



spotlight on VET

CYPRUS

VET in Cyprus

The vocational education and training (VET) system of Cyprus plays a significant role in dealing with adverse effects of the economic crisis on the labour market, as well as in laying the foundations for future socioeconomic development.

The earliest level where VET is available is upper secondary at technical schools, including evening technical schools, while the unified lyceum provides general upper secondary education. Horizontal and vertical movement across upper secondary education is possible, as students may move between the unified lyceum and technical schools, provided they succeed in special examinations. Technical schools offer two distinct three-year programmes: the theoretical stream and the practical stream. The first year of studies is common to each stream and students select a specialisation of their choice in the second year. The theoretical stream and the first and second years of the practical stream are completely school-based and combine general education subjects with technological and workshop subjects, while the third year of the practical stream combines a school-based environment with training at the workplace. School-leaving certificates are awarded upon successful completion of either programme and are equivalent to those of secondary general education schools. Therefore, certified secondary technical and vocational education school-leavers are eligible for admission to universities and other tertiary education institutions in Cyprus and abroad. Qualifications provide access to several regulated occupations, provided all other requirements of relevant legislation are met.

VET is also available through the apprenticeship system, which accepts students who leave formal education between grades eight and 10. The apprenticeship certificate allows access to several regulated occupations,

provided all other requirements of relevant legislation are met.

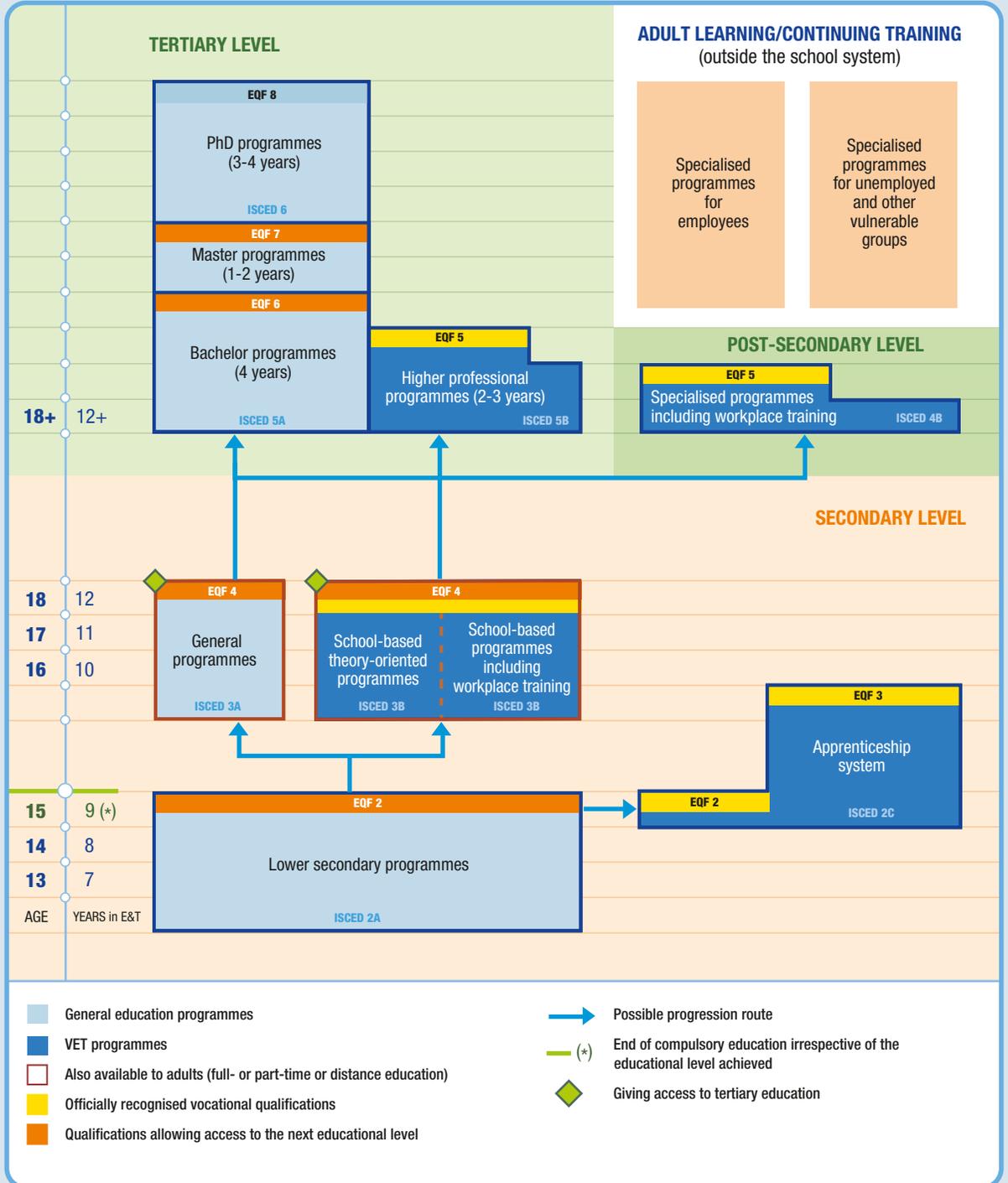
Post-upper secondary VET is provided since the 2012/13 academic year at post-secondary institutes of technical and vocational education and training. These institutes provide Cypriot citizens, especially young people, with two-year courses to acquire, improve, or upgrade their qualifications and skills. By acquiring a post-secondary technical qualification, they are better prepared for the labour market.

