

Erasmus+ Project

VET3D

3D LEARNING DIMENSIONS IN VOCATIONAL

EDUCATION

NATIONAL REPORTS on the Key competences and soft skills model in Vocational Education and Training for VET students
Findings from Latvia

I. Country's Profile

Description of the countries profile:

Republic of Latvia (Latvian: Latvijas Republika), is a country in the Baltic region of Northern Europe. It is one of the Baltic states; and is bordered by Estonia to the north, Lithuania to the south, Russia to the east, Belarus to the southeast, and shares a maritime border with Sweden to the west. Latvia covers an area of 64,589 km² (24,938 sq mi), with a population of 1.9 million. Its capital and largest city is Riga. Latvians belong to the ethno-linguistic group of the Balts; and speak Latvian, one of the only two surviving Baltic languages.



Flag:

Territory:

Latvia covers an area of 64,589 km² (24,938 sq mi), with a population of 1.9 million.



Official state language: Latvian

II. VET situation in Latvia in numbers

VET situation in country is affected by external factors such as 1) demographics and 2) economy and labour market indicators and 3) employment policies relevant to VET.

The population has decreased in the past two decades due to a negative natural increase and emigration of people in search of employment abroad. While the share of people of pensionable

age slightly increased from 21.1% in 2010 to 22.5% at the beginning of 2018, the working age population has decreased from 64.7% to 61.7%. At the same period the share of the population under working age has slightly increased – (from 14.2% to 15.8%). However, according to Eurostat forecasts, due to aging of population, the old-age-dependency ratio is expected to increase from 29.5% in 2015 to 65.7%

Demographic changes have an impact on vocational education and have led to rearrangement of vocational education institutions network: the number of State-governed vocational education schools has reduced from 58 in 2010 to 21 in 2018. To increase the quality and efficiency of vocational education, many small providers were merged into regional vocational education competence centres offering a wide range of qualifications and other services. Several providers were merged by the local governments in integrated general and vocational education institutions. During the economic crisis GDP decreased by 25%. Since end-2009, growth has resumed. From 2011 to 2013, the economy expanded rapidly – on average by 4.4% per year. It was among the fastest growths in the EU. Due to an unfavourable external market environment (low demand in some trading partner countries), GDP growth in 2014-16 was slower, but in 2017 again reached 4.5%. Along with the improvement of the economic situation, positive trends can be also observed in the labour market – decreasing unemployment and growing employment rate. However, the increase has slowed down because economic growth is primarily based on productivity increase, but less on increase in the number of employees (Ministry of Economics, 2018c).

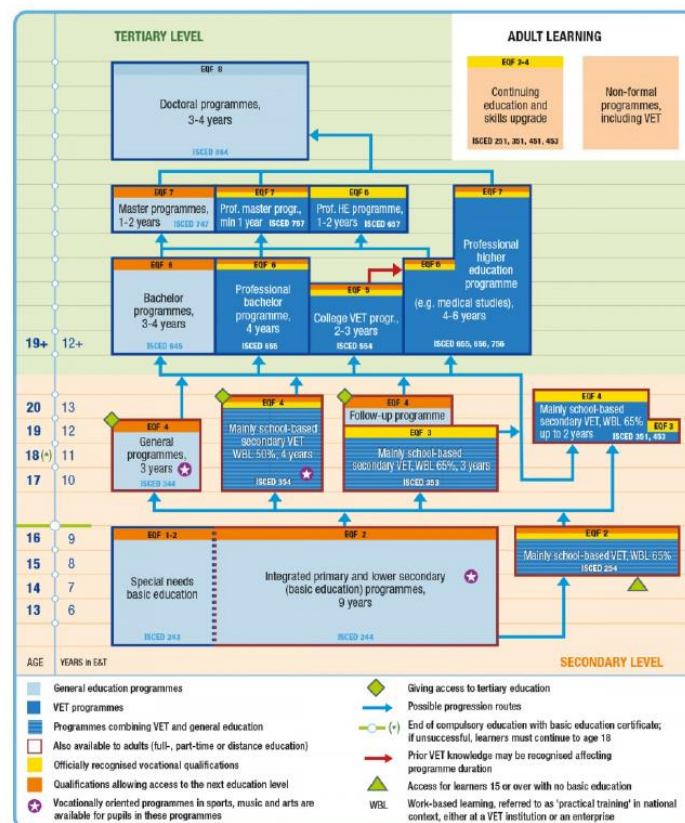
The unemployment rate depends on educational attainment. The gap has increased during the crisis as unskilled workers are more vulnerable to the unemployment. In 2017, the unemployment rate of people with low- (ISCED levels 1 and 2) and medium-level qualifications (ISCED levels 3 and 4) was still higher than in the pre-crisis years.

