other challenges include motivating employers to cooperate with VET providers, for example by financing the workplace and promoting continuing training for employees. The 2014-2020 education and training strategy includes these as mentioned above and other challenges by continuing education and training (supported by EU funds) including modernisation of new EU-level instruments.

Another challenge is to increase adult participation in learning by strengthening the role of the State in adult education. The implementation plan for a new adult education governance model (2016) supports a sustainable adult education system with shared responsibilities between stakeholders, including VET that provides programmes for adults.

Reforming VET and adult learning are national policy priorities. Recent reforms aim at:
- (a) promoting VET quality;
- (b) ensuring its relevance to labour market needs;
- (c) efficient use of resources to raise VET attractiveness.

In 2013, several projects jointly financed by the European Social Fund have raised VET’s attractiveness and quality. They have covered modern infrastructure, equipment and programmes (introducing modules), social partnership in designing and implementing education policy, introducing sectoral qualifications frameworks, drafting occupational standards for key professions, and raising VET teachers’ competences. Modular programmes are to be piloted to gather more evidence for policy makers. Since 2013, work-based learning has gained legal basis as one form of VET implementation. The scheme includes flexible curricula (accreditation system) and promotes sharing responsibilities of teaching and training between school and enterprises. Vocational education develops the curricula and participate in ensuring the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in workshops. Companies provide both theoretical and practical training in a real workplace environment and pay or provide allowances or wages to students.

Ensuring access guidance and counselling for young people, and putting in place ECVET and EQAVET systems for better quality and portability; are challenges that need aligning stakeholder opinions and expansion promotion. Other challenges include motivating employers to cooperate with VET providers, for example by financing the workplace and promoting continuing training for employees. The 2014-2020 education and training strategy includes these as mentioned above and other challenges by continuing education and training (supported by EU funds) including modernisation of new EU-level instruments.

Another challenge is to increase adult participation in learning by strengthening the role of the State in adult education. The implementation plan for a new adult education governance model (2016) supports a sustainable adult education system with shared responsibilities between stakeholders, including VET that provides programmes for adults.
VET in Latvia

Vocational education and training (VET) in Latvia
is offered at three (1) levels: integrated primary and
lower secondary (called ‘basic’ nationally), upper
secondary (vocational education and training (VET) in Latvia),
and tertiary (higher education). As VET is a main-school-based
activity, the national term refers to ‘vocational education’
that includes practical training at schools and enterprises.
To acquire a VET qualification at EQF levels 2 to 4, learners take a State qualification examination
at the end of the programme.

Basic VET programmes (one to two years, VETP 200) lead to qualifications at levels 2 to 3.
Learners are admitted irrespective of their previous education but not earlier than in the year
in which they turn 15. Those without completed basic education are admitted to three-year programmes
that include a compulsory basic general education course.

At upper secondary level: (a) three-year programmes (VETP 305) lead to a VET certificate at EQF level 3 but do not give
the right to enter higher education. Students who want to continue their studies at higher education
level may attend one-year bridge programmes.
(b) four-year programmes (VETP 304) lead to a secondary VET diploma (EQF level 4) at the end, students
also take four State exams in general subjects; if successful, they are awarded a certificate of general secondary education
giving access to higher education. (c) one- to two-year programmes (VETP 304 and 435) leading to a certificate of vocational qualification
at EQF levels 3 and 4 are offered for 17 to 28-year-olds with or without completed upper secondary education programmes.

The programmes focus on vocational skills only, so they are shorter.

Professional higher education programmes are provided at two levels:
(a) first-cycle college programmes (two to three
years, VETP 503, 504, 505) targeted mainly
at the labour market, through which graduates
can continue their studies in second-level professional higher education;
(b) second-level university programmes (four to six
years, VETP 605, 606, 657, 756 and 757). EQF levels 5 to 7 lead to a professional qualification
and professional teacher or master's degree, or a professional higher education qualification.