VET at tertiary non-university level is provided at four public institutes/colleges and at several private institutes. Successful completion of the programme, which lasts for two-to-three years, leads to a diploma or higher diploma awarded by the institution.

Vocational training for adults is extensively available in Cyprus for employees, the unemployed, other vulnerable groups and adults in general, through a mixture of public and private provision such as colleges, training institutions, consultancy firms and enterprises. Employees usually participate in training programmes which address job-specific skills deriving from company needs, while the unemployed acquire both horizontal and job-specific skills, to improve their employability. Some vocational training schemes targeted at the unemployed and the inactive combine training with either employment in an enterprise or work placement. However, the percentage of 25 to 64 year-olds participating in education and training is lower than the EU average.

The Ministry of Education and Culture has overall responsibility for developing and implementing educational policy. The Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance has overall responsibility for labour and social policy and the Human Resource Development Authority plays an important role in vocational training.

VET in the Cypriot education and training system



NB: ISCED 1997 was used on the chart. Conversion to ISCED 2011 is ongoing.
 Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Cyprus.

Distinctive features of VET

Cyprus has a long-standing tradition of tripartite consultation (government, trade unions and employers' organisations) and social dialogue. The social partners are involved in:

- planning in an advisory and consultative capacity;
- education reform promoted by the government;
- boards of governors of institutions dealing with human resource issues;
- identifying educational and training needs and setting priorities in education and training.

Vocational education and training in Cyprus is mainly public. Provision of secondary VET including evening technical schools, the apprenticeship system and post-upper secondary VET is free of charge, while various adult vocational training is offered for a limited fee.

A major incentive for participation in adult vocational training is provided by the Human Resource Development Authority, a semi-government organisation responsible for training and developing human resources of Cyprus. Funding provided by the Human Resource Development Authority has encouraged enterprises and their employees to participate in training and development activities.

Cyprus has a high level of educational attainment. There is a strong cultural trend among Cypriots in favour of general secondary education followed by higher education. Consequently, VET attracted only 13.2% in 2010 and 12.7% in 2011 of the upper secondary school age cohort.

Challenges

The persistent economic crisis and its adverse effects on the labour market pose a critical challenge for the Cypriot education and training system. As a result, training has been redirected to respond flexibly and effectively to the crisis, with targeted actions for the unemployed, economically inactive and employees. Emphasis is on prevention and curtailment of unemployment, by providing people with opportunities to acquire important knowledge and skills, including green skills.

A major challenge is to address youth as well as long-term unemployment. Actions that promote employability of young persons and the long-term unemployed, through guidance and work placements are being put forward.

An ongoing challenge for the education and training system is to encourage adult participation in lifelong learning activities and increase participation of young people in VET. Crucial measures are establishment of post-secondary institutes for technical and vocational education, which offer students an intermediate level of education between upper secondary and tertiary education, and the new modern apprenticeship, designed to constitute a viable, alternative form of training for young people.

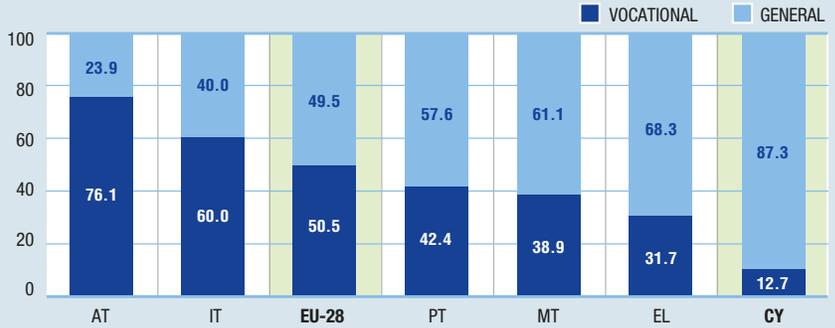
Further, implementation of EU tools for validating acquired skills, such as the national qualifications framework (NQF), will improve horizontal and vertical permeability of education and training systems. Development of a competence-based system of vocational qualifications, which will constitute an integral part of the NQF, is expected to strengthen the ties between VET for young people and vocational training for adults and improve their knowledge and skills.



