

# Spotlight on VET **ROMANIA**

Vocational education  
and training systems  
in Europe

2023

## VET in Romania

Initial vocational education and training (VET) is provided at upper secondary and post-secondary levels.

Based on the recently adopted [Law of pre-university education \(198/2023\)](#), compulsory education covers all upper secondary education cycle, including initial VET in Romania. Enrolment in grade 9 of VET requires passing the national exams in mathematics and the Romanian language, acquiring a lower secondary diploma, and a final mark transcript for all subjects. Some initial VET schools also have entry exams.

Initial VET is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. National Centre for TVET Development coordinates the development of training standards for qualifications, validated by sectoral committees (coordinated by the National Qualifications Authority, NQA). Social partners participate in the committees and support VET implementation. Continuing VET is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity.

### Initial VET

At upper secondary level there are:

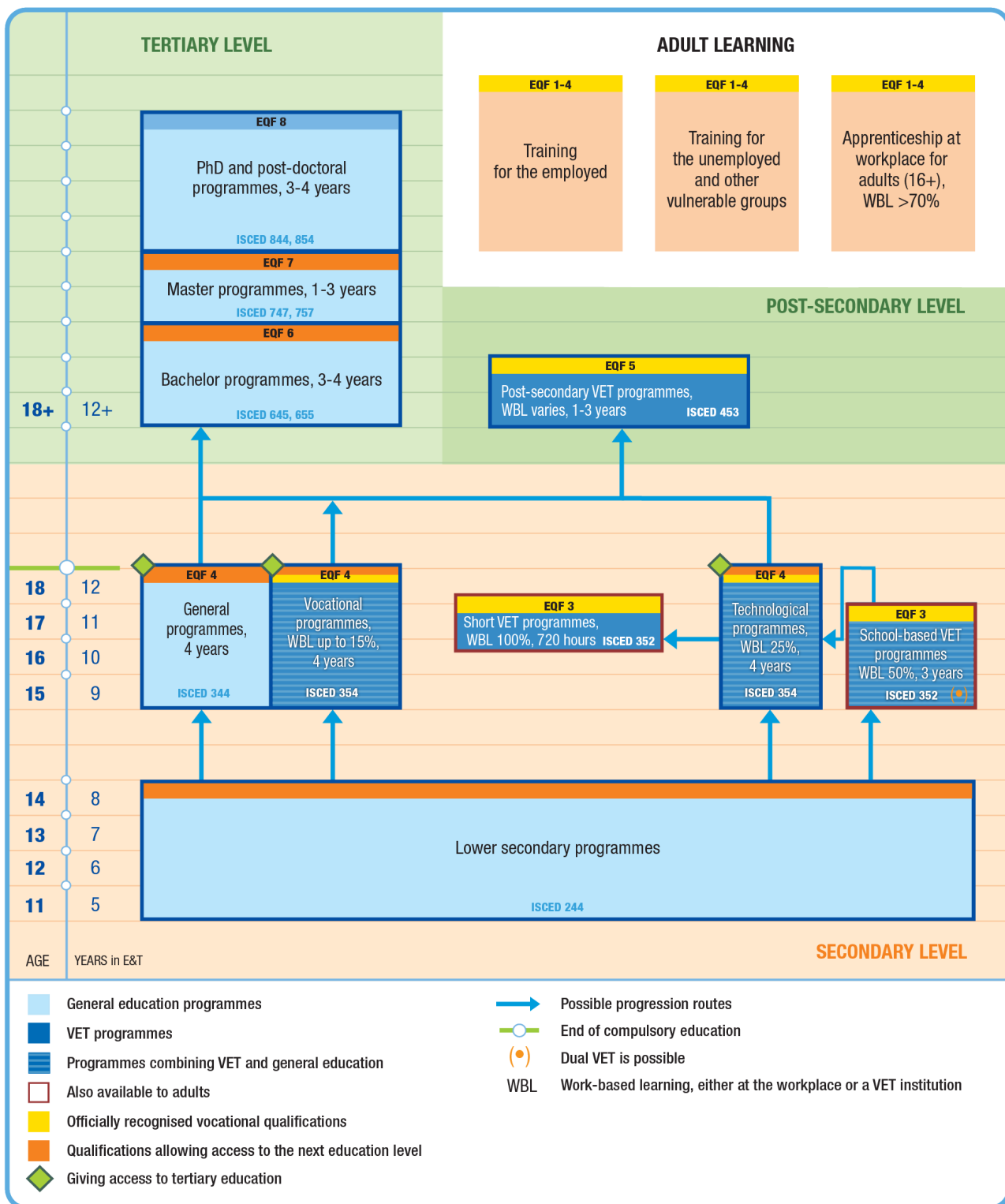
- 3-year school-based VET programmes (ISCED-P 352), providing graduates with a professional qualification at EQF level 3 (such as cook). Programmes are offered by 'professional schools', cooperating with employers who provide compulsory in-company training for learners as part of work-based learning (WBL). WBL is also offered in schools, at an average of 50% per programme. Since 2017/18, a [dual form of VET is available](#). The programmes open access to the labour market. In 2022/23 graduates could also enrol in the third year of EQF level 4 technological programmes;
- 4-year technological programmes (ISCED-P 354) offering graduates an upper secondary school leaving diploma and the EQF level 4 'technician' qualification in services, natural resources, environmental protection and technical study fields (such as technician in gastronomy). The programmes are provided by technological high schools and sometimes by colleges. The WBL share is 25%. After completing compulsory education, learners may opt out and enrol in a short VET programme (ISCED-P 352) offering a professional qualification only. In 2022/23. 7 out of 10 IVET learners were in 4-year programmes. This is 39% of the total VET population.
- short VET programmes (ISCED-P 352), providing learners who completed two years of a technological programme (completed grade 10) with a professional qualification at EQF level 3 (such as cook) via 720 hours of work-based learning. The programmes are coordinated by VET schools and are provided mainly by employers.
- 4-year vocational programmes (ISCED-P 354, EQF level 4), providing graduates with a professional qualification in the military, theology, sports, arts and pedagogy as well as with an upper secondary school leaving diploma. These programmes are provided by colleges and the share of WBL is up to 15%.

