



spotlight on VET

LITHUANIA

VET in Lithuania

Vocational education and training (VET) in Lithuania is offered at lower secondary (ISCED 2), upper secondary (ISCED 3) and post-secondary education (ISCED 4) levels. To acquire a VET qualification, learners take a specified exam after which a VET diploma is awarded. VET-oriented programmes in higher education lead to a professional bachelor degree (ISCED P-655); they are provided by colleges, a type of higher education institution.

Lower secondary level VET programmes (two to three years, ISCED P 252 and 254) lead to qualifications at EQF level 2. They are open to learners over 14 and training is mandatory until the age of 16. Those without completed lower secondary education can study VET along with general education.

At upper secondary level:

- (a) two- to three-year programmes (ISCED P-352) lead to a qualification at EQF level 3 but do not give access to higher education;
- (b) three-year programmes (ISCED P-354) lead to a VET qualification at EQF level 4 and a *matura* diploma giving access to higher education. To receive a *matura* diploma a learner must take at least two *matura* exams. Graduates who apply to higher education in the same field of studies are awarded additional entrance points.

Post-secondary level VET programmes (one to two years, ISCED P-454) lead to a qualification at EQF level 4. Starting from 2016 a new type of VET programme (ISCED 454) leading to EQF level 5 qualifications was introduced with a pilot programme for hospitality services administrator training. A VET diploma (EQF level 4) and three years of practical experience are required to enter the programme.

Formal continuing VET (CVET) is for learners who want to improve an existing qualification, acquire a new one or gain a competence needed to do jobs specified in regulations. CVET is designed for people with different education attainment levels, from primary to post-secondary; in some cases, a vocational qualification or work experience is a prerequisite. CVET programmes last no longer than one year and lead to qualifications at EQF levels 1-3, recognised by the State.

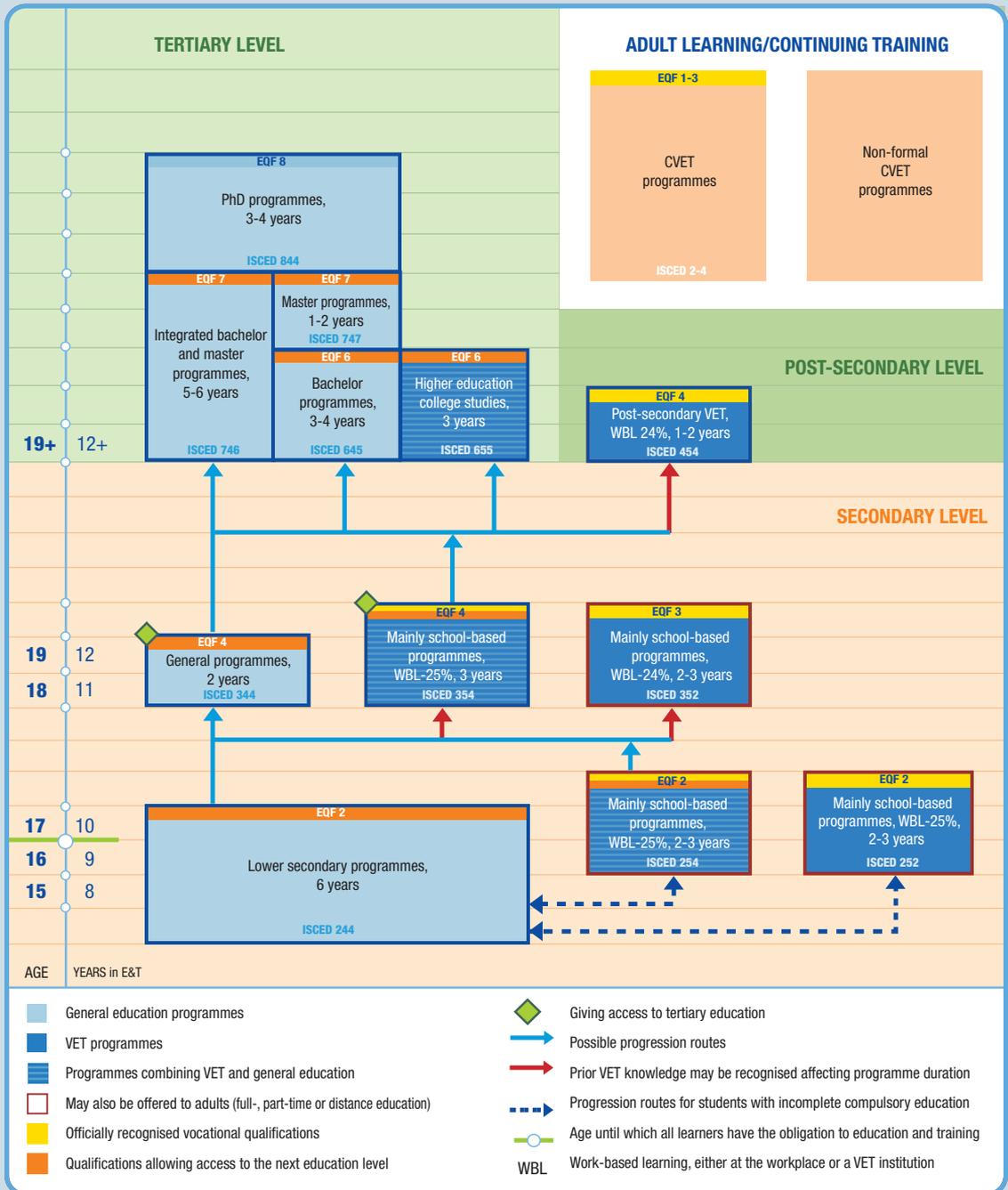
Non-formal CVET for the self-employed and employee training is organised in various settings. Some companies have their own training units and qualifications frameworks or apply internationally recognised sectoral qualifications and programmes.