According to the public employment service (State Employment Agency, Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūra, NVA), the share of young people (aged 15 to 24) in total numbers of registered unemployed has gradually decreased from 14.3% in 2010 to 6.6% in 2018. The employment rate of recent VET graduates (1) increased from 71.5% in 2014 to 74.8% in 2016 but then decreased to 69.1% in 2017.

Education attainment in Latvia is traditionally high (Figure 7). In 2017, the share of population aged up to 64 with upper secondary education including vocational education (ISCED levels 3 and 4) was 54.8% and it is the eight highest in the EU, following Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland,

Croatia, Hungary, Romania and Germany. The share of population with tertiary education (30%) is higher than in EU-28 average (27.9%). The share of those with low or without a qualification (ISCED level 0-2) is 15.2% – the fifth lowest in the EU, following Lithuania, Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia. From 2010 to 2017, there was a 19% decrease of vocational education students (excluding higher education). It is less than for general education (32% decrease) at upper secondary level (CSB, 2018). The share of adults (aged 25 and above) in vocational education has doubled since 2011/12 and reached 12% of the total vocational education population in 2017/18. This reflects changing needs of the labour market and widening offer of education opportunities for people aged 25+ supported by ESF funds. In past years, distribution of enrolled vocational education students between fields of study has varied only slightly. The most popular programmes in 2017 were in engineering, manufacturing and construction (35%) services (26%), humanities and arts (12%), social sciences, business and law (11%). Traditionally lesser part has been enrolled in programmes of health and welfare (7%), natural sciences, mathematics and information technologies (6%) and agriculture (4%).

The figure below describes the VET in education system.



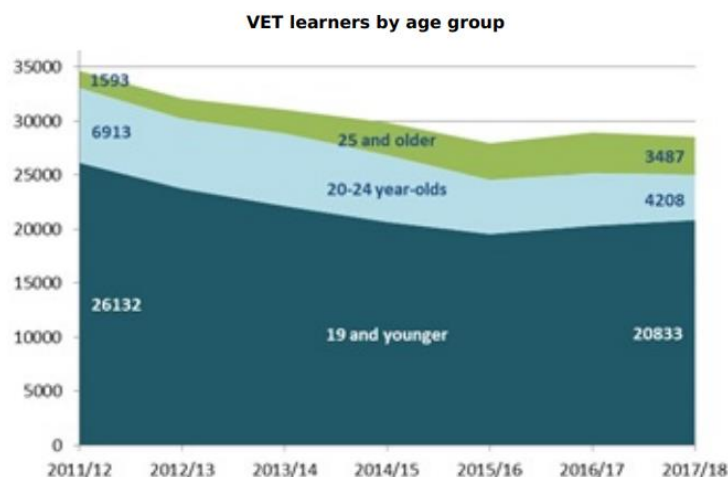
Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Latvia, 2019

Education system comprises:

- (a) pre-school education (ISCED level 0);
- (b) integrated primary and lower secondary education (ISCED levels 1 and 2) (hereafter basic education);
- (c) upper secondary education (ISCED levels 3 and 4) (hereafter secondary education);
- (d) higher (tertiary) education (ISCED levels 5, 6, 7 and 8).