Post-secondary VET provides 1- to 3-year higher VET programmes (ISCED-P 453), leading to a professional qualification at EQF level 5 (such as optician); these are organised by technological schools or colleges/universities. They provide secondary school graduates with an opportunity to advance in their qualifications.

### Continuing VET

Adult vocational training is offered by authorised private and public providers. 1- to 3-year continuing 'apprenticeship at workplace' programmes are managed by the public employment service. They offer adults (16+) without prior VET experience the chance to acquire a professional qualification at EQF levels 1 to 4, leading to a nationally recognised qualification certificate of the same value as in initial VET. Theory and practical training (WBL at least 70%) are provided mainly by companies, in cooperation with authorised professional training providers.

# VET in Romania's education and training system



NB: ISCED-P 2011.

Source: Cedefop, & National Centre for TVET Development. (2023). Vocational education and training in Europe – Romania: system description. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2024). Vocational education and training in Europe: VET in Europe database – detailed VET system descriptions [Database]. [www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/romania-u3](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/romania-u3)

## Distinctive features of VET

Distinctive features of initial VET are its inclusiveness and flexible pathways. Reflecting the double role of VET in promoting economic as well as social development, initial VET's main goals are to ensure:

- learners' personal and professional development;
- equal access opportunities to VET;
- high-quality provision, organisation and development.

Initial VET qualifications are based on training standards, including units of learning outcomes and, for each unit, an assessment standard. The standards were revised in 2016, to help increase VET labour market relevance by ensuring a better match between qualifications and the reality of working life after graduation.

Creating sector committees, which represent the various sectors of the economy, made the involvement of social partners in designing and assessing vocational qualifications more systemic. To ease education planning, social partners also participate in partnerships at regional level (regional consortia) and local level (local committees for social partnership development in VET).

Romania has developed a system for validating non-formally or informally acquired skills and competences. In line with guidelines adopted by the National Qualifications Authority, procedures were put in place to create a network of providers acting as validation/ assessment centres. These centres are active in more than half of the counties.

## Challenges and policy responses

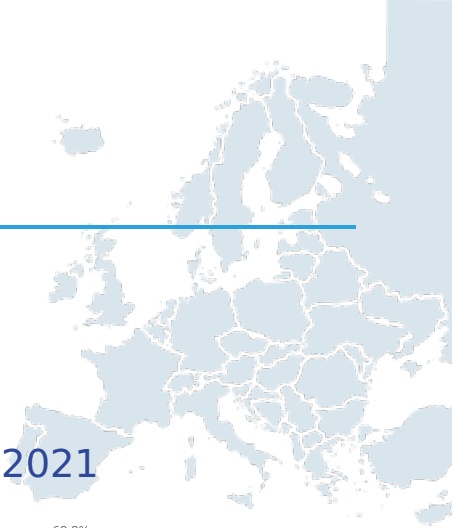
Investments to support the institutional development of education and training are still few, leading to unequal access to education and training and the high rate of early leaving from it; this particularly affects children in rural areas, from poor communities.