Although VET in Lithuania is school-based, work based learning (WBL), in workshops at school and at a workplace, is a major part. In IVET, WBL comprises 60 to 70% of the total time allocated to vocational subjects, of which eight to 15 weeks is organised in a company. To improve the quality of WBL in school's environment, 42 sectoral practical training centers have been established. In CVET, WBL corresponds to 60-80% of the programme, half of it preferably taking place in companies. Progressing implementation of apprenticeship is a national priority and policy initiatives are in process.

The Ministry of Education and Science is the main body responsible for shaping and implementing VET policy. The Ministry of Economy participates in human resources development and VET policy, and organises research on future skill needs. Advisory institutions play an important role in designing and implementing VET policy and the qualifications system. Most important are the VET council and the central professional committee, with its sectoral professional committees.

Social partners participate in developing new qualifications, standards and VET programmes. Since 2003, qualification exams have been detached from the training process and, since 2012, have been carried out by accredited institutions. Social partners, enterprises and employers' associations may apply for accreditation. Employers participate in initiating and designing VET programmes, organising WBL and managing VET institutions.

VET in Lithuania's education and training system



NB: ISCED-P 2011.

Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Lithuania.

Distinctive features of VET

Initial VET (IVET) is centralised and highly regulated by the State. CVET is delivered by IVET and other training providers, public or private organisations.

Provision of IVET at all levels is free of charge; CVET programmes are offered for a fee, except for the unemployed and those at risk of unemployment whose training is supported from European structural funds (ESF) projects. CVET for the unemployed is funded by a voucher system, which allows them to choose their training provider. The provision of training is based on contracts between the local public employment service, the unemployed and, if applicable, the enterprise. In this last instance, the employer undertakes to employ the person for at least six months after the training.

The largest share of IVET learners participate in post-secondary programmes (ISCED 4, 48% in 2016). The popularity of ISCED level 4 programmes has substantially increased in recent years, especially among adults who enter VET with a VET or higher education qualification. Slightly smaller share of learners are enrolled in upper secondary level programmes (ISCED 3, 43% in 2016).

The number of adults in formal IVET programmes is increasing. The average age of IVET learners in 2016 was 24.6 years; compared to 2012 this has increased by three years. In 2012 learners aged 14 to 22 comprised 78% of learners; in 2016 the share decreased to 61%.

From 2002, VET curricula in Lithuania have been competence-based, with clearly defined learning outcomes. The content of VET qualifications is defined in VET standards that are being replaced by sectoral qualifications standards. These standards describe the main qualifications in specific sectors of the economy at different national qualifications framework levels. VET programmes are being gradually redesigned into modular programmes consisting of mandatory and optional units.

Challenges and policy responses

The Cedefop forecasts for Lithuania up to 2025 predict a loss of one fifth of the total labour force

and approximately a third of labour force with medium-level qualifications. This is prompting a review of human resources development policy to guarantee labour force productivity and economic competitiveness.

The challenge remains to encourage participation in VET. Only 26.7% of students in upper secondary education (2014) are enrolled in vocationally oriented programmes, 10% of upper secondary education graduates move to VET, and 63% of upper secondary education graduates move to higher education directly after graduation (2016). Participation in life-long learning remains below 6% and is lower than in most other EU countries. The national goal is to increase it to 12% by 2022. Ministries of Education and Science, Social Security and Labour and Economy will offer various adult training opportunities for key competences development, with training of the unemployed and employees jointly funded by ESF. VET and lifelong learning promotion campaigns will be organised and career guidance services further developed.

Participation in apprenticeship is low and efforts are being made to motivate VET institutions and companies to cooperate in enhancing WBL and apprenticeship. Support will be given to apprenticeship pilot projects, assistance for enterprises, strengthening of sectoral practical training centres and expanding access to learners from other VET institutions.

An action plan for the development of lifelong learning for 2017-20 addresses these aspects. In the document, VET and lifelong learning actions are grouped under three objectives:

- (a) update of VET curricula and VET methods focusing on competitive 21st century competences;
- (b) development of VET institution sustainable networking and increase in social inclusion;
- (c) development of efficient conditions and incentives for lifelong learning.