Pre-school education for five to six year-old children is compulsory. It is followed by nine years of compulsory basic education and three years of non-compulsory secondary education. Basic education is mainly general, however, vocational education is offered for learners with mental disabilities or without completed basic education. Secondary education can be acquired through general or vocational programmes. Higher (tertiary) education includes both academic and professional study programmes. The Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF) has eight levels corresponding to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) (Cabinet of Ministers, 2017). Most vocational education providers are governed by the State, which is the Ministry of Education and Science in most cases. Others are under responsibility of the ministries of culture, welfare and interior. There are also vocational education schools established (or taken over from the State) by local government and private ones.

The VET learners in figures:



Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Latvia, 2019

Traditionally, there are more males in VET (58.8% in upper-secondary education), except at post-secondary level. The share of early leavers from education and training has decreased from 14.3% in 2009 to 8.3% in 2018. It is below the national objective for 2020 of not more than 10% and the EU-28 average of 10.6%.

The share of adults (aged 25 and above) in vocational education has doubled since 2011/12 and reached 12% of the total VET population in 2017/18. This reflects changing labour market needs and the variety of education opportunities for people aged 25+, supported by ESF funds.

The transition to upper secondary is not mandatory, however, the upper secondary graduation rate for the Latvian population reaches 90%, which is above the OECD average of 87% (OECD, 2018). Upper secondary education starts at age 16 and includes three years of general education, or two to four years in a vocational education track, and ends with a final examination. Successful students in a general education and in a vocational (four-year programme) track are awarded a certificate that allows them to enter tertiary education. Successful vocational education students earn a professional qualification on top of their vocational education diploma. Vocational students who have completed a three-year programme can enter tertiary education under the condition that they fulfil a fourth “bridge” year. The government has been monitoring enrolment in general education vs. vocational education and training (VET) as an indicator of the Education Development Guidelines (Image “Enrolment in general and vocational secondary educations in Latvia”), and aims to equalise participation rates between general and vocational programmes by 2020 (Eurydice, 2019).

	Number of students in upper secondary education			Percentage	
	General education (grades 10-12)	VET (grades 10-12)	Total (grades 10-12)	General education (grades 10-12)	VET (grades 10-12)
2015-2016	37 236	23 010	60 246	61.81%	38.19%
2016-2017	37 487 (+251)	23 591 (+581)	61 078 (+832)	61.38%	38.62%
2017-2018	37 179 (-308)	23 646 (+55)	60 825 (-253)	61.12%	38.88%

Image “Enrolment in general and vocational secondary educations in Latvia”

Source: *Source: OECD Skills Strategy report of 2019*

The VET school network consists of 46 VET schools providing VET secondary education (data for the beginning of the 2018/19 school year). Most VET schools are under the authority of the state, including those under the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Ministry of Culture. Few are private and municipal (Image below).

Distribution of vocational education institutions by responsible body or institution, 2018/2019						
	Higher education institution	Professional basic and secondary education institution			General education institution	Total
	College	Vocational school (EQF 3) (Arodizgltības iestāde)	Vocational education competence centre (VECC)	Vocational secondary school (EQF 4)	General education school	
Ministry of Education and Science	5	1	17	4		27
Ministry of Interior Affairs	1					1
Ministry of Culture			4	6		10
Ministry of Welfare				1		1
Ministry of Health	1					1
Legal or natural person	4			8		12
Municipality			1	5	2	8
Total:	11	1	22	24	2	60

Distribution of VET institutions by responsible body or institution

Source: *Source: OECD Skills Strategy report of 2019*

Since 2011, the vocational education system in Latvia has undergone a major transition, from a highly centralised model to one that is more flexible and that seeks to promote collaboration between local employers and schools. Because of a declining student population, provision has been consolidated by significantly reducing the number of VET schools. Since 2009, larger vocational schools – those with more than 500 students outside of Riga and more than 800 students in Riga – that meet specific qualitative and quantitative requirements can become Vocational Education Competence Centres (VECCs), thus creating regional VET “hubs”. These VECCs provide vocational secondary education programmes, carry out the validation of professional competences acquired outside formal education, and act as regional methodological centres by developing close relationships with employers, identifying skills in demand in the industry, and providing further education (OECD, 2016). A college could also obtain VECC status if it implements VET secondary education programmes and meets further criteria. As of the 2018/19 school year, 23 vocational education institutions had been granted VECC status