Another challenge is to reduce youth unemployment by supporting skills acquisition and securing smooth and sustainable transitions from education and training to the labour market. The National Centre for TVET Development has introduced the dual form as part of initial VET, leading to level 3 EQF qualifications with a prospect to extend it to levels 4 and 5 EQF. Based on the 2023 legislation, a dual VET can also be offered at higher education levels (EQF 6-8) pending the development of the implementation methodology.

The national ReConect project (supported by ESF) helps develop mechanisms to anticipate labour market skills needs, monitor VET and higher education graduate insertion, and evaluate/monitor public policies on active measures and VET. The data from several databases are stored online.

Continuing VET faces challenges such as unemployment and low participation in lifelong learning in the EU. The labour ministry has addressed these challenges by developing an elementary occupations list, giving unskilled adults access to participate in 6-month apprenticeship programmes leading to EQF level 1 qualifications, as well as by creating a framework for variable duration training programmes linked to labour market needs; these can be from 180 hours for level 1 to 1 080 for level 4 EQF qualification.

The share of IVET learners decreased from 57% in 2021/22 to 55% in 2022/23 from all learners at upper secondary level.

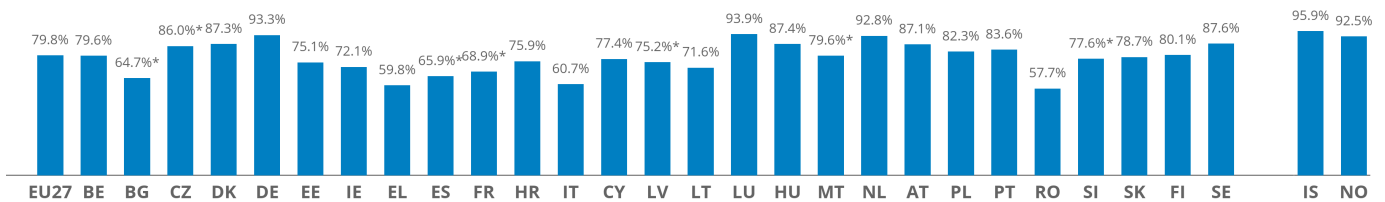


## Education and training in figures

### IVET students as % of all upper secondary students, 2021

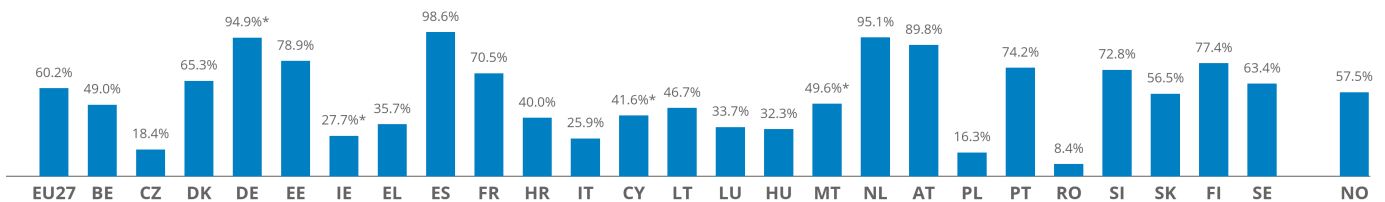


### Employment rate for recent IVET graduates (20-34 year-olds) (%), 2022



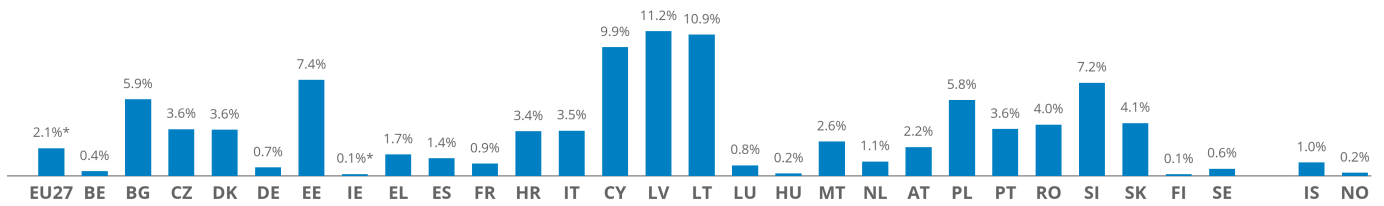
Notes: Bulgaria, Latvia, Malta and Slovenia: (u) low reliability, Czechia: (b) break in time series, Spain and France: (d) definition differs

