

National Implementation Plan of the Council Recommendation on VET ¹: Cyprus

| Contents | | Page |
|----------|--|------|
| 1 | Brief information on the national context and baseline | 2 |
| 2 | Challenges and general objectives of the plan | 12 |
| 3 | Detailed description of main measures and/or their packages | 15 |
| 4 | Governance of the implementation of the plan | 107 |
| 5 | Expected Results of plan | 110 |
| 6 | Annex 2 – National level reforms and actions defined in the VET Recommendation and the Osnabrück Declaration | 114 |

¹ Council Recommendation of 24 November 2020 on vocational education and training (VET) for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience (OJ C, C/417, 02.12.2020, p. 1–16).

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1. Brief information on the national context and baseline

The Vocational Education and Training (VET) system in Cyprus is an integral element in the country's efforts to support, sustain and develop economic growth, social cohesion and effectively deal with adverse conditions such as unemployment or low numbers of qualified personnel in certain sectors of the labor market. The overall national goal, as outlined in national strategic plans and documents, is to create an integrated, attractive, flexible and high quality Technical and Vocational Education and Training System that will be responsive to the needs of the Cyprus economy and society in light of the changing local, national and international social, technological and economic circumstances.

National Context of VET system in Cyprus: The Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) has the overall responsibility for developing, implementing and overseeing educational policy on VET issues via the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training (DoSTVET). The Cyprus Technical and Vocational Education and Training System (STEEK) operates at various, yet interconnected levels. The earliest level of VET education is the Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, offered at Technical and Vocational Schools of Education and Training, for students aged 15 to 18, and Evening Schools of Technical and Vocational Education, for adult students. Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education is provided in a 3-year cycle. There are two directions, theoretical and practical, which provide a balanced course of general education subjects and technological/practical specialisation subjects to prepare students for immediate employment in industry or for pursuing further education in a higher education institution on leaving school. Upon registration on the first year of study, students of both directions select the field of study and a specialisation of their choice, in which they continue until they graduate. Secondary Technical and Vocational Education also provides students with the opportunity to develop personal knowledge, skills and aptitudes, communication and learning skills, professionalism and the attitudes and values needed for their successful employment and integration into society. The Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education Leaving Certificate is equal to the Upper Secondary General Education Leaving Certificate and corresponds to level 4 of the National and the European Qualifications Framework (NQF/EQF). Students who choose the theoretical direction are

placed in industry for work experience for two (2) weeks per year in Year 1 and Year 2 of their programme (4 weeks in total). Students who choose the practical direction are placed in industry for their practical training for four (4) weeks per year in Year 1 and Year 2 (eight weeks in total). Students attending hotel and catering courses are placed in hotels for three (3) weeks in June, July and August at the end of Year 1. In Year 2, they are placed in hotels for eighteen (18) consecutive weeks between the first week of June and the last week of September. This means that their practical training in hotels accounts for 25 % of their school year. Both directions provide graduates with the necessary knowledge base for a professional and social integration, for competing for a place in a higher or tertiary education institution in Cyprus or abroad, and for attending lifelong learning and training programmes that will enable them to respond to future economic and social needs and demands at the national and international level.

Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education is provided in thirteen (13) Technical and Vocational Schools of Education and Training, in Nicosia, Limassol, Larnaca, Paralimni, Avgorou, Paphos, Polis Chysochous and Emba. There are also departments of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education in, Agros, Solea and Omodos Schools. Currently, the fields of study that are offered are the following: Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Electronic Applications, Architecture and Civil Engineering, Applied Arts, Agriculture, Services, Industrial Design and Product Development, Management of Hotel Units/Hotel and Catering Professions, Maritime Professions, Hairdressing and Cosmetology, and Viticulture-Winery.

As mentioned above, the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training also offers formal Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education Programmes through the five Evening Schools of Technical and Vocational Education, which operate as second chance schools in Nicosia, Limassol, Larnaca, Paphos and free area of the Famagusta district. The objective of the Evening Schools of Technical and Vocational Education is to further promote participation in Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and support the integration of school dropouts in the workplace and in society in general. The programmes offered are equivalent to the Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education programmes that are offered in the morning. The material taught in each field of study and specialisation is the same as the material taught in the respective field of study/specialisation offered in the

morning, adapted, however, to the particular characteristics and needs of adult learners who attend evening classes. The duration of studies varies from two to three years, depending on the educational level of the adult learners interested in attending the Evening Schools of Technical and Vocational Education.

Attendance at the Evening Schools of Technical and Vocational Education is free of charge and leads to the acquisition of a Leaving Certificate (Apolysterion), which is equivalent to that awarded to graduates of Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Upper Secondary General Education. It corresponds to level 4 of the CyQF and EQF, entitling graduates either to pursue further studies at Institutions of Higher Education in Cyprus, Greece, or abroad, provided that they meet the entry requirements, or access directly the labour market as skilled workers.

VET is also available through the Apprenticeship System, which operates in two levels: Preparatory Apprenticeship (PA) and Core Apprenticeship (CA). Preparatory Apprenticeship is offered to young people between the ages of 14 and 16, who have not completed their compulsory education (Lower Secondary Education - Gymnasium). It can last from one to two years and, according to the academic progress and maturity of each individual student, it offers two options. They can either advance to the Core Apprenticeship, or, through an examination procedure, revert to the Gymnasium. The students attending the Preparatory Apprenticeship follow a different curriculum which includes the main subjects (Greek, Mathematics, Physics, English) along with Art, Carpentry Workshops, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering etc. In cooperation with Career Counsellors and with the help of psychologists, students are offered the chance to discover their talents and abilities, which will also empower their self-confidence. Hence, they are better equipped to choose the specialisation suited for them if they decide to continue to the Core Apprenticeship. Core Apprenticeship is the pathway which provides apprentices the opportunity to remain in education and at the same time be placed in industry for their practical training. One can be admitted to the Core Apprenticeship after completing compulsory education (Gymnasium) or after attending Preparatory Apprenticeship. Apprentices of Core Apprenticeship attend classes at Technical and Vocational Schools of Education and Training twice a week and the remaining three days are placed in various companies within the industry for their practical training. Upon completion of their three-

year programme of studies, apprentices are awarded the Apprenticeship Certificate, which is equivalent to level 3 of CyQF/EQF (National and European Qualifications Framework). The Certificate prerequisites they have passed successfully their final examinations and have completed their practical training in industry. Specialisations are offered on a rotational basis at each district, according to the Apprentices' choices, as well as the requirements of the local labour market.

Tertiary VET has also been provided for the last ten years. In April 2017, the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education accredited the Post-Secondary Institutes of Vocational Education and Training (MIEEK in the Greek language) as a Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training and classified their programmes at Level 5 of ISCED and CyQF/EQF. For the establishment and smooth operation of the Institutes, the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth cooperates with the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus, Organizations of Employers and Manufacturers, Associations of Employees, and other stakeholders relevant to the world of work, who are represented in the MIEEK Council. The objective of the Institutes is to offer higher vocational education and training and provide students with the necessary qualifications by imparting academic and technical knowledge, as well as professional and practical skills. Additionally, they offer students the possibility to develop those skills that will enable them to adapt to the changing needs of industry. The programmes have been especially designed to be relevant to labour market needs. Indicative two-year programmes offered are the following: Bakery – Confectionery, Computer and Communication Networks, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Installations, Organic Horticultural Crops, Supply Chain Management and Maritime Studies, CNC Technology, Industrial and Residential Automation, Culinary Arts etc.

It should be noted that, in addition to VET training available to pupils and students in tertiary education and training programs, vocational training is also widely available for employees, the unemployed, other vulnerable groups and adults in general through a mixture of public and private provisions such as colleges, training institutions, consultancy firms and enterprises. The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) is a semi-government organisation which started operating in 1979 and has an integral role in promoting VET training in Cyprus. It is governed by a 13-strong tripartite Board of Directors, comprising government, employer and

trade union representatives. The HRDA's mission is to create the prerequisites for the planned and systematic training and development of Cyprus's human resources, at all levels and in all sectors, for meeting the economy's needs within the state's socio-economic policies.

Strategic National Framework: The design and implementation of Vocational Education and Training in Cyprus is guided by important national strategy plans such as the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth Strategic Plan 2022-2024, the strategic priorities set by the DoSTVET, the Cyprus Recovery and Resilience Plan, the Cyprus 2035 Vision and the Cyprus Lifelong Learning Strategy 2021-2027.

Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth Strategic Plan 2022-2024: The MoESY has identified eight strategic goals for the time period between 2022 and 2024. The strategic goals that are of critical importance for VET in Cyprus are the following: Development, training and quality professional development for all human resources, upgrade of administration structures across the entire educational system, provide students with quality education and training, support each student by recognising individual differences and the need to provide equal education opportunities.

Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) Strategic Plan for the period 2023-2025: The HRDA implements a comprehensive process of planning and reporting of its activities. In 2022, the HRDA prepared the Strategic Plan for the period 2023-2025, which contains the strategic objectives of the HRDA, that are linked to the Activity-Based Budget. The strategic objectives of the HRDA for the period 2023-2025 are the following: (a) Upgrading the country's human resources, through the continuous and lifelong learning of the employed, the unemployed and the inactive, with emphasis on young, older-age and low-skilled persons and the long-term unemployed; (b) Improving the productivity, enhancing the competitiveness and developing the resilience of Cypriot enterprises through the improvement of their potential for adaptability and the better utilisation of their human resources and (c) Enhancing the quality assurance and the efficiency of the system for the training and development of human resources through the assessment and certification of training provision, the strengthening of controls for systems and procedures as well as the knowledge, skills and vocational qualifications of the country's human resources.

Strategic priorities set by the DoSTVET: The DoSTVET is currently in the process of updating its strategic planning for the time period between 2023 and 2027. The new strategic plan for this period is centred around five priorities, which are aligned with the Council Recommendation on VET (2020) and the Osnabruck Declaration, as well as with other major European policies (European Skills Agenda, European Pillar of Social Rights) while adhering to the relevant national policies (Strategic Planning of MoESY, Cyprus Tomorrow Agenda). The first priority is to create and develop quality, inclusive and flexible VET and transform VET into an attractive choice for all. Quality means equip young people and adults with all necessary knowledge skills and competences in order to be able to thrive in the ever changing labour market. Inclusive means addressing the gender balance and student disability and provide equal opportunities for learning to all. Flexible means adapting to changing labour market conditions and being able to adapt accordingly. The second priority is to establish a lifelong learning culture by providing learning opportunities to adults in order to either improve their skillset or acquire new skills that are relevant and in demand by the labour market. The third priority is to achieve specific EU-level objectives as set in the Council Recommendation on VET with regard to VET graduates' employability, exposure to work-based learning and mobility. Priorities 4 and 5 are to assess demand in the Cyprus market which may lead to an increase of the rate of secondary education students' participation in VET, and establish and support partnerships at national and international level.

Cyprus Recovery and Resilience Plan (the "RRP" or the "Plan"): Cyprus RRP reflects the integrated, ambitious and at the same time realistic plan of the Republic of Cyprus, for the effective utilization of RRF funds to be allocated to Cyprus for the period 2021-2026. The strategic objective of the RRP is "to strengthen the economy's resilience and the country's potential for economically, socially and environmentally sustainable long - term growth and welfare". The RRP has been developed around five policy axes, namely (1) Public health, civil protection and lessons learned from the pandemic, (2) Accelerated transition to a green economy, (3) Strengthening the resilience and competitiveness of the economy, (4) Towards a digital era and (5) Labour market, social protection, education and human capital. Each policy axis comprises of appropriate country-specific investments and reforms that take into account the need to mitigate the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 crisis and to strengthen the resilience and transformation of the economy through a robust new growth model, which will contribute to enhancing resilience, sustainability and efficiency of the economy and to achieving

the Union's goals for the green and digital transitions. Through the measures of the RRP, the aim is to promote Cyprus as a country with high levels of resilience, productivity and competitiveness through a sustainable model of long-term growth where the education system and workforce development are aligned with the skills needed for the future. The aim is also to promote Cyprus as a country that is among the pioneers in Green and Digital Transition. The RRP moves within the framework and directions specified by the long-term economic strategy (LTES) being prepared on behalf of the Cyprus Economic and Competitiveness Council, filtered by the European Commission's guidelines under the RRF, and encompassing the implementation of the Country Specific Recommendations in the context of the European Semester. The LTES aims to formulate and implement a new ambitious, long-term strategy and growth model, in order to fulfil the vision of transforming Cyprus into an international model based on a thriving and prosperous economy, with a high level of competitiveness, increased productivity and export orientation, at the same time encompassing a fair and inclusive society. In alignment to this vision, the RRP contains reforms and investments under the above 5 policy axes and their respective components, 13 in total, with a total budget amounting to €1.2 bln. Through a number of targeted measures with a green and / or digital dimension, under almost all the policy axes, it is estimated that around 41% of the Plan contributes to the green transition and around 23% to digital transformation.