Formal continuing VET (CVET) programmes enable adults with education/work experience
to obtain a State-recognized professional qualification
in 480 to 2,128 hours, depending on the field of study. Teacher professional development programmes
(at least 160 hours) enable learners to acquire professional teaching skills regardless of their age, education and professional background but do not lead to a qualification.

Apprenticeships exist on a small scale, mainly in the crafts sector. It is separate from the rest of the education system and there are no pathways to formal education.

The Ministry of Education and Science is the main body responsible for VET in legal framework, governance, funding and coordination. Social dialogue and strategic cooperation are established through the national Tripartite Sub-Council for Cooperation in Vocational Education and Employment, founded in 2002 by the State and employer and employee representatives. Since 2011, 12 sectoral expert councils have been established that cover various aspects of vocational education (in line with labour market needs) and participate in shaping the implementation of new VET programmes. VET attractiveness is increasing. More young people use ISCED 400 programmes for first access to the labour market than before. These programmes are jointly financed by the ‘Youth guarantee’ and the European Social Fund.

The national framework qualifications were established and linked to the European qualifications framework (EQF) in 2011. It includes all formal qualifications.

A validation system for professional competence acquired outside formal education has existed since 2011, allowing direct acquisition of VET qualifications at EQF levels 2 to 4. Procedures for certification and recognition of prior learning were set up for higher education in 2012.

Distinctive features of VET

Initial VET is centralised and highly regulated. Public funding supports schools that provide
professional education and training (PHT) and competence centres and were re-organised
with the Youth guarantee and the European Social Fund. VET provides extensive learning opportunities for early leavers from education. With more involvement in infrastructure and the development/implementation of new programmes, VET attractiveness is increasing. More young people use ISCED 400 programmes for first access to the labour market than before. These programmes are jointly financed by the ‘Youth guarantee’ and the European Social Fund.

The national framework qualifications were established and linked to the European qualifications framework (EQF) in 2011. It includes all formal qualifications.

A validation system for professional competence acquired outside formal education has existed since 2011, allowing direct acquisition of VET qualifications at EQF levels 2 to 4. Procedures for certification and recognition of prior learning were set up for higher education in 2012.

Challenges and policy responses

Reforming VET and adult learning are national policy priorities. Recent reforms aim at:
(a) promoting VET quality;
(b) making VET programmes more attractive to the labour market needs;
(c) efficient use of resources to raise VET attractiveness.

Policy incentives for a balanced distribution of students choosing vocational and general education after completing basic education, and for a threshold increase in adult participation in learning.

By 2015, several projects jointly financed by the European Social Fund have raised VET’s attractiveness and quality. They have covered modern infrastructure, equipment and programmes (introducing modules), social partner participation in designing and implementing education policy, introducing sectoral qualifications frameworks, drafting occupational standards for key professions, and raising VET teachers’ competences. Modular programmes are to be piloted to gather more evidence for policy makers. Since 2013, ‘work-based learning’ has gained legal basis as one form of VET implementation. The scheme includes flexible curriculum (according to occupation characteristics) and promotes sharing responsibilities of teaching and training between school and enterprises. Vocational education reforms develop the curriculum and participate in ensuring the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in workshops. Companies provide both theoretical and practical training in a real workplace environment and pay an allowance or a wage to students.

Another challenge is to increase adult participation in learning by strengthening the role of the State in adult education. The implementation plan for a new adult education governance model (2016) supports a sustainable adult education system with shared responsibilities between stakeholders, including VET that provides programmes for adults.

(1) Arts, culture and sports programmes (referred to as ‘vocationally oriented education programmes’ nationally)
(2) ISCED-P 2011.
VET in Latvia

VET in Latvia is offered at three (1) levels: integrated primary and lower secondary (called ‘basic’ nationally); upper secondary (secondary); and tertiary (professional higher) education. As VET is mainly school-based, the national term refers to ‘vocational education’ that includes practical training at schools and enterprises. To acquire a VET qualification at EQF levels 2 to 4, learners take a State qualification examination at the end of the programme.