The VET system is governed by the following State institutions:

- 1) Cabinet of Ministers (Ministru kabinets) defines policies and strategies for vocational education and sets procedures for: development of occupational standards, organisation of work placements/apprenticeship scheme, and professional qualification exams. It also regulates mandatory documents for VET provision, list of mandatory occupational standards, activities of Sectoral Expert Councils, examination centre quality assurance, sets the criteria for issuing State-

recognised qualifications and recognising foreign qualifications, sets price list for validation of informal and non-formal learning;

- 2) Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) develops the framework regulations for vocational education. The ministry proposes allocation of funds from the State budget and finances the vocational education providers it has established;
- 3) other ministries (culture, welfare and interior) develop proposals for allocation of funds for financing vocational education schools under their responsibility and organise continuing professional development for teachers;
- 4) National Centre for Education (Valsts izglītības satura centrs, VISCS) under the supervision of MoES develops content of basic, secondary and continuing vocational education, professional development and vocationally oriented education;
- 5) State Education Quality Service (Izglītības kvalitātes valsts dienests, IKVD) under the supervision of MoES licenses general and vocational education programmes (EQF level 1-It also ensures quality assurance of vocational (except professional higher) education, coordinates validation of informal and non-formal learning (EQF level 2-4), and since 2013 coordinates implementation of the common European quality assurance for VET (EQAVET) in Latvia;
- 6) State Education Development Agency (Valsts izglītības attīstības aģentūra, VIAA) under the supervision of MoES promotes development and implementation of education policy (including continuing education) by acting as the liaison body involved in management and ex post monitoring of EU funds, introducing EU programmes, supporting development of career education policy, arranging national-level professional skills competitions and ensuring participation in international competitions. Since 2014, VIAA coordinates actions of four national experts nominated by MoES to promote the European credit system for VET (ECVET) and ease its implementation in Latvia;
- 7) Ministry of Welfare (Labklājības ministrija, MoW) is responsible for labour market policy development, including training interventions;
- 8) State Employment Agency (Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūra, NVA) under the supervision of MoW implements labour market policy, including programmes for the unemployed;
- 9) local governments participate in the implementation of vocational education by managing their own schools. They promote business development in their territory, cooperate with employer organisations and help students finding work placements.

There are also Social dialogue and strategic cooperation, Employment Council, Twelve Sectoral Expert Councils, Collegial advisory bodies – Conventions – established at each vocational education institution since 2015 engaged in VET system planning and forecasting.

III. Country reports and national policies regarding VET system

Developing the employment policy is a responsibility of the Ministry of Welfare.

In 2015, the government approved the Inclusive Employment Guidelines for 2015-20 (Cabinet of Ministers, 2015) in order to facilitate creation of an inclusive labour market policy; thus, using the full potential of human resources in Latvia, including reducing social consequences of unemployment, supporting the return of the unemployed to the labour market and maximizing the duration of staying in the labour market of people representing groups at the risk of social exclusion, as well as improving the quality of workplaces. These guidelines are aimed at securing the long-term unemployment rate under 15% of the total number of unemployed and 2.5% of all economically active persons by 2020 and in the long run. Guidelines foresee more learning opportunities and activities for helping the unemployed and job-seekers start up their own businesses.

Education policy priorities, formulated by the Ministry of Education and Science in the education development guidelines 2014-20 (Saeima, 2014) **foresee close cooperation with the employment sector. To promote employment, vocational schools are more actively engaged in implementation of respective policies.** According to legislation on supporting unemployed and job-seekers (Saeima, 2002), the Ministry of Welfare in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science provide vocational education, career guidance and requalification and professional development for the unemployed and job-seekers. They also offer non-formal learning and courses for the (self-) employed at risk of unemployment. Both ministries work on improving employment policy and support involvement of unemployed/job-seekers/(self-)employed in learning through State and EU cofinanced projects.