Two major projects are included in the Cyprus RRP and are perfectly aligned with the VET system in Cyprus. The first project is an investment into the construction of two model Technical and Vocational Schools of Education and Training to replace existing ones. This investment aims to improve the conditions of secondary education pupils enrolling in Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and acquire necessary knowledge and skills required in the ever-changing labour market. It is for this reason that an assessment of market demand has to take place so that evidence-based decision making can take place, regarding the necessary capacity of Technical Schools needed in Cyprus together as well as the programs they should carry. It is also noted that Technical Schools in Cyprus operate from 7:30 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., with the infrastructure hosting a number of other VET pathways (Evening Schools of Technical and Vocational Education, the Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training - MIEEK, the Apprenticeship System of VET and the Lifelong Learning Programmes of VET) that provide ample professional opportunities to young

adults or experienced professionals in order to acquire or improve their current skill set. As a result, more Technical Schools will also result in more and better training and employment opportunities for the society in general.

The second Cyprus RRP project directly related to VET in Cyprus is the reform “Addressing Skills Mismatch between Education and Labour Market”. Evidence suggests that educational outcomes in Cyprus are not fully aligned to businesses’ needs. For example, while the employment rate of recent higher education graduates has steadily increased since 2013, growing almost 8% between 2017 and 2018 to reach 79%, around a third of graduates are employed in occupations that do not require any higher education qualifications such as manufacturing, professional services, wholesale and retail distribution, and public administration (Cyprus Competiveness Report, 2019). This proportion has remained relatively stable over the past decade, indicating persistent structural challenges in the matching of labour market participants to appropriate employment relevant to their capability and skills. This could also indicate that the Cypriot economy lacks the capacity to create high-wage, high-productivity jobs. Based on Eurostat data, Cyprus also appears to have a significantly higher skills mismatch in the areas which require high levels of technical competency, including computing, science and mathematics.

A mismatch between the educational system and labour market needs can be a serious threat to the economic growth and development. Therefore, the proposed project aims at feeding the development of a comprehensive national strategy to address the observed skills mismatch between education and labour market by continually monitoring skill needs and developing and implementing measures towards meeting those identified needs. The ultimate objective of the proposal is to improve the competitiveness of the country and enhance social cohesion, by addressing the disparity between the labour market and the overall education. For the successful implementation of the Reform, the MoESY aims to form a MoESY Project Management Committee made up of representatives of stakeholders (MoESY, employer and employee organizations, school and university representatives etc.), with a mandate to develop, implement and monitor a comprehensive plan to address the skills mismatch based on the evidence provided in the reports and policy documents mentioned earlier, as well as evidence from more detailed future studies. It includes actions such as

the reform and modernization of the secondary schools' educational programmes (including VET programmes) and curricula to improve, among else, digital literacy, emotional intelligence and soft skills, and entrepreneurship skills. It includes provisions of high-quality professional training to secondary education teaching staff that teach in VET programmes in close collaboration with labour market experts and the upgrading of teaching rooms and laboratories in schools so that teaching staff and students have access to the latest technology and equipment relevant to their studies. Skills mismatch may also be addressed via the HRDA's schemes for the organisation and implementation of training programmes that are included in the Cyprus RRP. The four HRDA's schemes included in the RRP are the following:

- Training programmes for strengthening digital skills of the employed and the unemployed
- Training programmes for strengthening green skills of the employed and the unemployed
- Training programmes for strengthening blue skills of the employed and the unemployed
- Entrepreneurship training programmes for the unemployed

Cyprus Vision 2035: This report sets out the plan to realise Cyprus' Vision 2035 and to transform the country to one of the world's best places to live, work and do business. In general, this Report describes and outlines actions in over 120 initiative areas and more than 50 case studies necessary to transform Cyprus' economic model to an outward-looking, low-carbon, high-tech economy which is sustainable and resilient for all Cypriots, making full use of the resources and opportunities offered by the European Union (including the Next Generation EU). It considers the entire fabric of the country including civil society, the wider green economy and environment, and future generations. It is not just focused on the economy but it sets out a governance framework responsible to deliver Cyprus' Vision 2035 and catalyse change supplemented, at a later stage, with a more granular and time-bound action Plan. Vision 2035 defines success by setting targets based on publicly available Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which can be transparently used to set direction, measure progress and highlight areas of success or failures and recognises that everyone has a vested interest to realise Vision 2035, with specific calls to actions outlining what is expected from Cyprus' policymakers, businesses, academia and citizens to make Vision 2035 a reality. One of the top strategic objectives of Vision 2035 is to improve and promote vocational education with new

Technical and Vocational Schools of Education and Training and create a culture of lifelong learning. Another important objective is to create a fundamental change in behaviour, attitudes and skills in society. In Cyprus, this means accelerating progress on the green agenda and fundamentally changing behaviours and attitudes towards things like recycling and transport. It also means enhancing and improving perceptions regarding the benefits derived from vocational and technical education and careers, which will be important for certain key sectors under Vision 2035.

Cyprus Lifelong Learning Strategy 2021-2027: The lifelong learning strategy (especially for the years 2021-27) aims to assist national agencies and other bodies in Cyprus reaching the EU targets in relevant fields. It aims to face challenges such as the low participation of adults in lifelong learning, which remains below the EU average. It is expected that the new lifelong learning strategy will improve efforts to upskill and reskill low-qualified and low-skilled adults and address the high percentage of unemployment among young people. The strategy is also expected to benefit other groups such as early leavers, NEETs and migrants/refugees. The implementation of a variety of learning opportunities is anticipated to enrich knowledge, skills and competences for personal development and economic well-being of the specified target groups. The development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the new lifelong learning strategy for 2021-27 is carried out by the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth, and is internally coordinated by the European and International Affairs, Lifelong Learning and Adult Education Office of the MoESY. The work carried out by the MoESY was also facilitated by external experts, following the successful proposal submitted by the Ministry to the Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP). The policies and actions carried out within the new lifelong learning strategy are monitored by two Committees: the national and the technical lifelong learning committees. Representatives from various stakeholders, including the Directorate General of Growth of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA), and social partners, participate in the two committees. The strategy was approved by the National Committee in July 2022 and by the Council of Ministers in September 2022.

2. Challenges and general objectives of the plan

Main challenges in socioeconomic, employment and VET areas:

Given the size of its economy, Cyprus has always been vulnerable to significant economic changes happening worldwide. It is no surprise that over the last two decades, Cyprus had to request assistance from the European Union and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in order to tackle and overcome the financial difficulties that overtook the banking sector and subsequently the deterioration of public finances, due to the global financial crisis of 2008. Cyprus was able to pull out of the assistance programme and moved into a more stable economic and financial situation by undertaking major reforms in all areas of social and public life. This turnaround of the country's financial outlook was rather impressive and took place in less time compared to other EU countries faced with similar financial burdens. Since 2016, the government has continued its efforts to maintain financial stability and sustainable finances, as well as to implement key structural reforms. However, despite significant progress, important challenges remain, such as high level of non-performing loans and private debt, concentration of economic activity in a limited number of sectors, reliance on imports, large investment needs in the areas of green and digital transition. At the same time, key reforms in areas such as public administration and local government reform, education, and the efficiency of the justice system have been planned and initiated with their implementation underway.

However, while Cyprus has made a strong recovery in the past five years in terms of GDP growth, its relative economic performance compared to other economies is still stagnant and major changes need to take place within the current decade. Governmental declarations suggest that a new economic growth model is needed to revive growth in Cyprus and set the country on a new and more sustainable trajectory for long term growth and development. Within this context, Vocational Education and Training has an important role to play by providing people with professionally viable options and meeting the ever-changing labour market needs.

Cyprus NIP Strategic goals and objectives: The Cyprus NIP is based on the general objective of the MoESY's strategy 2022-2024 which is to create an attractive, innovative, inclusive and flexible Technical and Vocational Education and Training System that will equip young learners and adults with the necessary skills and knowledge in order to be well prepared for accessing the labour market and contribute to quality of life in the country.

Specific strategic goals have been set in order to achieve the above general objective for the VET system:

- Create and develop quality, inclusive and flexible VET and transform VET into an attractive educational / professional choice. Quality means equip young people and adults with all necessary knowledge skills and competences in order to be able to thrive in the ever-changing labour market. Inclusive means addressing the gender balance and disabled students and providing equal opportunities for learning to all. Flexible means adapting to changing labour market conditions and be able to adapt accordingly.
- Establish a lifelong learning culture by providing learning opportunities to adults in order to either improve their skillset or acquire new skills that are relevant and in demand for the labour market.
- Achieve specific EU-level objectives as set in the Council Recommendation on VET with regard to VET graduates' employability, exposure to work-based learning and mobility.
- Assess demand in VET in the Cyprus market and develop a plan to address it
- Build and support partnerships at national and international level.

Funding: Funding for measures included in the Cyprus NIP comes from various sources: governmental budget, ESF++, RRP and TSI.

Timetable for NIP: The timetable for each measure taken is included in the descriptions of the measures that follow. Many actions are already in place and others are in development phase and soon to be moved into implementation stage by early 2023.

3. Detailed description of main measures and/or their packages

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| Title |
| 3.1. Addressing skills mismatch between education and labour market (Secondary and Higher Education) |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| <p>Skills mismatch is a major concern. In the EU, a fifth of adult employees have lower skills than needed by the labour market, when starting their jobs, thus indicating skill gaps at recruitment. In addition, 39% of EU workers feel that their skills are not effectively utilised at work. This mismatch between skills and jobs can have adverse effects on individuals (wage penalties, job and life satisfaction), firms (negative consequences for productivity and competitiveness, low performance, loss of profits), but also for countries (unemployment, low competitiveness and unattractiveness to investors) and the EU economy as a whole.</p> |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| <p>A mismatch between the educational system and the labour market needs can be a serious threat to the economic growth and development. Therefore, the proposed reform aims at the development of a comprehensive national strategy to address the observed skills mismatch between education and labour market by continually monitoring skill needs and developing and implementing measures towards meeting those identified needs. The ultimate objective of the proposal is to improve the competitiveness of the country and enhance social cohesion, while eliminating the disparity between the labour market and secondary/tertiary education.</p> |

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| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline | |
| <p>For the successful implementation of the Reform, the MOESY aims to form a MOESY Project Management Committee made up of representatives of stakeholders (MOESY, employer and employee organisations, school and university representatives etc.), with a mandate to develop, implement and monitor a comprehensive plan to address the skills mismatch based on the evidence provided in the reports and policy documents mentioned earlier, as well as evidence from more detailed future studies. The Strategy will be translated into an action plan with a well-rounded series of actions and activities that together will form the backbone of reforms to the education system and the labour market in the coming years. It includes actions such as: Enhancement of the Career Counselling and Educational Services (CCES) of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY), Reform and modernisation of the secondary schools' educational programmes and curricula to improve, among else, digital literacy, emotional intelligence and soft skills, and entrepreneurship skills, Introduction of two additional programmes of study offered by the Department of Secondary General Education and two additional programmes of study offered by the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training that will be tailored to labour market needs, Provision of high-quality professional training to Secondary Education teaching staff in close collaboration with labour market experts, and Upgrading of teaching rooms and laboratories in schools so that teaching staff and students have access to the latest technology and equipment relevant to their studies.</p> | |
| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. |

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
| Beneficiaries/target groups | |
| Secondary VET students, young people that are identified as 'NEETs' (including and not limited to early school leavers), employers, employees, society as a whole. | |
| Responsible ministries/bodies | |
| Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) | |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) | |
| RRP (€4.3 mil) | |

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| Title |
| 3.2. Construction of two new model Technical and Vocational Schools of Education and Training to replace two old ones |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| Create a modern and fit-for-purpose learning environment for Secondary Technical and Vocational Education. |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| This investment aims to modernise and increase the attractiveness of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education. The new school facilities will provide a test bed for the development of state of the art programs and promote closer links with the industry. |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| The implementation of the investment will be carried out by the Department of Technical Services of the MoESY, in cooperation with the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training. The Department of Technical Services has great experience in architectural, structural, electrical and mechanical studies, the implementation and supervision of construction projects and material control, upgrading of school building structures, surveys and various construction projects. The proposed investment includes the construction of two new Technical and Vocational Schools of Education and Training, one in Limassol (in replacement of the A' Technical and Vocational School of Education and Training in Limassol) and one in Larnaca (in replacement of the Ayios Lazaros Technical and Vocational School of Education and Training). The replacement of the two Technical Schools mentioned above is absolutely essential because, at their current state, the schools cannot adequately serve their educational purposes and they offer minimum flexibility in designing and offering new programmes of study. It is imperative that new upgraded schools are constructed so |

that Technical and Vocational Education has the means and capacity for improvement and evolution. It is expected that the two Technical Schools will serve a large number of enrolled pupils and other professionals or adults as indicated in the Table that follows. The schools will feature teaching rooms, labs, multipurpose halls, sports facilities, staff and management rooms.