Basic VET programmes (one to two years, ISCED-P 254) lead to qualifications at EQF levels 2 and 3. Learners are admitted irrespective of their previous education but not earlier than in the year in which they turn 15. Those without completed basic education are admitted to three-year programmes that include a compulsory general education course.

At upper secondary level: (a) three-year programmes (ISCED-P 353) lead to a VET certificate at EQF level 3 but do not give the right to enter higher education. Students who want to continue their studies at higher education level may attend one-year bridge programmes;

(b) four-year programmes (ISCED-P 354) lead to a second VET diploma (EQF level 4) and give the right to enter higher education.

(c) one- to two-year programmes (ISCED-P 354 and 453) leading to a certificate of vocational qualification at EQF levels 3 and 4 are for 17 to 29 year-olds with or without completed upper secondary education. The programmes focus on vocational skills only, so they are shorter.

Professional higher education programmes are provided at two levels:

(a) first-level college programmes (two to three years, ISCED-P 534) targeted mainly at the labour market, though graduates can continue their studies in second-level professional higher education;

(b) second-level university programmes (four to six years, ISCED-P 655, 656, 675, 756, EQF 6 and 7) lead to a professional qualification and professional teacher or master’s degree, or a professional higher education qualification.

Formal continuing VET (CVET) programmes enable adults with education/work experience to obtain a State-recognised professional qualification in 480 to 1,280 hours, depending on the field of study. There is a professional development programme (at least 160 hours) enabling learners to acquire professional mobility and skills regardless of their age, education and professional background but do not lead to a qualification.

Apprenticeships exist on a small scale, mainly in the crafts sector. It is separate from the rest of the education system and there are no pathways to formal education.

The Ministry of Education and Science is the main body responsible for VET. It has a legal framework, governance, funding and content. Social dialogue and strategic cooperation are encouraged through the national Tripartite Social-Council for Cooperation in Vocational Education and Employment, founded in 2000 by the State and employer and employee representatives. Since 2011, 12 sectoral expert councils ensure that vocational education provides is in line with labour market needs, and participate in developing sectoral qualifications frameworks, national occupational standards, education programmes and quality assurance systems.

The national education system has a system of governance, funding and content. Social dialogue and strategic cooperation are encouraged through the national Tripartite Social-Council for Cooperation in Vocational Education and Employment, founded in 2000 by the State and employer and employee representatives. Since 2011, 12 sectoral expert councils ensure that vocational education provides is in line with labour market needs, and participate in developing sectoral qualifications frameworks, national occupational standards, education programmes and quality assurance systems. Since 2015, a collegial advisory bodies including representatives from employers, local governments and the national education system – competency centres – are established at each VET school to contribute to strategic development and cooperation with the labour market.

Initial VET is centred and highly regulated by the Ministry of Education and Science. Seven major sectors are defined, each with competence centre and would recommend best equipment and the support of EU funds in 2007-15. In addition to VET programmes, they validate non-formal and informal learning and offer lifelong learning and continuous teacher training. CVET providers are mainly private.

Most VET students (83%) study at upper secondary level. The distribution of students between general and vocational upper secondary education is 61:39 in favour of general education. VET provides extensive learning opportunities for early leavers from education. With more investment in infrastructure and the development/implementation of new programmes, VET attractiveness is increasing. More young people use ISCED 453 programmes for fast access to the labour market than before. These programmes are jointly financed by the Youth Guarantee and the European Social Fund.

The national qualifications framework was established and linked to the European qualifications framework (EQF) in 2011. It includes all formal qualifications.

A validation system for professional competence (VETportals.gr) has been implemented. The system is being harmonised with the EQF and other European frameworks.