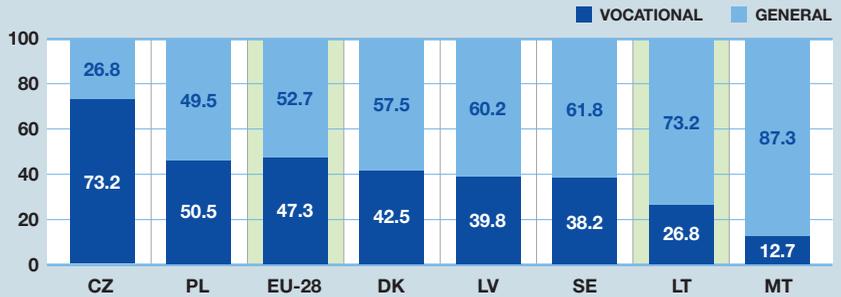
In autumn 2017, under the initiative of the President's office, a revision to the Law on VET was proposed and passed to Parliament for further discussions. The changes foreseen relate to strengthening WBL and apprenticeship, enhancing the role of sectoral professional committees, reforming arrangements for publicly funded IVET, and introducing a regular external VET quality evaluation system.



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, 2015

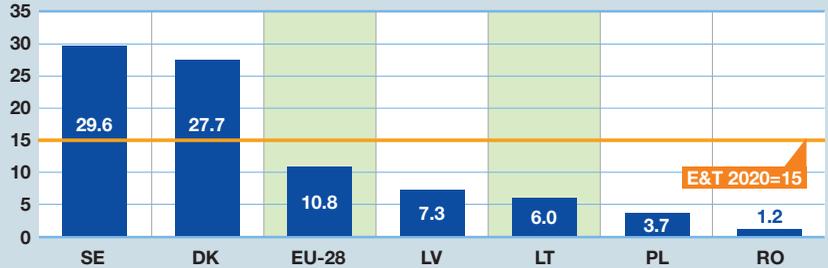


NB: EU-28 value is based on estimated Eurostat values.

Source: Cedefop calculations based on Eurostat, UOE data collection on education systems, date of extraction 8.12.2017.

Lifelong learning

% of population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey, 2016

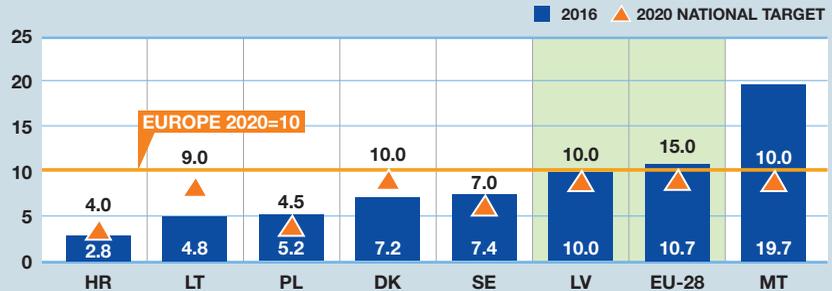


NB: Break in time series for DK.

Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, date of extraction 8.12.2017.

Early leavers from education and training

% of the population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education and who were not in further education or training during the last four weeks prior to the survey, 2016

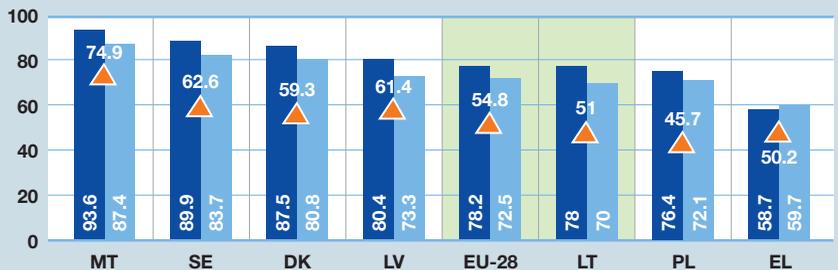


NB: Low reliability for 2016 HR value. Break in time series for 2016 DK.

Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, date of extraction 8.12.2017.

Employment rates of young graduates

% of 20 to 34 years-old no longer in education and training, 2016



■ Upper vocational secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)

■ Upper general secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)

▲ Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)

NB: Break in time series for DK values.

Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, date of extraction 8.12.2017.



Further information

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www.smm.lt	Ministry of Education and Science
www.ukmin.lt	Ministry of Economy
www.ldb.lt	Lithuanian Public Employment Service under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour
www.stat.gov.lt	Statistics Lithuania
www.kpmc.lt	Qualifications and VET Development Centre
www.euroguidance.lt	Euroguidance Lietuva
www.aikos.smm.lt	open information, counselling and guidance system AIKOS
www.kpmc.lt/refernet/	ReferNet Lithuania national website

This Spotlight is based on input from the Qualifications and VET Development Centre (ReferNet Lithuania 2017).



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