Education and training in figures

Learners in upper secondary education enrolled in vocational and general programmes

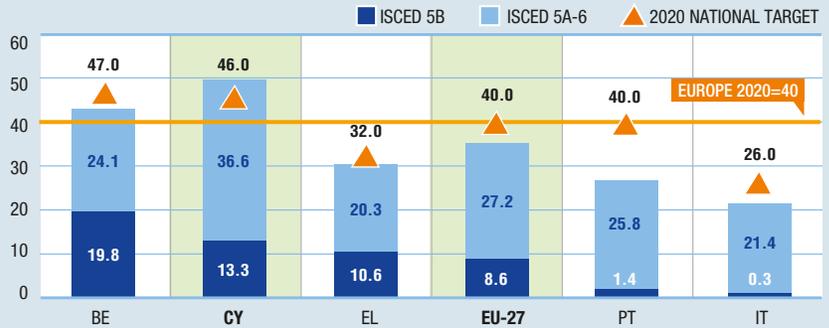
% of all students in upper secondary education, 2011



Source: Eurostat, UOE data collection on education systems, date of extraction 28.6.2013.

Tertiary education by type

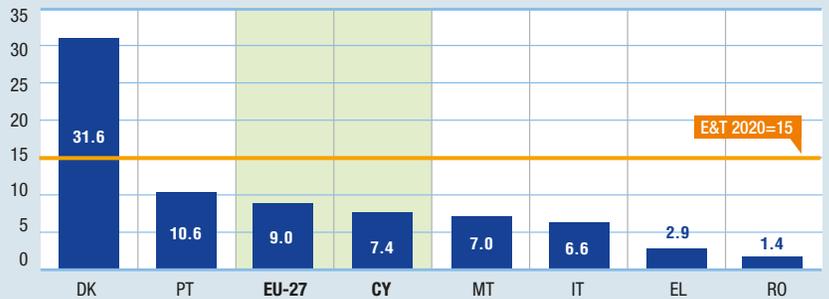
% of 30-34 year-olds with tertiary education by type, 2012



Source: Cedefop calculations based on Eurostat, labour force survey, date of extraction 8.7.2013.

Lifelong learning

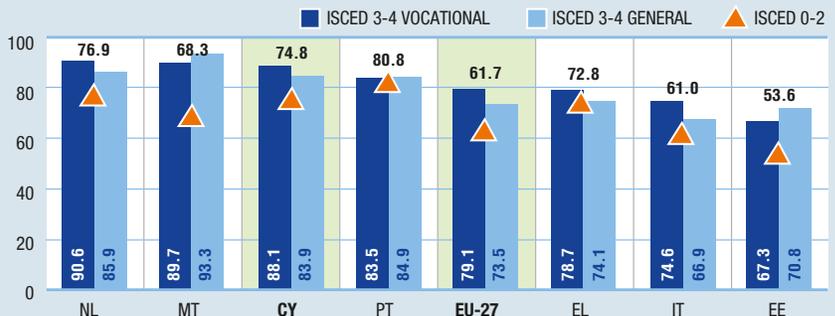
% of population aged 25-64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey, 2012



Source: Eurostat, labour force survey, date of extraction 3.7.2013.

Employment rates by highest level of educational attainment

20-34 year-olds no longer in education by highest level of educational attainment, 2009



Source: Cedefop calculations based on Eurostat, 2009 ad hoc module of the EU labour force survey, date of extraction 19.9.2012.



Further information

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www.planning.gov.cy	Planning Bureau
www.mlsi.gov.cy	Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
www.moec.gov.cy	Ministry of Education and Culture
www.mof.gov.cy/cystat	Statistical Service of Cyprus
www.llp.org.cy	Foundation for the Management of European Lifelong Learning Programmes
www.eurydice.org	National Eurydice unit
www.refernet.org.cy	ReferNet Cyprus

8051 EN – TI-01 – 13-639-EN-N – doi: 2801/49281



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Publications Office

978-92-896-1382-8



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