It is estimated that the construction of the new Technical Schools will start in 2022 and be completed by Q2 2026:Q2 2022-Architectural designs, other technical and environmental studies and tender specification documents for the construction contracts expected to be completed.Q4 2022-Signing of two contracts for the construction of two Technical Schools in Limassol and Larnaca and issue of construction initiation order by the project Engineers in line with the DNSH principle. Q2 2026-Completion of construction of two Technical Schools in Limassol and Larnaca and issue of taking over certificates. Schools fully operational from start of school year 2026-2027.

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| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |

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|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) |
| Scope (national, regional, local) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local |
| Beneficiaries/target groups |
| Secondary education pupils who are interested in enrolling in VET programmes of studies and adult learners/young professionals who seek to improve their professional knowledge and skills and thus improve their chances of employment in the labour market. |
| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| RRP (€40 mil) and ESF+ |

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| Title |
| 3.3. Digital transformation of school units with the aim of enhancing digital skills and skills related to STEAM education |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| <p>Considering the post-COVID era and the growing demand of everyday life to respond successfully to the “online world”, there is urgent need to develop students’ digital skills. To achieve this goal, we intend to provide the digital equipment for the creation of e-class, the transformation of the curriculum and the training of teachers to support the enhancement of digital skills through school education. According to the TIMSS results (2019) for Cyprus, “computers available for students to use during mathematics lessons” for only 9% of grade 8 students compared to 37% of students internationally. In addition, “computers available for students to use during science lessons” for only 7% of grade 8 students compared to 38% of students internationally. Only 14% of grade 4 students participate in classrooms that have computers which students can share while the respective percentage of grade 8 students is 2%. Hence, there is urgent need to tackle the provision of resources in school classrooms, train teachers and transform the curriculum. In this way, the proposed reform will contribute to the Reskill and Upskill Flagship goal of 70% citizens with basic digital skills and to reducing the share of 13-14 year-students who underperform in computer and informational literacy under 15%.</p> |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| <p>The main goal of the reform is the enhancement of digital skills. Digital competences based on the Digital Competence Framework 2.0 include the following key components: information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, safety and problem solving. A related goal is to provide students opportunities to acquire the 21st century skills (collaboration and teamwork, creativity and imagination, critical thinking, problem-solving) and the improvement of students’ learning outcomes. The digital transformation of school units is a fundamental part of the overall overarching policy of Cyprus’ digital transformation agenda, which</p> |

falls under the competences of the Deputy Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digital Policy. The said action will be implemented by the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth. The overarching objective is the transformation of the curriculum and the development of the educational material to achieve the aforementioned goals. We tackle this by developing digital skills as a cross-curricular theme from primary to secondary education and by incorporating STEAM56 teaching methodology. It is necessary to provide the resources in school classrooms and the respective training for teachers.

Specifically, the objectives are: •Equip/upgrade the school classrooms by developing e-classes. In this way, it will provide the infrastructure to develop and apply students' digital skills in everyday teaching and learning. •Equip students to have access to the infrastructure for developing and applying digital skills (based on eligibility criteria). In this way, we aim to offer equal opportunities for students of low socio-economic background through the use of educational technology. •Provide the respective training to in-service teachers for developing digital skills. •Transform the curriculum and prepare educational materials to enhance digital skills and STEAM methodology as a cross-curricular theme.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

The implementation will take place according to the following series of steps: •Identify the current needs regarding hardware for the creation of e-class (school classrooms); Assess the current hardware; Equip school classrooms •Hardware: Laptop, projector and peripherals •Equip students with hardware (laptop/tablets); Based on eligibility criteria students from third grade of primary school and second grade of secondary school •Transform curriculum and produce educational material towards enhancing digital skills(cross-curricular) and STEAM methodology •Train in-service teachers to develop students' digital skills Implementation of this reform requires the involvement of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth, the Director of Secondary General

Education, the Director of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training, the Director of Primary Education, the Director of the Pedagogical Institute, the Head of the ICT sector of the Ministry and other existing staff of the Ministry. Also, it is planned to involve the participation of Universities, Parents' Associations, and Educational Trade Unions, the Committee on Educational Affairs and Culture of Cyprus Parliament, and the Commissioner for Personal Data Protection. Furthermore, working groups will be created in order to support this project, which will involve experts from the labour market and other professionals.

Timeline: Q2 2023-Classrooms in at least 700 schools have been digitally equipped with laptops, projectors, microphones, speakers, digital graphic boards.Q4 2024-Curriculum transformation and production of educational material for digital skills and STEM methodology for120 school subjects.Q2 2026-At least 675 (out of which 300 primary, 300 secondary general and 75 secondary vocational teachers) teachers per year for 5 years (in total at least 3375 teachers) which accounts for around 32% of all teachers (primary and secondary), have benefitted from In-Service Training& Professional Development on Digital Competences.

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| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabruck Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) | |

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) |
| Scope (national, regional, local) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local |
| Beneficiaries/target groups |
| Teachers, School Deputy Principals and School Principals, Inspectorates and Discipline Advisors and Students, of all levels of education (primary, secondary general, secondary technical / vocational). |
| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| RRP |

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| Title |
| 3.4. Development of Technical and Vocational Education and Training |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| There is a prima facie discord between supply of and demand for professionals in technical professions in Cyprus. Consequently, the need arises for evidence based policy making regarding investments in increasing the numbers of enrolled pupils in Secondary Technical and Vocational Education. |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| The scope of the project is to improve the relevance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training System to the needs of the labour market, to facilitate the transition from education to work, and to improve education and training systems and their quality, via forecasting mechanisms of skills needs, the adaptation of curricula and the establishment and development of work-based learning systems, including dual learning and apprenticeship systems. |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| The project is implemented by the DoSTVET since 2014 (under programme period 2014-2020) and continues with increased ESF+ funding under the current programme period (2021-2027). The project covers all programmes of study (pathways) falling under the authority of DoSTVET: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secondary Technical and Vocational Education |

- Evening Schools of Technical and Vocational Education
- Apprenticeship System of Vocational Education and Training
- Lifelong Learning Programmes of Vocational Education and Training
- Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training - MIEEK

Actions taken within the scope of the project are the following:

- Assessing the market demand in the relative fields of study
- The introduction of new Study Programmes and new fields of study / specialisations in Technical and Vocational Education and Training.
- Informing pupils, students and trainees on matters of professional development and the benefits of completing programmes/pathways in the VET system.
- Systematic training of instructors on technological developments and training on new industrial methods and procedures, with the aim of improving the quality of teaching and their educational abilities.
- Practical training for the students of the MIEEK Public School of Higher VET, as well as in-company training for the students of the Apprenticeship System, for specialisations/qualifications in which it is necessary to have specialized hands-on experiences.
- Inspections of pupils and students during their practical training and inspections of the apprentices of the Apprenticeship System during their in-house training and strengthening the incentives for this training.
- Purchase and access to appropriate modern technical equipment, training materials and infrastructure through training in industries that have appropriate relevant equipment.
- Organization of modern training model in industry by incentivizing reputable industrial units to provide knowledge, skills and abilities/competences to the students/learners of Technical and Vocational Schools of Education and Training.
- Development of Vocational Education and Training curricula that are oriented towards learning outcomes and ready to meet the needs of the labour market.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion and further flexibility of the institution of Evening Schools of Technical and Vocational Education, which operate as second chance schools. | |
| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabruck Declaration |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
| Beneficiaries/target groups | |
| Students and graduates of all pathways operating within the context of the public VET system | |

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| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| ESF+ (€38 mil) and National Funds |

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| Title |
| 3.5. Training programmes under the Cyprus Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021-2026 (HRDA) |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) implements a wide range of activities for the training and development of the human resources of Cyprus, providing the employed and the unemployed with the opportunity of acquiring new or upgrading existing knowledge and skills. Four HRDA's schemes for the organisation and implementation of training programmes have been included under the Cyprus Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021-2026 (RRP). |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| The schemes aim at the acquisition of new and upgrading of existing knowledge and skills of employed persons (public and private sector employees and the self-employed) or the unemployed, by participating in training programmes to be implemented by certified Vocational Training Centres (VTCs). |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| The four HRDA's schemes included in the RRP are the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training programmes for strengthening digital skills of the employed and the unemployed |

The scheme aims at the acquisition of new and upgrading of existing digital skills of the human resources of Cyprus (public and private sector employees, the self-employed and the unemployed), through participation in training programmes to be implemented by certified VTCs.

- Training programmes for strengthening green skills of the employed and the unemployed

The scheme aims at the acquisition of new and upgrading of existing knowledge and skills of employed persons (public and private sector and the self-employed) who are in occupations or sectors of the green economy or the unemployed who wish to enter these occupations, by participating in training programmes to be implemented by certified VTCs.

- Training programmes for strengthening blue skills of the employed and the unemployed

The scheme aims at the acquisition of new and upgrading of existing knowledge and skills of employed persons (public and private sector and the self-employed) who are in occupations or sectors of the blue economy or the unemployed who wish to enter these occupations, by participating in training programmes to be implemented by certified VTCs.

- Entrepreneurship training programmes for the unemployed

The scheme aims at the acquisition of specialised knowledge and skills in issues of entrepreneurship development, as well as the formation and operation of a business by the unemployed (with emphasis on women, up to 55 years old with upper secondary education) interested in starting their own business, by participating in training programmes to be implemented by certified VTCs.

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| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional | |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> local |
| Beneficiaries/target groups |
| Employed and unemployed |
| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| EU funds – Recovery and Resilience Facility and National funds |

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| Title |
| 3.6. Integration of the unemployed and inactive persons into employment |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| Actively support employability and reduction of unemployment. |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| The objectives of the HRDA include the integration of the unemployed and inactive persons in employment, with focused training activities to actively support employability and the reduction of unemployment. Special emphasis is given to employment and training in enterprises, to job placement of the unemployed in enterprises/organisations for the acquisition of work experience and to training of human resources to improve employability. |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| <p>The activities which are implemented by the HRDA in order to meet the above-mentioned aim are shown below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme for the employment and training of tertiary education graduates <p>The aim is to improve the organisation and management of enterprises and organisations through the employment and training of new tertiary education graduates and at the same time the smooth integration of the new graduates in appropriate employment positions. The scheme provides incentives to enterprises in order to offer employment positions, practical training and work</p> |

experience of a six-month duration to graduates under the age of 30. The scheme was introduced in November 2014 and expires at the end of 2023.

- Scheme for the training of the long-term unemployed in enterprises/organisations

The aim is to provide opportunities to long-term unemployed persons in order for them to integrate/reintegrate in employment and at the same time acquire knowledge and skills in relation to the needs of a specific work position. The scheme provides incentives to enterprises/organisations to employ and train long-term unemployed persons through an individualised training programme of a four-months duration. The scheme was introduced in July 2016 and expires at the end of 2023.

- Training programmes for the unemployed

The aim is to provide training opportunities for the unemployed in order to acquire, enrich and/or upgrade their skills and knowledge, in accordance with the needs observed in the labour market, to broaden their prospects for re-entering and best possible reintegration in employment, as well as to meet their expectations for a new professional career. The programmes which are implemented, are decided by the HRDA based on, amongst others, data which is provided on a regular basis by the Public Employment Service (PES), surveys and studies conducted by the HRDA, as well as after consultation with the social partners and professional bodies. The scheme was introduced in February 2015 and expires at the end of 2023.

- Special scheme for the vocational training of the unemployed in organisations of the public and broader public sector, local government authorities, non-governmental organisations and non-profit institutions

The aim is to provide opportunities for the acquisition of vocational training and work experience to the unemployed and at the same time provide the possibility to services/organisations of the public and broader public sector, local government authorities, non-governmental organisations and non-profit institutions to utilise appropriate human resources through the implementation of vocational training and work experience programmes of a four-month duration renewable for another four months. The scheme was introduced in October 2020 and expires at the end of 2022.

- Standard multi-company training programmes – participation of the unemployed

The aim is to provide training opportunities to unemployed persons through their participation in training programmes organised by Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) within the framework of the HRDA's scheme «Standard multi-company training programmes». These programmes cover a broad range of subjects in relation to all the operations of the enterprise and all professions. The programmes are designed and organised by VTCs, based on the thematic priorities set by the HRDA, after consultation with social partners and other interested parties, which are then notified to the VTCs. The option for the long-term unemployed persons to participate in the above-mentioned scheme was introduced as of January 2015. As of September 2018, all unemployed persons may participate in these programmes. The scheme expires at the end of 2023.