Challenges and policy responses

Reforming VET and adult learning are national policy priorities. Recent reforms aim at (a) promoting VET quality, (b) increasing its relevance to the labour market needs; (c) efficient use of resources to raise VET attractiveness. Policies focus on a balanced (equal distribution of resources) support to regular students choosing vocational and general education after completing basic education, and for a threshold increase in adult participation in learning. By 2015, several projects jointly financed by EU Structural Funds have raised VET’s attractiveness and quality. They have covered modern infrastructure and equipment and programmes (introducing modules), social partner participation in designing and implementing education policy, introducing sectoral qualifications frameworks, drafting occupational standards for key professions, and raising VET teachers’ competence. Modular programmes are to be piloted to gather more evidence for policy makers. Since 2013, ‘work-based learning’ has gained legal basis as one form of VET implementation. The scheme includes flexible curricula (according to occupation characteristics) and promotes sharing responsibilities of teaching and training between school and enterprises. Vocational education institutions develop the curricula and participate in ensuring the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in workshops. Companies provide both theoretical and practical training in a real workplace environment or pay an allowance or a wage to students. External access, guidance and counselling for young people, and putting in place ECVET and EQAVET systems for better quality and permeability, are challenges that need aligning stakeholder opinions and extensive promotion. Other challenges include motivating enterprises to cooperate with VET providers, for example by providing training at the workplace and promoting continuing training for employees. Since 2014-20, National Vocational Strategy addresses issues mentioned above and other challenges by continuing reforms supported by EU funds including modernisation of new EU VET instruments.

Another challenge is increasing adult participation in learning by strengthening the role of the State in adult education. The implementation plan for a new adult education governance model (2016) supports a sustainable adult education system with shared responsibilities between stakeholders, including VET that provides programmes for adults.
% of all students in upper secondary education, 2014

Lifelong learning % of population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training, 2015

Early leavers from education and training % of early leavers from education and training, 2015

Employment rates of young graduates % of 20 to 34 year-olds no longer in education and training, 2015

Further information


This Spotlight is based on input from the Academic Information Centre (ReferNet Latvia 2016).
Upper secondary students (ISCED 2011 level 3) enrolled in vocational and general programmes
% of all students in upper secondary education, 2014

Early leavers from education and training % of early leavers from education and training, 2015

Employment rates of young graduates % of 20-34 year-olds in full-time education, 2015

Further information

Source:
- Eurostat, EU labour force survey, date of extraction 14.10.16.
- Eurostat, labour force survey, date of extraction 6.12.16.
- Cedefop calculations, based on Eurostat, UOE data collection on education systems, date of extraction 6.12.16.

To complete upper secondary education, which is general, rather than vocational, in nature.

NB: 47.4% is the provisional weighted EU average for 2014 based on available country data (27 countries). In Ireland, it is possible to proceed to apprenticeship training following completion of lower secondary education (ISCED 2), but most learners continue to secondary education, leading to upper secondary education.

Cedefop calculations, based on Eurostat, UOE data collection on education systems, date of extraction 6.12.16.

% of 20 to 34 year-olds
% of population aged 25
Education and training, 2015

To complete upper secondary education, which is general, rather than vocational, in nature.

NB: Definition for national target differs in LT, SE, DK and ES.

Cedefop calculations, based on Eurostat, UOE data collection on education systems, date of extraction 6.12.16.

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training Cedefop
Tel. +30 2310490111, Fax +30 2310490020, E-mail: info@cedefop.europa.eu
PO Box 22427, 551 02 Thessaloniki, GREECE
Europe 123, 570 01 Thessaloniki (Pylea), GREECE
Copyright © European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2017
All rights reserved.

Referencing of the Latvian education system to the Academic Information Centre (ReferNet Latvia 2016).

Spotlight on VET LATVIA

Further information


This Spotlight is based on input from the Academic Information Centre (ReferNet Latvia 2016).

spotlight on VET
LAUTVIA