### Recent IVET graduates (20-34 year-olds) with a work-based learning experience as part of their vocational education and training (%), 2022



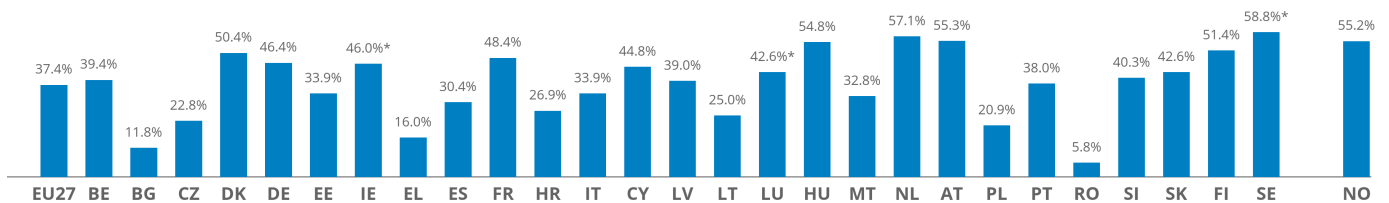
Notes: Germany, Ireland and Cyprus: (u) low reliability

## IVET learners who benefitted from a learning mobility abroad (%), 2021



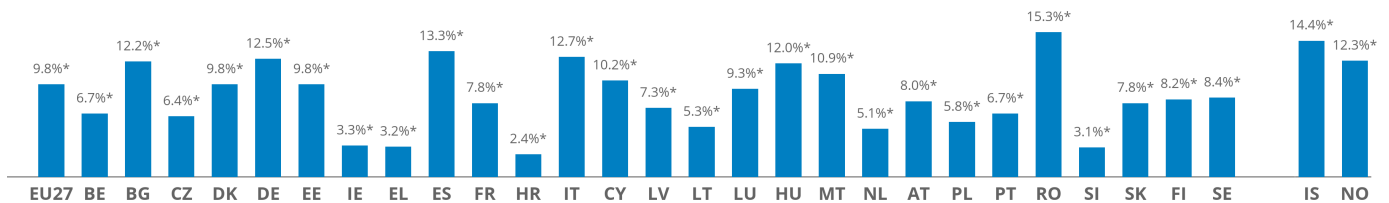
Notes: EU27: (d) definition differs (V) Cedefop estimate, Ireland: (d) definition differs, Croatia, Cyprus, Netherlands and Slovenia: (z) not applicable

## Adults (25-64 year-olds) with a learning experience in the last 12 months (%), 2016



Notes: All values: (b) break in time series

## Early leavers from education and training (%), 2021



Notes: EU27, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Norway: (b) break in time series, Croatia and Slovenia: (b) break in time series (u) low reliability

Source: Cedefop's Key indicators on VET



## Further information

- Cedefop and ReferNet (2023). *Timeline of VET policies: Romania*
- European Commission (2023). *Education and training monitor: Romania*
- Eurydice (2024). *National education systems: Romania*
- Parliament of Romania (2023). *Law on pre-university education 198/2023*
- Parliament of Romania (2023). *Law on higher education 199/2023*

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| <a href="http://www.refernet.ro">www.refernet.ro</a> | ReferNet Romania  |
| <a href="http://www.edu.ro">www.edu.ro</a>           | Ministry of Education   |
| <a href="http://www.tvet.ro">www.tvet.ro</a>         | National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Development            |
| <a href="http://www.mmuncii.ro">www.mmuncii.ro</a>   | Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity  |
| <a href="http://www.incsmps.ro">www.incsmps.ro</a>   | National Scientific Research Institute for Labour and Social Protection                           |
| <a href="http://www.anc.edu.ro">www.anc.edu.ro</a>   | National Qualifications Authority   |
| <a href="http://www.anofm.ro">www.anofm.ro</a>       | National Agency for Employment (ANOFM)  |
| <a href="http://www.ise.ro">www.ise.ro</a>           | National Centre for Policies and Evaluation in Education (former Institute of Education Sciences) |
| <a href="http://www.insse.ro">www.insse.ro</a>       | National Institute of Statistics  |

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