Use of e-learning methods in training programmes

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to help contain its spread, the HRDA has promoted the utilisation of e-learning methods by the organisers of subsidised training programmes. As of March 2020, the providers of subsidised training programmes (VTCs and enterprises/organisations) are allowed to use e-learning methods for the Standard multi-company training programmes, the High-priority multi-company training programmes, the Single-company training programmes and the Continuing training programmes for

trade union officials. For increased flexibility, the HRDA does not specify the e-learning tools that can be used but requires a learning environment ensuring real time synchronous e-learning with simultaneous participation of the trainer and trainees.

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| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national |
| <input type="checkbox"/> regional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> local |
| Beneficiaries/target groups |
| Unemployed persons registered with the Public Employment Services (PES) |
| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| National funds |

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| Title |
| 3.7. Lifelong learning of the employed |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| Upgrading and enriching the knowledge and skills of the employed, especially in economic sectors with growth prospects. |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| The enrichment of the knowledge and skills of the employed constitutes a key ingredient for their better and more flexible utilisation, and contributes significantly to the improvement of their productivity, enhancing the competitiveness and resilience of enterprises. In this way, training is offered as a tool supporting the employed and the labour market with all the resulting beneficial consequences for the economy and the society in general. |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| <p>The activities which are implemented by the HRDA in order to meet the above-mentioned aim are shown below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-company training programmes in Cyprus <p>The aim is to provide incentives to employers to design, organise and implement training programmes to meet the training needs of their staff. The design and organisation of the programmes is done by the enterprises according to the thematic priorities set by the HRDA, after consultation with social partners and other interested parties, which are then notified to the enterprises. The scheme was introduced in December 2014 and expires at the end of 2023.</p> |

- Single-company training programmes abroad

The aim is to provide incentives to employers to participate with their employees in innovative and/or specialised programmes abroad, aiming to transfer to Cyprus knowledge and skills in areas related to the introduction of innovation, new technology and technical know-how. The design and organisation of the programmes is carried out by the enterprises according to the thematic priorities set by the HRDA, after consultation with social partners and other interested parties, which are then notified to the enterprises. The scheme was introduced in December 2014 and expires at the end of 2023.

- Standard multi-company training programmes

The aim is to meet the training needs of employed persons through their participation in training programmes implemented by accredited Vocational Training Centres (VTCs). The programmes cover a wide range of subjects in all the functions of an enterprise and all professions. The design and organisation of the programmes is carried out by the VTCs according to the thematic priorities set by the HRDA, after consultation with social partners and other interested parties, which are then notified to the VTCs. The scheme was introduced in October 2014 and expires at the end of 2023.

- High priority multi-company training programmes

The aim is to meet the training needs of employed persons through their participation in training programmes implemented by accredited Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) in particularly important areas for the development of enterprises or/and areas which are a high priority for the country's economy. The design and organisation of the programmes in which trainers with extensive experience are utilised is carried out by the VTCs according to the thematic priorities set by the HRDA, after consultation with social

partners and interested parties, which are then notified to the VTCs. The scheme was introduced in December 2014 and expires at the end of 2023.

- Continuing training programmes for trade union officials

The aim is to meet the training needs of trade union officials in issues related to their trade-union duties. The training programmes are implemented by Trade Union Training Centres. The scheme was introduced in April 2009 and has no expiration date.

Use of e-learning methods in training programmes

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to help contain its spread, the HRDA has promoted the utilisation of e-learning methods by the organisers of subsidised training programmes. As of March 2020, the providers of subsidised training programmes (VTCs and enterprises/organisations) are allowed to use e-learning methods for the Standard multi-company training programmes, the High-priority multi-company training programmes, the Single-company training programmes and the Continuing training programmes for trade union officials. For increased flexibility, the HRDA does not specify the e-learning tools that can be used but requires a learning environment ensuring real time synchronous e-learning with simultaneous participation of the trainer and trainees.

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| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
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VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)

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| <input type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
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Scope (national, regional, local)

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
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Beneficiaries/target groups

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| Employed persons | |
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Responsible ministries/bodies

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| Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| National funds |

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| Title | |
| 3.8. System for the assessment and accreditation of training providers | |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed | |
| Improving the quality of the training programmes subsidised by the HRDA and provided to the employed and the unemployed. | |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan | |
| The aim of this system is to assess physical and legal entities dealing with the organisation and implementation of training activities or/and with the provision of infrastructure facilities for their implementation, to be certified as Vocational Training Centres, Vocational Training Facilities and Trainers of Vocational Training. | |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline | |
| The System for the Assessment and Accreditation of Training Providers was designed taking into account the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training. The project contributes to the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of the training services provided. | |
| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
| Beneficiaries/target groups | |
| Trainers, unemployed and employed | |
| Responsible ministries/bodies | |
| Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) | |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) | |
| European Social Fund (ESF) and National Funds. | |

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| Title |
| 3.9. HRDA's actions under the Cyprus Operational Programme «THALIA 2021-2027» |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| <p>The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) implements a wide range of activities for the training and development of the human resources of Cyprus, providing the employed and the unemployed with the opportunity of acquiring new or upgrading existing knowledge and skills. Two HRDA's actions have been included under the Cyprus Operational Programme «THALIA 2021-2027»: The Development and implementation of «Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs)» and the «Training Programmes for young people aged 15-29 not in education, employment, or training (NEETs) to acquire basic knowledge and skills».</p> |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| <p>The schemes aim at the acquisition of new and upgrading of existing knowledge and skills of the employed and the unemployed, as well as young people aged 15-29 not in education, employment, or training (NEETs).</p> |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| <p>The two HRDA's actions included in the Cyprus Operational Programme «THALIA 2021-2027» are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) |

ILAs will provide credits to eligible groups of employed and unemployed persons to attend training programmes, in order to acquire new and/or upgrade existing knowledge and skills. They aim at promoting lifelong learning by providing opportunities for flexible promotion of upgrading knowledge and skills, while preventing social exclusion. Through ILAs, individuals will gain access to training programmes on a broad range of issues within the framework of the HRDA's scheme «Standard multi-company training programmes». Their involvement in training activities with the opportunities provided for skills upgrading and retraining can enable them to remain competitive in the labour market, improve their employment opportunities, while at the same time enhance social cohesion.

- Training programmes for young people aged 15-29 not in education, employment, or training (NEETs) to acquire basic knowledge and skills

The acquisition of basic knowledge and skills (for example literacy, math skills, digital and technological skills, interpersonal skills, entrepreneurship) will help young people aged 15-29 to enter the labour market. In addition, upgrading existing and acquiring new knowledge and skills will help them exploit the employment opportunities that will arise in dynamic sectors of economic activity, such as the green and blue economy, and will prepare them suitably for the changing nature of work, especially to that related to digital transition.

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| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
| Beneficiaries/target groups | |
| Employed and unemployed persons that aim at the acquisition of new and upgrading of existing knowledge and skills. | |
| Responsible ministries/bodies | |

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| Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and National funds |

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| Title |
| 3.10. Integrated Student Evaluation System (ISES) |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| Development of a unified, valid and reliable evaluation system from primary to upper secondary education, which leads to improving learning and reporting that facilitates better decision making and policy making. |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| The Integrated Student Evaluation System (ISES) aims to give emphasis on formative assessment, diagnose student needs in relation to specific expected outcomes and facilitate the necessary educational interventions for improvement. Priority is also given to alternative forms of student evaluation. |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| The ISES, which includes formative assessment and diagnosis of student needs, is being implemented since the 2019 - 2020 school year. Based on the regulations governing secondary education, semester core exams are also implemented. Teachers' professional development on formative assessment, alternative forms of student evaluation and modern teaching methods are continuing in order to support teachers in implementing the ISES. |

The MoESY has been engaged in a dialogue with all social partners and has recorded all the suggestions for improvements of the ISES in the best interest of the students, teachers and society.

2021 - Implementation phase

The ISES is being implemented for students of primary education and for students of upper secondary general education and upper secondary technical and vocational education. It is expected that in 2022, the ISES will be also implemented in lower secondary general education.

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| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local |
| Beneficiaries/target groups |
| Learners in upper secondary education, apprentices |
| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| National Funds |

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| Title |
| 3.11. Purchase of Services from Instructors for teaching at the Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training-MIEEK - Creation of Registers |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| <p>The Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training - MIEEK, of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth, offers high quality education and training programmes of a duration of two years, certified and accredited by the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in HE (CYQAA). The programmes of study cover growing sectors of the economy, aiming to meet the high demand in the labour market for modern occupations. Therefore, there is a great need for cooperation with specialized personnel in specific educational subjects</p> |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| <p>Specific objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The instruction in specific subjects 2) The offer of services according to the content and schedule of each programme of study. 3) The preparation of examination essays and their correction 4) The instructor is obliged to perform any other services related to the teaching of the subject. |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| <p>Main actions and activities: Processing the tender steps, which generally include the call for submissions, the bid submission, the selection process, the compilation of a register and the formation of the contract.</p> |

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| The validity and duration of the compiled register is generally for a three-year period. | |
| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
| Beneficiaries/target groups | |

Learners from all the pathways offered by the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training and especially MIEEK students

Responsible ministries/bodies

Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY)

Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)

ESF+ and National Funds

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| Title |
| 3.12. External evaluation of the Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training - MIEEK |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| <p>The evaluation of structures and programmes of study of the Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training - MIEEK is one of the most important procedures to ensure its effectiveness and modernization, given the conditions that apply today. For this reason, there is a need to conduct primary data research in order to determine the degree of quality of the structures and programmes of study offered by the Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training.</p> |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| <p>The purpose of this evaluation is, among others, the investigation of the contribution of the Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training to the employability of its graduates and its connection with the labour market. Also, the investigation of the degree of achievement of the objective above, which is to offer opportunities to citizens of Cyprus and especially to young people, to acquire, improve or upgrade their professional qualifications and skills, so that they become more qualified for employment and participation in the labour market. Moreover, the aim of the evaluation is to investigate the degree to which scientific, technical and professional knowledge and skills are provided, and at the same time the degree to which they are characterized by flexibility and adaptability to the rapidly occurring changes in employment, economy, professions and the content of professions.</p> <p>In addition, a partial objective of the evaluation is the analysis of the elements related to the compatibility of the work positions that the graduates have secured in the labour market with the programme of study they have attended, the type and form of the work they have found (work contract or project, full or part-time) and the opinions of all graduates regarding the usefulness of the programmes of study in terms of their career path.</p> |

Another objective of the research will be to assess the extent to which employers, who employ or have employed graduates, are satisfied with regard to the knowledge, skills and competences they possess or have possessed.

The evaluation should investigate the satisfaction of graduates and current students regarding the suitability and adequacy of the building infrastructure, their employability, the detailed curricula and their relation to the labour market, the pedagogical methods of the instructors, their competitiveness in the labour market, the effectiveness of the structures, and their development prospects.

The objectives of the evaluation will be to upgrade and standardize the process of collecting quality indicators at the School, with additional requirements as these will arise through the evaluation. The quality indicators used so far to measure the achievement of the objectives are: success in exams, dropout rate, employment rate, degree of satisfaction of students and graduates and degree of satisfaction of employers.

Additional objectives will be the evaluation of the academic development strategy, the teaching project and the instructors, the ways of developing the research project and researchers, the relations with social/cultural/productive bodies, local and international and administrative services and infrastructures. It is also expected that through this effort quantitative and qualitative tools will be created with the aim of collecting the relevant data and their further analysis, processing and interpretation.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

The Contractor, in the context of the implementation of the contract, should deliver the following deliverables:

- 1) Correlation study of study programmes with labour market needs and analysis of the degree of employment of graduates
- 2) Research on the adequacy of curricula and the course structure of each programme of study offered by the School
- 3) Study on the adequacy of the facilities/infrastructure offered in the School

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| <p>4) Research on the adequacy of curricula, their fees and the facilities offered in the faculties according to the students of the current academic year</p> <p>5) Research on the adequacy of teaching staff</p> <p>6) Research on the adequacy of teaching staff according to the students of the current academic year</p> <p>7) Final Report</p> | |
| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) |
| Scope (national, regional, local) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local |
| Beneficiaries/target groups |
| MIEEK students |
| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| ESF+ and National Funds |

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| Title |
| 3.13. Construction and Management of Alumni Interconnection Platform (Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training) |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| <p>The Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth, in the context of its upgrading and with the aim of connecting its programmes of study with the needs of the labour market, aims to develop an online platform, which will serve as a communication network between employers looking for technically trained staff (demand) and graduates of Secondary and Higher Technical and Vocational Education and Training, who are looking for a job (supply). Through the platform, employers will have the possibility, among others, to create their company profile, declare the sector in which they operate, save and modify information, search CVs and jobs by specialisation and by district, as well as communicate with prospective employees. VET graduates will have the possibility to create their personal profile with information such as their degree(s), qualifications, subject of interest, current employment status, income criteria and CV. Additionally, they will be able to update and/or modify their profile with new data, such as new work experience or education, new skills and any certificates they may acquire.</p> |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| <p>Specific objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) System analysis 2) Design Templates, Flow Charts, Database Diagram 3) Access to the Beta Platform for the purpose of testing it |

- 4) Control and corrections of errors / omissions in the operation of the system
- 5) Project delivery: Database, Source Code, Other related files needed for the system to work
- 6) System and database installation on production server (deploy files), Administrator credentials
- 7) Maintenance: the Contractor is expected to supervise and correct any problems and malfunctions of the platform throughout the duration of the contract.

Therefore, the platform will be an important site for searching for information that contributes to the professional orientation of each alumni.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

Main actions and activities: Tender notice, Tender assignment, Maintenance and Monitoring.

EU policy priorities addressed

Council Recommendation on VET

- A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges.
- B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET.
- C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand.
- D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills.
- E. VET promotes equality of opportunities.
- F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.

Osnabrück Declaration

- 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET.
- 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation.
- 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET.
- 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.

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| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) |
| Scope (national, regional, local) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local |
| Beneficiaries/target groups |
| Graduates from all the pathways offered by the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training |
| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| ESF+ and National Funds. |

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| Title | |
| 3.14. Purchase of books for the needs of the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training and the study programmes of the Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training | |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed | |
| Purchase of books to strengthen and enrich school libraries aiming at enhancing book borrowing from students. The students will use them to achieve their academic obligations. | |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan | |
| Provide educators and students with current scientific knowledge | |
| Connect educational materials with work experience | |
| Enhance educators' capacity for quality teaching and learning. | |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline | |
| Main actions and activities: Tender notice, Tender assignment, delivery of books. The validity and duration of the register is generally for a three-month period. | |
| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
| Beneficiaries/target groups | |
| Graduates from all pathways offered by the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training | |
| Responsible ministries/bodies | |
| Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) | |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) | |
| ESF+ and National Funds | |

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| Title |
| 3.15. Digital Portal for the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) is developing an integrated information technology system aiming at significant improvements in its operations and services. |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided, while reducing bureaucracy and operational and administrative costs. |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| <p>The new integrated information technology system includes various sub-systems such as electronic archive, accounting system, human resource system, internal portal as well as a digital platform, «Hermes», which, when fully implemented, will cover the operational needs and all services provided by the HRDA using modern information communication technologies (ICT).</p> <p>The system significantly enhances the utilisation of new information technologies by the organisation itself and at the same time contributes to the promotion of the use of ICT and digital skills, both by the HRDA's staff and its partners.</p> |

The digital portal «Hermes» (<https://ermis.anad.org.cy>) provides easy access with simple and user-friendly procedures, to all schemes and systems operated by the HRDA, guiding the user in the processing of registration as well as the submission of applications, their processing as well as the monitoring of their progress.

The new integrated information technology system is currently at its final stage of implementation.

As of July 2021, the digital portal «Hermes» provides the opportunity to the user to register as an entity (physical person, legal entity, consortium, government body) as well as to acquire the necessary roles (employer, trainer of vocational training, vocational training facility, vocational training centre and centres for assessment of vocational qualifications).

The electronic submission of applications for participation in the HRDA's schemes has gradually started as of January 2022, with the «Scheme for the employment and training of tertiary education graduates» and the «Scheme for the training of the long-term unemployed in enterprises/organisations». As of June 2022, the schemes for the Single-company training programmes in Cyprus and Abroad, are operated only through the digital portal «Hermes» and as of September 2022, the operation of the schemes for the Standard multi-company training programmes, the High-priority multi-company training programmes and the Continuing training programmes for trade union officials has also started through the portal for programmes which will be implemented from January 2023 onwards.

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| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
| Beneficiaries/target groups | |
| Persons in employment, including those at risk of unemployment, Unemployed and jobseekers, NEETs, Young people, Adult learners, Low-skilled/qualified persons, Trainers. | |
| Responsible ministries/bodies | |
| Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) | |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) | |
| National funds | |

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| Title |
| 3.16. Enhancing VET Teachers' Digital Competences |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| Enhancement of teachers' digital competences is considered critical for Cyprus. |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| <p>The Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI) of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) has introduced Digital Competences Development for Educators (DCDE). This aims to strengthen and further develop teachers' digital competences in order to promote the effective use and integration of digital technologies in the teaching and learning process.</p> <p>The intended outcomes of the programme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teachers should use online learning environments, electronic learning tools, open digital educational content and learning communities, in order to enhance their professional development and lifelong learning skills; • teachers should develop the necessary digital skills to become effective in providing innovative learning environments in the Cypriot education system, in order to support their learners in acquiring knowledge, while cultivating values and attitudes, and also developing the necessary horizontal skills essential for the 21st century. |

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

The programme is offered through a distance-learning approach and methodology, utilising CPI's e-learning environment. It consists of an introductory module and ten learning modules with content on thematic areas that have been defined through a process of diagnosing the needs of teachers but also following European and national directions.

The programme supports and contributes to the implementation of education policies of the MoESY, as well as the implementation of the policy for teachers' (including VET teachers') professional development.

2020 - Pilot phase

The ten learning modules were designed and developed in cooperation with the Open University of Cyprus, the European University and Frederick University during 2020.

Following the completion of the module development, the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI), in cooperation with the three universities, ran the pilot implementation of the DCDE programme from March to June 2021, with a small number of teachers (approximately 210 teachers, including VET teachers).

The CPI plans to implement the programme for the next four academic years, targeting more teachers at all levels.

2021 – Implementation phase

CPI (along with the three universities) implemented the phase 2 of the programme (December 2021 – May 2022), in which teachers from all levels could either join in as newcomers or continue their professional development with further learning modules. The CPI

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| plans to implement the programme for the next four academic school years, targeting more teachers at all levels (primary, secondary and VET teachers). | |
| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
| Beneficiaries/target groups | |

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| Teachers, School leaders |
| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI) Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| National Funds |

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| Title |
| 3.17. The 2021-27 CY Lifelong Learning Strategy |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| The lifelong learning strategy (especially for the years 2021-27) aims to assist national agencies and other bodies in Cyprus reaching the EU targets in relevant fields. It aims to face challenges such as the low participation of adults in lifelong learning, which remains below the EU average: only 6.7% of adults aged 25-64 have had a recent learning experience during the last four weeks, compared to the EU average of 11.1% in 2018. It is expected that the new lifelong learning strategy will improve efforts to upskill and reskill low-qualified and low-skilled adults and address the high percentage of unemployment among young people. The strategy is also expected to benefit other groups such as early leavers, NEETs and migrants/refugees. The implementation of a variety of learning opportunities is anticipated to enrich knowledge, skills and competences for personal development and economic well-being of the specified target groups |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| The development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the new lifelong learning strategy for 2021-27 will be carried out by the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) and will be internally coordinated by the European and International Affairs (EIA), Lifelong Learning and Adult Education Office (LLL & AE Office) of the Ministry. The work carried out by the MoESY will also |

be facilitated by external experts, following the successful Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP) introduced by the Ministry.

The policies and actions carried out within the new lifelong learning strategy will be monitored by the two national and the technical lifelong learning committees. Representatives from various stakeholders, including the Directorate General for Growth of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA), and social partners, will participate in the two committees.

Stage of development:

2019 - Design phase

Following a Decision by the Council of Ministers (no.86.672, dated 23 January 2019) the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the new lifelong learning strategy for 2021-27 has been transferred from the former Directorate General for European Programmes, Coordination and Development (now Directorate General for Growth, Ministry of Finance) to the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth. This effort will be coordinated by the European and International Affairs (EIA), Lifelong Learning and Adult Education Office (LLL & AE Office) of the MoESY and aims to respond better to the challenges related to the promotion of lifelong learning and adult education in the Republic of Cyprus.

2020 - Design phase

Since December 2020, the process has been coordinated by the European and International Affairs (EIA), Lifelong Learning and Adult Education Office (LLL & AE Office), following internal reorganisation of the MoESY. The work carried out by the MoESY is

facilitated by experts from the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), following a successful application submitted by the MoESY to the Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) of the European Commission.

A number of online study visits took place, during which examples of good practices on successful lifelong learning and adult education strategies from other EU Member States were presented. Many good practices and examples were identified and taken into account in drafting the lifelong learning strategy 2021-27: examples include issues of financing and budgeting, synergies and collaboration among stakeholders, incentives for adults to participate, outreach measures and guidance mechanisms and establishments to promote lifelong learning. Consultation with relevant stakeholders has taken place during the next phases of the process, such as following the first draft of the lifelong learning strategy 2021-27.

Desk research, including European best practices and stakeholder interviews, was carried out from October 2020 to February 2021, in order to produce a report on current lifelong learning provision in Cyprus. The findings were presented to stakeholders in an online workshop in February 2021. The workshop allowed consultation with stakeholders on the challenges to be addressed by the lifelong learning strategy 2021-27, fostered cooperation between them, led to an agreement on the key performance indicators (KPIs) and provided feedback for the next steps.

The 2021-27 CY Lifelong Learning Strategy was approved by the Council of Ministers on 30th September 2022.

| EU policy priorities addressed | |
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| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabruck Declaration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
| Beneficiaries/target groups | |
| Unemployed and jobseekers, Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs), Learners with migrant background, including refugees, Learners in risk of early leaving or/and early leavers, Low-skilled/qualified persons, Adult learners. | |
| Responsible ministries/bodies | |
| Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) | |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) | |
| TSI, national funds | |

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| Title |
| 3.18. Career Counselling Service (Youth Board of Cyprus) |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| The Youth Board of Cyprus has created its Career Counselling Service, responding to the needs of young people for expert guidance in their educational and professional life, and also their needs for subsequent guidance for young professionals. |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| To offer, via its four pillars of action, to young people of different ages and different needs, guidance and personal development opportunities. |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| <p>The four pillars of the service's actions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalised guidance from career counsellors and expertise career guidance. Each young person can arrange a personal appointment with a counsellor so that he/she can receive personalised counselling. Appointments are carried out at all youth information centres in all five districts in Cyprus; • Skill testing: this is an important tool that can lead young people to self-knowledge and guide them to the most appropriate choice of field of study and career direction. Lower and upper secondary education students (EQF/CyQF 2-4) can take the test for free and then have their results analysed by the counsellors. The tests, which are used by the Youth Board's career counsellors, are based on advanced psychometric methodologies and mathematical models with the aim of analysing the |

personality of an individual using an advanced expert system based on research work funded by the European Union and governmental bodies. The knowledge base supports decision-making related to vocational and career counselling, retrieving specialisations – professions that match with the personality of the individual –from a database of over 2 000 entries;

- Organising soft skills development and cultivation workshops for young people who are looking for a job and for those who are already working. The workshops are held nationwide at the youth information centres of the Youth Board of Cyprus. They focus on developing job market navigation skills (preparing a CV, preparing for a job interview, good job search practices) and giving young professionals the opportunity to develop the necessary skills that will help them in their professional development, ways of perceiving their career, self-esteem and self-knowledge, skills and abilities of the professional of the 21st century, etc.);
- Career academies: during the two-day 'career academies' organised by the Youth Board of Cyprus, participants are given the opportunity to attend lectures and participate in experiential workshops by leading speakers on topics such as career choice, job search, the development of a new professional, as well as more specialised topics such as financial programmes and professional skills development. At the same time, speeches are made by young professionals and entrepreneurs to motivate other young people in their future professional and entrepreneurial endeavours.

Stage of development:

2019 - Implementation phase

The Youth Board of Cyprus continues to offer career counselling services but more systematically under the four pillars described.

2020 - Implementation phase

The Youth Board of Cyprus continues to offer career counselling services under the four pillars described.

2021 - Implementation phase

The Youth Board of Cyprus continues to offer career counselling services under the four pillars described.

EU policy priorities addressed

Council Recommendation on VET

- A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges.
- B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET.
- C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand.
- D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills.
- E. VET promotes equality of opportunities.
- F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.

Osnabrück Declaration

- 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET.
- 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation.
- 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET.
- 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.

VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)

- initial VET (IVET)
- continuing VET (CVET)

Scope (national, regional, local)

- national
- regional
- local

Beneficiaries/target groups

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|---|
| Young people (15-29 years old), Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) |
| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Youth Board of Cyprus |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| National Funds |

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| Title |
| 3.19. System of Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| The direct comparison and reference of the Vocational Qualifications Standards (VQS) with other qualifications in the National Qualifications Framework (CyQF) as well as the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), since the SVQ is an integral part of the CyQF, which is linked to the EQF. |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| To provide the opportunity to persons for assessment and certification of their knowledge, reaching an appropriate competence level. |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| The SVQ is based on VQS developed by the HRDA with the assistance of Vocational Qualifications Technical Committees. The SVQ assesses in real or simulated working conditions the ability of a person to carry out specific tasks according to a VQS. At the same time, the SVQ sets out the framework for the design of training and development activities in order to prepare the candidates for a successful assessment, so as to obtain the certification of their vocational qualifications, as well as for the development of knowledge and skills required to perform the tasks of professions that correspond to VQS. |

The SVQ is an integral part of the National Qualifications Framework (CyQF), which is linked to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Aiming at the direct comparison and reference of the VQS with other qualifications in the CyQF as well as the EQF, the SVQ has adopted the level descriptors of the EQF.

Also, in the context of the System for the assessment and accreditation of training providers, persons who want to become Trainers of Vocational Training must successfully go through the assessment and certification procedure following the System of Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) and acquire the Trainer of Vocational Training Qualification (EQF/CyQF 5, SVQ Level 5).

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| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |

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| Scope (national, regional, local) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local |
| Beneficiaries/target groups |
| Trainers, unemployed and employed |
| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| European Structural and Investment Funds and National Funds. |

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| <p>Title</p> |
| <p>3.20. Framework for Teacher Professional Development</p> |
| <p>Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline</p> |
| <p>In 2015 a new framework for teachers' professional learning (TPL) was approved by the Council of Ministers. It includes VET teachers and sets principles for continuing professional development (CPD), which will be systematic, addressed to all teachers, and targeted to teacher and school needs. This decision also tasked the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI) with the professional training of teachers. CPI offers a variety of training programmes that are either compulsory for teachers (if provided for by the education laws and service plans) or are developed with reference to the particular needs of the schools. This new policy for the professional training of teachers was piloted in the school year 2015/16. Based on evaluation findings, the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) decided that all schools at all levels (pre-primary, primary, secondary general and secondary technical/VET) should implement a professional learning action plan.</p> <p>Schools had the teacher professional portal to use in the preparation and implementation of the professional development action plan. This offers supporting material (e.g. needs assessment specimens, list of actions), and suggestions for cooperating opportunities with the education ministry or other institutions and universities. An opportunity was given to several schools to follow voluntarily a more systematic procedure to implement the school professional learning plan, with annual support of facilitators from the CPI. During school years 2017/18 and 2018/19, two Technical and Vocational Schools of Education and Training participated in the CPI professional development support programme.</p> |

During the 2017/18 and 2018/19 school years, the CPI organised training activities, in cooperation with the Department of Secondary General Education and the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training (STVET), for two days, one in each semester.

During the school year 2017/18, more than 300 school-based seminars were offered for different types of school across Cyprus, while over 100 conferences and 100 afternoon workshops were organised, in cooperation with the departments of the MoESY. For 2018/19, more than 400 school-based seminars and more than 80 afternoon workshops were offered. The seminars were offered by CPI teaching staff or by invited speakers.

Stage of development:

2015 - Approved/agreed

2016 - Pilot phase

In January 2016, the CPI, in cooperation with the Department of Secondary General Education and the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training (STVET), organised two-day in-service training seminars. The teachers attending the seminars had the opportunity to choose training activities offered in their schools. In accordance with the new framework for teachers' professional learning, schools were supported to organise their teacher learning activities.

In 2016, an evaluation of the professional development support programme was carried out by EU experts and the Centre of Educational Research and Evaluation (CERE). At the same time every year the schools submit their professional learning reports to the teacher professional portal. The CPI facilitators also submit their annual report on the implementation of the TPL. Data on teachers' self-efficacy before and after TPL are also collected by the CPI.

2017 - Implementation phase

A 2017 ministerial decision introduced the preparation of the school professional learning plan as part of the school improvement plan.

2018 - Implementation phase

Continuing implementation

2019 - Implementation phase

In 2019/20, the number of VET schools, participating in this programme, increased to three.

2020 - Implementation phase

The Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI) continues to deliver and support the framework for teacher professional development for all school levels, as well as the professional development support programme (YEM). In the last two years, CPI offered the YEM programme to four Technical and Vocational Schools of Education and Training.

2021 - Implementation phase

The Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI) continues to deliver and support the framework for teacher professional development for all school levels, as well as the professional development support programme (YEM).

EU policy priorities addressed

Council Recommendation on VET

Osnabrück Declaration

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| <input type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
| Beneficiaries/target groups | |
| Teachers, School leaders | |
| Responsible ministries/bodies | |
| Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI) Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) | |

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| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| National Funds |

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| Title |
| 3.21. New VET Specializations in Secondary and Higher VET |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| To make Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, and Higher Vocational Education and Training, more attractive and relevant to labour market needs. |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| <p>In order to make Secondary Technical and Vocational Education (STVE) more attractive and relevant to labour market needs, new STVE fields of study and specialisations have been introduced as of the school year 2016/17. The new specialisations offered include natural gas transmission and distribution, renewable energy sources, digital technology and programming, and industrial design and product development. Relevant curricula contain the study fields that are included in the 2015-20 strategic plan and are compatible with the VET programme frameworks.</p> <p>Furthermore, following the Decision of the Council of Ministers dated 5 June 2019, more new STVE specialisations, such as cosmetology, ship mechanics, seamen, and viticulture - winery, were introduced in Secondary Technical and Vocational Education as of September 2019.</p> <p>In order to increase employer engagement, the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth has signed Memoranda of Cooperation with the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (June 2019), and the Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation (July 2019). The Memoranda include measures for the development of new or the review of existing VET specialisations, so that they are</p> |

aligned with changing labour market needs. They also include measures to aid industrial placement of VET students in enterprises. The implementation of the measures included in the Memoranda of Cooperation is in process. Liaison persons have been appointed to support and facilitate the implementation of the measures included in the Memoranda.

Regarding Higher VET, after consultation with the stakeholders participating in the Council of the Public School of Higher VET - MIEEK and taking into account the needs of the labour market, new programmes have been developed and accredited by the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education: Automotive Technician, Culinary Arts, Catering Services, and Industrial Technician.

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| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local |
| Beneficiaries/target groups |
| Learners in Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, and Learners of the Public School of Higher VET - MIEEK |
| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth (MoESY) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| ESF+ and National Funds |

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| Title |
| 3.22. Validation Arrangements |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| Validating non-formal and informal learning is possible for certain competence-based vocational qualifications. Non-formal and informal learning cannot yet be validated for the award of qualifications by VET schools. The government has agreed that VET qualifications, usually granted by labour market institutions or employment services, will have the same learning outcomes as those obtained through the formal system. Quality assurance measures linked to validation are in place and are being further developed. |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| The Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESCY) is currently coordinating the implementation of the project “Establishing a mechanism for the validation of non-formal and informal learning”. The project is jointly funded by the European Social Fund (ESF+) and the Republic of Cyprus. This project has supported a mapping study of the current situation in Cyprus regarding the validation of non-formal and informal learning. Based on this mapping study, an overall National action plan for the creation of mechanisms for the validation of non-formal and informal learning in Cyprus was developed in early 2018. The National action plan foresees setting up a validation mechanism and its pilot implementation. |
| Stage of development: |

2018 - Approved/agreed

After its development, the plan was put into public consultation and completed in May 2018. In October 2018, the Council of Ministers approved the plan.

2019 - Pilot phase

The first results from the pilot operation of the mechanism in Adult Education, Youth and Volunteering are estimated to be available at the end of 2020.

2020 - Pilot phase

Due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic there was a delay in the implementation of the project. Thus, the pilot phase was foreseen to begin in late 2021 and to continue in 2022.

2021 - Pilot phase

The contractor designed the tools of the pilot phase of the implementation of the mechanism for the validation of non-formal and informal learning in the three sectors (adult education, youth and volunteerism).

Due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic there was a delay in the implementation of the project. Thus, the pilot phase is foreseen to begin in late 2022 and to continue in 2023.

EU policy priorities addressed

| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
| Beneficiaries/target groups | |
| Young people (15-29 years old), Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers, Adult learners. | |
| Responsible ministries/bodies | |
| Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth (MoESY) | |

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| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| ESF+, National Funds |

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| Title |
| 3.23. Permeability and Flexibility of VET Programmes |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| To ease access to formal Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education programmes/qualifications and to Higher Vocational Education and Training programmes/qualifications within the framework of the public System of VET. |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| The 2015-20 Strategic Plan for the System of Technical and Vocational Education and Training, renewed for the period 2022-2027, provides for all Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) and Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) curricula under the remit of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth to be modularised and to use ECVET points to improve permeability. Modularisation and ECVET, along with recognition of prior learning, are expected to ease the access of people who completed the Apprenticeship System and the Lifelong Learning Programmes of VET to formal upper secondary technical and vocational qualifications (offered by the Evening Schools of Technical and Vocational Education, which operate as second chance schools). The Lifelong Learning Programmes of VET provide technical skills and competences to people of all ages, to satisfy the need for updated knowledge and reskilling/upskilling. The framework applies to new VET specialisations and VET curricula developed after the approval of the 2015 Strategic Plan for VET. |

In April 2017, the programmes offered by the Post-Secondary Institutes of Vocational Education and Training acquired a Higher VET status, as they were accredited by the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education as a Public School of Higher VET. This contributes greatly towards the aim of further strengthening Vocational Education and Training in Cyprus. The Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training offers accredited programmes (CyQF level 5B, EQF level 5, ISCED level 5), leading to the acquisition of a two-year Diploma of Higher VET, which can also be recognised by universities. Upgrading these Institutes, therefore, provides new opportunities for enhancing academic cooperation with other Higher Education Institutions both in Cyprus and abroad in the area of Higher VET.

EU policy priorities addressed

Council Recommendation on VET

- A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges.
- B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET.
- C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand.
- D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills.
- E. VET promotes equality of opportunities.
- F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.

Osnabrück Declaration

- 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET.
- 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation.
- 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET.
- 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.

VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)

- initial VET (IVET)
- continuing VET (CVET)

| |
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| Scope (national, regional, local) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local |
| Beneficiaries/target groups |
| Learners in Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, Apprentices, Adult Learners, Higher VET Students |
| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| National Funds and ESF+. |

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| Title |
| 3.24. VET Employers matching platform |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| To facilitate communication between VET graduates and potential employers. |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| <p>One of the measures included in the 2015-20 Strategic Plan for the System of Technical and Vocational Education and Training, which has been renewed for the period 2022-2027 was the setting up of a national monitoring system of initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) and continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) graduates, which will inform the upgrading of the VET system. The Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training (STVET) purchased services for the design and development of the platform. The platform has become operational as of April 2019. It is called Communication Network with Employers for Technical Occupations and aims to facilitate the communication between VET graduates and potential employers. With the assistance of this tool, graduates are more easily integrated into the labour market and employers are assisted to fill vacancies with technically qualified persons. The procedure is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • graduates of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, and of the Public School of Higher VET – MIEEK, can create their personal online profile. To be able to register on the platform, graduates must contact the administration office of the school that they have graduated from and get a registration code; |

- employers have the opportunity to create a corporate profile for their company provided that their information is validated by the platform administrator;
- through their personal profile, VET graduates can upload information regarding their qualifications, knowledge and skills and their area of interest, creating an online resume. They can also search for employment opportunities, communicate with other network members and have access to the platform announcement board;
- employers indicate the available job positions in their company and the qualifications required in order to recruit technically qualified persons. They may also search, based on pre-set criteria, for available, qualified graduates.

The use of the platform by graduates offers them better employment opportunities. This initiative is funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

The number of graduates who have registered is about 200 and is expected to increase further. Currently, only graduates of the Public School of Higher VET have registered on the platform. The Department of STVET is in the process of upgrading the platform in order to include graduates of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education. The upgrading of the platform will also include the possibility for extraction of various statistical data regarding employment or further studies of graduates per specialisation.

The number of enterprises registered on the platform has reached 52.

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| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. |

| | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
| Beneficiaries/target groups | |
| Graduates of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, and of the Public School of Higher VET | |
| Responsible ministries/bodies | |
| Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) | |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) | |
| Erasmus+ Programme | |

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| Title |
| 3.25. Identification of Employment and Training Needs |
| Rationale/background, challenges addressed |
| <p>The HRDA systematically monitors developments in the labour market, providing forecasts and estimates of employment and training needs. On a regular basis, every 2-3 years, the HRDA provides ten-year forecasts of employment needs in economic sectors and occupations covering the whole spectrum of the Cyprus labour market. Additionally, the HRDA annually conducts a study on identification of employment and training needs, which identifies the specialisations and skills required in the Cyprus economy. It should be also noted that two other studies were conducted regarding the identification of green and blue skill needs in the Cyprus economy. Based on the findings, suggestions are put forward to implement the corresponding activities of the HRDA, aiming to cover the needs and alleviate the problems of the labour market.</p> |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| <p>The HRDA studies on employment forecasts are an important tool for planning HRDA's activities. Based on these research studies and following consultations with stakeholders, the HRDA prepares documents every two years that contain the themes for the continuing training programmes it subsidises. The findings of the research studies are also considered by the HRDA in selecting the standards of vocational qualifications that are being developed.</p> <p>Also, the results of the HRDA's studies on anticipation of skill needs are utilised by policy makers for the development of strategies and policies in education, training and lifelong learning. They are also used at operational level for the development of programmes</p> |

of study in education, including the study programmes of technical schools and the post-secondary institutes of vocational education and training of the education ministry. Additionally, they are used by people involved in counselling, such as secondary education vocational guidance teachers and employment counsellors and by the public. For this purpose, all research studies are disseminated upon completion to a wide audience of prominent stakeholders. Special presentations are organised for secondary school guidance counsellors and employment counsellors, students and parents.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) provides:

- 10-year employment forecasts every two to three years. In October 2017 forecasts of employment needs were made available by HRDA for the period 2017-27. The forecast covers 309 occupations in 52 economic sectors in Cyprus (HRDA, 2017) and will be used to plan and implement education and training activities. Although the employment forecasts for the period 2020-30 were almost finalised and ready to be published, due to the drastic changes and effects on the economy and the labour market from the Covid-19 pandemic, it was decided to revise the forecasts. Therefore, the study is expected to be completed in December 2022 and will cover the period 2022-32.
- an annual study on the identification of employment and training needs. This study provides estimates for the number of persons required for specific occupations and the needs for specific skills. Based on these estimates, suggestions are put forward for the implementation of training programmes. In the study, the views of social partners, other stakeholders and enterprises are collected and analysed. The study for 2022 was published in April 2022.

Furthermore, the HRDA has conducted the following two specialised studies:

- Identification of blue skills in the Cyprus economy (HRDA, 2016).

This study examines and analyses the blue economy and blue occupations, maps out the blue economy of Cyprus and identifies blue skill needs in the Cyprus economy for the period 2016-26. It provides forecasts for employment demand in economic sectors and occupations which are part of the blue economy. The identification of skills focuses on maritime, shipping, fishing and maritime and coastal tourism occupations. The study leads to suggestions aiming for the timely and planned satisfaction of Cyprus’s blue economy needs in the areas of employment and human resource development, education and training.

- Identification of green skill needs in the Cyprus economy (HRDA, 2018).

This study examines and analyses the green economy and green occupations, mapping out the green economy of Cyprus and identifying green skill needs in the Cyprus economy for the period 2017-27. The green economy in Cyprus consists of 30 economic sectors and 60 occupations from the whole spectrum of the Cyprus labour market. The study leads to specific suggestions aiming for the timely and planned response to the future situation in the labour market resulting from the transition to a green economy. The suggestions concern employment and human resource development, education and training.

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| EU policy priorities addressed | |
| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |

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| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) |
| Scope (national, regional, local) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local |
| Beneficiaries/target groups |
| Guidance practitioners, VET providers (all kinds), Teachers, Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices, Young people (15-29 years old), Adult learners |
| Responsible ministries/bodies |
| Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) |
| National funds. |

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| Title |
| 3.26. Increasing the duration of work-based learning in school-based VET |
| Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan |
| Increase links with the labour market and employer engagement |
| Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline |
| <p>In December 2015, after consultation with employer organisations (the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation), the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth decided to increase the work-based learning component (industrial placements) of Secondary Technical Vocational Education (STVE) programmes. Further increasing cooperation between Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and industry, enabling access to suitable modern technical equipment, educational material and infrastructure through practical training in industry, is one of the main measures included in the Strategic Plan for Technical and Vocational Education and Training 2015-2022, renewed for the period 2022-2027. Implementation of the decision started during the school year 2016/17. The practical training of STVE students in enterprises has increased and the work-based learning component is offered during the summer.</p> <p>More specifically, students of the theoretical direction are placed in industry for work experience for two (2) weeks per year in Year 1 and Year 2 of their programme (4 weeks in total). Students of the practical direction are placed in industry for their practical</p> |

training for four (4) weeks per year in Year 1 and Year 2 (eight weeks in total). Students attending hotel and catering courses are placed in hotels for three (3) weeks in June, July and August at the end of Year 1. In Year 2, they are placed in hotels for eighteen (18) consecutive weeks between the first week of June and the last week of September. This means that their practical training in hotels accounts for 25 % of their school year.

In order to further increase links with the labour market and employer engagement, the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) signed Memoranda of Cooperation with employers' organisations: the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry in June 2019, and the Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation in July 2019. These Memoranda include measures to support the industrial placement of Upper Secondary and Higher VET learners in enterprises. Liaison persons have been appointed in order to support and facilitate the implementation of the measures included in the Memoranda.

| EU policy priorities addressed | |
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| Council Recommendation on VET | Osnabrück Declaration |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET. |

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. | |
| VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET) | |
| Scope (national, regional, local) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local | |
| Beneficiaries/target groups | |
| Learners in Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education | |
| Responsible ministries/bodies | |
| Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY) | |
| Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral) | |
| ESF+ and National Funds | |

4. Governance of the implementation of the plan

The Cyprus National Implementation Plan for the integrated monitoring of the Council Recommendation on VET and the Osnabruck Declaration will be managed under governance arrangements that will ensure accountability, appropriate coordination and integration with all relevant stakeholders. The establishment of a governance structure is of outmost importance and it should combine national and/or local intergovernmental mechanisms and non-governmental involvement, with the overall aim of creating effective vertical and horizontal institutional mechanisms. In the case of the Cyprus NIP, the implementing and governing authority is the Cyprus Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth, through the Permanent Secretary operating via the Director of the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training. The Ministry's staff has vast experience in administering and managing previous reform efforts and projects of similar importance or scope. Groups of professionals will be formed and cooperate under the supervision of highly qualified administrators as outlined below in more detail.

The most important governance arrangements that need to take place are the following:

- Steering Committee and Project Manager
- The establishment of a NIP Coordination Committee for policy directions and monitoring the implementation of the Cyprus National Implementation Plan.
- Meaningful stakeholder engagement, especially with regard to data collection, policy suggestions and recommendations and implementation of the NIP agreed measures.
- Governance Meetings and Coordination.

(a) *Steering Committee (members to be determined) and Project Manager.* The project manager is the Director of the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training, who also participates in the DGVT Meetings, representing the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth.

(a) NIP Coordination Committee: The overarching goal of the committee is to monitor the general progress of the NIP as well as all the outcomes. Given its scope, the governance structure includes or will include both governmental and non-governmental entities. The NIP coordination committee will be comprised of all the interested parties both within or outside the government. The governmental members of this NIP coordination committee should include the Director of the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training (Project Owner and serving as the Head of the NIP coordination committee), the Project Manager, representatives from the MoESY (Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training, and the Director General of the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance) who also participates in the DGVT Meetings and is the National Representative, representing the Cyprus Government in the Management Board of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop). The HRDA has also the role of the National Coordinator of the European Network of Expertise on VET (Refernet) in Cyprus. Non-governmental members include representatives from various labour market groups and organizations.

(c) Stakeholder engagement: Stakeholders have important roles to fulfill, such as defining needs, presenting expectations and communicating changing business and social conditions. The MoESY, via its Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training, has already proceeded in identifying important stakeholders and reaching agreements with them with regard to actions included in the National Implementation Plan. Two indicative examples are the Memoranda of Cooperation signed between the MoESY and the two national Employers' Associations: the Cyprus Employers & Industrialists Federation (OEB) and the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KEBE).

(d) Governance meetings and coordination: Meetings consist a very important tool for communication and coordination among all involved parties. Meetings will be held at different management levels and deal with various components of the NIP. It is expected that implementation review meetings of the NIP committee will be held approximately every six months with the clear goal of

presenting, discussing and if necessary adjusting the strategic vision, agendas and courses of action. Monthly operating meetings will be held between the Project Owner, the Project Manager and selected members of the involved parties.

5. Expected results of the plan

(a) It is expected that the effective and efficient implementation of the Cyprus National Implementation Plan will help in achieving certain objectives set forth and have overall positive effects both in the field of vocational education and training and in society-economy in general. The targeted key outcomes are the following:

- *Improve educators' competences in delivering technical and vocational education and training:* Cyprus enjoys a large number of well qualified educators in the fields of vocational education and training. All educators teaching in all programmes of study falling under the umbrella of the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training have the necessary teaching qualifications and most of them have undergone extensive training both in their academic field and in pedagogy. However, given the technological advances and the ever continuing social and economic conditions, the need for targeted and specialized professional training for educators will continue to be a priority for the time period covered by the Cyprus NIP. It is expected that educators' capacity to deliver quality education to students of all ages will be improved significantly due to the collective benefits rising from the implementation of the measures included in the NIP.

- *Improve infrastructure of vocational education and training schools:* Quality teaching and quality education cannot take place unless schools, teaching rooms, laboratories and general facilities are conducive to an enjoyable and highly productive learning experience. It is expected that through the implementation of the NIP measures, the schools' capacity to provide educators and students with an appropriate teaching and learning environment will be greatly enhanced, through the purchase and / or upgrading of necessary equipment and educational materials.

- *Addressing skills mismatch between what students learn and what labour market needs:* The existing gap between what students learn during the vocational education and training and what labour market needs is well documented. One of the key expected outcomes of the Cyprus NIP implementation is to significantly close or even eradicate this gap by 2030. The skills mismatch is not evenly observed in all academic fields and the need to address it is greater in certain areas than others. Professional training,

upgrading educational equipment and curricula and working closely with labour market experts will contribute to closing the currently observed skills mismatch.

- *Increase the proportion of students enrolled in vocational education and training:* Cyprus has one of the lowest proportions of students enrolled in Technical and Vocational Education and Training programmes in Europe. In fact, this proportion is well below the European average. It is expected that the successful implementation of the Cyprus NIP will enhance the attractiveness of Vocational Education and Training among young and adult learners. The goal is to increase the rate of secondary education students' participation in VET and close the gap between current rate of participation in Cyprus and current European average rate over the next 8 years with approximate targets of 25% participation rate by the end of 2026 and 30% participation rate by the end of 2030.

- *Create and develop quality, inclusive and flexible VET system for all:* **Quality** means equip young people and adults with all necessary knowledge skills and competences in order to be able to thrive in the ever changing labour market.

Inclusive means addressing the gender balance and provide equal opportunities for learning to all. **Flexible** means adapting to changing labour market conditions and be able to adapt accordingly.

- *Establish a lifelong learning culture* by providing learning opportunities to adults in order to either improve their skillset or acquire new skills that are relevant and in demand from the labour market. This entails the introduction of new programmes of studies and / or improving and altering current programmes of study that do not meet today's requirements.

Beyond the key educational outcomes outlined above, it is expected that the successful implementation of the Cyprus NIP will prove to be beneficial from a social and / or economical perspective. A better VET system will have positive spillover effects on how people live, earn and make educated choices in society.

(b) *Risk Identification and Risk Management*: The successful implementation of the Cyprus NIP cannot be guaranteed without special attention paid to potential risks that could derail the course and the results of the NIP. Risk analysis is important from the outset in order to identify potential threats to the NIP's implementation, evaluate (if possible) all of the consequences and try to plan mitigation measures. As with any other plan of similar scale and scope, it is important to identify as many unexpected events, threats that might disrupt or discontinue the NIP's processes and resources, prioritize the risks, link the possibility of each risk with its impact, develop a potential response to all risks and come up with a contingency plan (if possible). The idea is to try to have a proactive management approach rather than a reactive one.

The most important risks for the implementation of the Cyprus NIP are the following:

- *Communication Risk*: Effective and timely communication is critical. Effective communication channels must be put in place given the number of interested parties and stakeholders involved in this plan.
- *Scope Risk*: Many measures outlined above are rather large in scope because we are trying to bring on as big of an impact as possible. This poses a potential threat in effectively planning and managing all available resources in a certain timeline. This risk is very important given that measures are taken by different people, teams and/ or organizations.
- *Labour Market Risk*: There is a risk in terms of actually meeting labour market needs if there is a great time gap between the stage of action design and the stage of action implementation. Designing a measure takes into consideration the current needs and the current labour market context. If the implementation is significantly delayed, then there is the risk of delivering an action that should have been implemented years ago.

- *External Hazards Risk:* Each project may be subject to adverse events beyond the control of NIP management. By employing adequate monitoring measures, we may be able to minimize the impact of such events.

Internal Hazards Risks: The successful implementation of the Cyprus NIP is largely dependent on the governmental willingness to sustain and promote the public VET System in Cyprus. The ideal scenario is to have a stable and positive governmental stance towards VET regardless of the composition of the government. The Cyprus NIP will run for a period of eight years and, during this period, the government will change twice; therefore, there is a risk of uncertainty if different governments adopt different positions towards VET. The governments' political will during this eight-year period is of critical importance. Proactive measures should be taken in order to preserve governmental support towards VET throughout the implementation phase of the Cyprus NIP.

Annex 2 – National level reforms and actions defined in the VET Recommendation and the Osnabrück Declaration

| VET Recommendation priorities | Detailed VET recommendation priorities | Osnabrück Declaration objectives | Specific national level actions by 2025 |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>A. Vocational education and training is agile in adapting to labour market changes</p> | <p>A.1 VET programmes that offer a balanced mix of vocational and technical skills well aligned to all economic cycles, evolving jobs and working methods and key competences, including solid basic skills, digital, transversal, green and other life skills which provide strong foundations for resilience, lifelong learning, lifelong employability, social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development;</p> <p>A.2 VET curricula, programme offers and qualifications which are regularly updated, building on skills intelligence (i.e. graduate tracking systems, skills anticipation mechanisms, including at sectoral and regional levels);</p> <p>A.3 an appropriate degree of autonomy of VET providers, flexibility, support and funding to adapt their training offer to changing skills needs, green and digital transitions and economic cycles;</p> <p>A.4 VET programmes at all levels which comprise work-based learning components that are further expanded also in continuing vocational education</p> | <p>1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET</p> <p>4. European Education and Training Area and international VET</p> | <p>1.1. Explore the possibility of setting up a network of voluntary experts and executives, retired or on sabbatical, to support their peers in the fields of VET and apprenticeships as part of the EAfA</p> <p>1.3 Reinforce work-based learning and apprenticeships by implementing the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships and making use of the on-demand support services, and policy learning initiatives. Strengthen the use of quality and inclusive apprenticeships as a tool to support school/training-to-work transitions of vulnerable groups and to improve citizens' qualification levels.</p> <p>1.5. Develop national and regional skills intelligence systems including skills anticipation and graduate tracking; enable social partners, decision-makers, stakeholders and providers to adapt and update VET programmes, curricula and guidelines in a timely and effective manner</p> <p>4.4. Promote intercultural knowledge, skills and competences as part of qualification and curricula requirements in VET qualifications in line with the Key Competence Framework</p> |

| VET Recommendation priorities | Detailed VET recommendation priorities | Osnabrück Declaration objectives | Specific national level actions by 2025 |
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| | and training, and complemented by appropriate support and measures to stabilise the offer of apprenticeships and to address specific challenges of small companies to create work-based learning opportunities in different sectors of the economy. | | |
| B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of vocational education and training | <p>B.1 Learner centred VET programmes that offer access to face-to-face and digital or blended learning, flexible and modular pathways based on the recognition of the outcomes of non-formal and informal learning and open up career and learning progression; continuing vocational training programmes designed to be adaptable to labour market, sectoral or individual up- or reskilling needs; and</p> <p>B.2 VET programmes which are based on modules or units of learning outcomes and validation mechanisms allowing the transfer, recognition and accumulation of individuals' learning outcomes with a view to gaining a qualification, a partial qualification, as relevant in the national context.</p> | 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of C-VET and digitalisation | 2.1. Develop national skills strategies for quality and inclusive lifelong learning with all relevant national, regional, sectoral stakeholders and social partners. Besides education and training provision, the national skills strategies may include guidance, incentives for improved skills provision by employers, increased participation by employees, validation of prior learning and targeted public approaches for reaching out to inactive and unemployed individuals, NEETs or individuals at risk of unemployment |
| C. Vocational education and training is a driver for innovation and | C.1 Integration of VET into economic, industrial and innovation strategies, including those linked to recovery, green and digital transitions; expansion of the | 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, | 1.4. Support Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) and improve permeability between vocational and academic pathways, including work-based learning and enhanced cooperation between VET, HE and |

| VET Recommendation priorities | Detailed VET recommendation priorities | Osnabrück Declaration objectives | Specific national level actions by 2025 |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>growth and prepares for the digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand</p> | <p>training offer fostering the acquisition of entrepreneurial, digital and green skills;</p> <p>C.2 establishment of Centres of Vocational Excellence, which act as catalysts for local business investment, supporting recovery, green and digital transitions, European and regional innovation and smart specialisation strategies, development of vocational education and training, including at higher qualification levels (EQF levels 5-8), in line with national context and provide innovative services such as clusters and business incubators for start-ups and technology innovation for SMEs, as well as innovative reskilling solutions for workers at risk of redundancy; and</p> <p>C.3 access to state-of-the-art infrastructure, digitalisation strategies in line with national context and environmental and social sustainability in VET programmes and organisational management, thus contributing to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.</p> | <p>inclusive and flexible VET</p> <p>3. Sustainability – a green link in VET</p> | <p>research centres, thus establishing quality and effective VET and apprenticeship programmes at EQF level 5 and above</p> <p>3.1. Create incentives for greening VET programmes, including education and training in green technologies and innovation, in energy efficiency, circular economy, environmental awareness, sustainable use of learning and training material, digitalisation to reduce climate effects</p> <p>3.2. Define labour-market-relevant skills for the green transition that are to be incorporated in curricula and VET provision, including basic skills across all sectors and occupations and sector-specific skills in cooperation with the social partners</p> <p>3.3. Define and support opportunities to enable teaching and training staff, managing teams in VET providers and trainers and mentors in companies to act as multipliers and mediators, in view of increasing digitalisation and sustainability within the provision and management of training programmes</p> |
| <p>D. Vocational education and training is an</p> | <p>D.1. Permeability between both initial and continuing vocational education and</p> | <p>1. Resilience and excellence through quality,</p> | <p>1.2. Support the development of digital infrastructure for learning and teaching purposes in VET, including artificial intelligence and AR/VR technologies, and</p> |

| VET Recommendation priorities | Detailed VET recommendation priorities | Osnabrück Declaration objectives | Specific national level actions by 2025 |
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| attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills | <p>training, general education and higher education;</p> <p>D.2 development of VET at EQF levels 5 to 8;</p> <p>D.3 delivery based on a mix of open, digital and participative learning environments, including learning conducive workplaces supported by state-of-the-art and accessible infrastructure, equipment and technology, and accompanied by versatile pedagogies and tools (e.g. ICT based simulators, virtual and augmented reality);</p> <p>D.4 initial and continuing professional development of VET teachers and trainers to foster technical and digital skills and effective innovative training methods, including teaching in virtual environment, in line with state of the art vocational and digital pedagogy, work with digital learning tools, and in diverse and multicultural environments;</p> <p>D.5 internationalisation strategies supporting a strategic approach to international cooperation in VET;</p> | <p>inclusive and flexible VET</p> <p>2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of C-VET and digitalisation</p> <p>4. European Education and Training Area and international VET</p> | <p>develop suitable institutional teaching and training arrangements underpinned by adequate infrastructure, especially in remote and rural areas thus ensuring social inclusion</p> <p>2.2. Develop targeted information measures on the benefits of CVET and ensure user-friendly access to information on IVET and CVET offers at national and regional levels addressing gender and other stereotypes for an equal, fair and diverse society</p> <p>2.5. Support VET teachers, trainers, guidance counsellors, adult educators and mentors by equipping them with the adequate skills and tools for and through digital technologies; in particular through systematic approaches to, and opportunities for, initial and continuous professional development in both school and work-based settings, as well as distance education and training, enabling them to progress in their careers</p> <p>4.1. Support and facilitate the mobility of VET and adult learners, including apprentices, for example by developing support structures and providing information on opportunities in host countries</p> <p>4.2. Increase the rate of mobility of VET learners as well as teachers and trainers, while strengthening measures to ensure the quality and recognition of learning outcomes, as well as adequate support structures. Foster longer periods of mobility for VET</p> |

| VET Recommendation priorities | Detailed VET recommendation priorities | Osnabrück Declaration objectives | Specific national level actions by 2025 |
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| | <p>D.6 Opportunities for learning mobility of vocational learners and staff, including virtual mobility, long-duration mobility and mobility to Partner Countries are in place, facilitated by the use and recognition of units of learning outcomes and of relevant European tools (Memorandum of Understanding and the Learning Agreement); and</p> <p>D.7 high quality lifelong learning and career guidance services, making full use of Europass and other digital services.</p> | | <p>learners abroad and ensure that apprentice work placements are in line with the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships , taking into account national regulations and collective agreements, including health and safety provisions</p> <p>4.3. Develop VET internationalisation strategies, mobilising partnerships and including commitments for concrete and targeted actions, with all relevant stakeholders in accordance with national or regional regulations</p> <p>4.5 Cooperate with other EU countries in preparing national teams for international competitions such as WorldSkills and EuroSkills</p> |
| <p>E. Vocational education and training promotes equality of opportunities</p> | <p>E.1 inclusive and accessible programmes for vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities, low-qualified/skilled persons, minorities, people with migrant background and people with fewer opportunities because of their geographical location and/or their social-economically disadvantaged situation; targeted measures and flexible training formats prevent early leaving from education and training and support the school-to-work transition;</p> <p>E.2. programmes accessible through digital learning platforms, supported by tools, devices and internet connection,</p> | <p>1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET</p> <p>2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of C-VET and digitalisation</p> | <p>1.2. Support the development of digital infrastructure for learning and teaching purposes in VET including artificial intelligence and AR/VR technologies and develop suitable institutional teaching and training arrangements underpinned by adequate infrastructure, especially in remote and rural areas thus ensuring social inclusion</p> <p>2.2. Develop targeted information measures on the benefits of CVET and ensure user-friendly access to information on IVET and CVET offers at national and regional levels addressing gender and other stereotypes for an equal, fair and diverse society</p> |

| VET Recommendation priorities | Detailed VET recommendation priorities | Osnabrück Declaration objectives | Specific national level actions by 2025 |
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| | <p>in particular for vulnerable groups and people in rural or remote areas; and</p> <p>E.3 targeted measures promoting gender balance in traditionally “male” or “female” professions and address gender related and other types of stereotypes together.</p> | | |
| <p>F. Vocational education and training is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance</p> | <p>F.1 further development of national quality assurance systems, for both initial and continuing VET, in all learning environments (such as school-based provision and work-based learning, including apprenticeship schemes) and all learning types (digital, face-to-face or blended), delivered by both public and private providers, underpinned by a set of indicative descriptors and common reference indicators for quality assurance in vocational education and training applied both at system and provider level as defined in Annex II of the Council Recommendation on VET.</p> <p>F.2 Quality Assurance National Reference Point for VET to: take concrete initiatives to implement and further develop the EQAVET Framework, inform and mobilise a wide range of stakeholders, including Centres of Vocational Excellence, to contribute</p> | | |

| VET Recommendation priorities | Detailed VET recommendation priorities | Osnabrück Declaration objectives | Specific national level actions by 2025 |
|---|--|--|---|
| | <p>to implementing the EQAVET framework, support self-evaluation as a complementary and effective means of quality assurance to allow the measurement of success and the identification of areas for improvement, including with respect to digital readiness of VET systems and institutions, participate actively in the European network for quality assurance in vocational education and training, provide an updated description of the national quality assurance arrangements based on the EQAVET Framework, engage in EU level peer reviews of quality assurance to enhance the transparency and consistency of quality assurance arrangements, and to reinforce trust between the Member States;</p> | | |
| <p>Making best use of the European transparency tools</p> | | <p>2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of C-VET and digitalisation</p> | <p>2.3. Work with respective stakeholders to develop digital learning solutions supporting access to CVET opportunities and the awarding of CVET credentials and certificates, thereby opening the possibility to obtain full qualifications without neglecting on-the-job CVET and the positive effects of learning conducive work environments</p> <p>2.4. Support linking national VET platforms or databases to the Europass in accordance with the</p> |

| VET Recommendation priorities | Detailed VET recommendation priorities | Osnabrück Declaration objectives | Specific national level actions by 2025 |
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| | | | Europass decision and the EQF Recommendation where appropriate |
| Sustainable partnerships at national, regional and sectoral level, involving all relevant stakeholders | | | |
| | Best use of European Union funds and instruments such as the Next Generation EU (Recovery and Resilience Facility, REACT-EU), European Social Fund+, SURE, the European Regional Development Fund, InvestEU, Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, Interreg, Digital Europe, the Just Transition Mechanism and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, and the Modernisation Fund | | |