In line with amendments to the Vocational Education Law (Saeima, 1999a) and to the corresponding regulations (Cabinet of Ministers, 2005a) certificates of vocational education and professional qualification should include the relevant LQF level since 2017.

Initial vocational education is regulated by the State. **The education development guidelines 2014-20** (Saeima, 2014) set the policy priorities – development of occupational standards, modular vocational education programmes and implementation of apprenticeship type scheme (nationally

called ‘work-based learning’) – which are supported by the ESF projects. **The Vocational Education Law (Saeima, 1999a) provides legal regulations and defines three levels of vocational education:**

- (a) basic vocational education;
- (b) secondary vocational education;
- (c) professional higher education:
- (d) first-level professional higher (college) education;
- (e) second-level professional higher (university) education.

IV. *VET funding (national & international)*

Most vocational education providers are governed by the State, which is the Ministry of Education and Science in most cases. Others are under responsibility of the ministries of culture, welfare and interior. There are also vocational education schools established (or taken over from the State) by local government and private ones.

Procedures for financing vocational education are stipulated by the Education and Vocational Education Laws (Saeima, 1998; 1999a). Education institutions are financed from the State budget, local government budget or private funding according to their ownership. State budget allocations for vocational education programmes are calculated per student.

According to Eurostat data, the education budget has decreased from 6.7% of GDP in 2009 to 5.5% in 2016 (9) (in EU-28 accordingly from 5.3% in 2009 to 4.7% in 2016). The budget for vocational education institutions under responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science increased from EUR 54.07 million in 2011 to EUR 70.36 million in 2018 (Saeima, 2017). In addition, other resources (including EU funds) have been allocated to development of the VET system. For example, in 2009-15, EUR 163.6 million and in 2016-23, EUR 89.07 million has been invested in modernisation of equipment and infrastructure. Schools also use their own revenues to finance their activities.

V. *Incentives for VET learners, education providers and enterprises*

Salaries of teachers in State and local government education institutions (including preschools) are paid from the State budget. Local governments may supplement salaries of teachers. For private schools implementing accredited basic, secondary and higher education programmes the State can also finance salaries of teachers. There are fixed and non-fixed costs (Cabinet of Ministers, 2007) covered by the government, for example:

- allowances (scholarships);

- student residence maintenance;
- rehabilitation and catering services for students with special needs;
- culture education and sports activities;
- practical training in enterprises;
- accident insurance for practical training in enterprises;
- salary of employees (wages and employer's State social insurance contributions).

In 2014-20, the Operational Programme 'Growth and employment' supports employees' skills development at the request of the companies to promote the introduction of innovations in enterprises. Different sectoral associations implement employees' training projects co-financed by EU funds.

VET learners

Attractiveness of initial vocational education and reduction of early leaving from education are national policy priorities.

Unlike general education students, vocational education students receive a monthly allowance according to government regulations on scholarships (Cabinet of Ministers, 2004). Students in public vocational education programmes receive State allowance which amounts to between EUR 10 and 150 per month depending on performance. Orphans/children without parental care (not in care institutions or foster families) and best performers in studies or school social activities receive a higher allowance.

From 17 to 29 year-old students of short programmes in the youth guarantee initiative have an opportunity to receive ESF cofinanced scholarships per month up to EUR 70-115. Tax incentives for individuals are also available and regulated by Law on Personal Income Tax (Saeima, 1993). The Law was amended to introduce, as of January 2017, tax exemption of apprenticeship scholarships not exceeding EUR 280 per month.

Tertiary (including professional) education students can apply for two types of study loans to cover tuition fees and costs of living. Loans are offered by selected banks (or other credit institutions) and are State-guaranteed (Saeima, 1995).

The Employers' Confederation of Latvia started a national level ESF project (2017-23) on vocational education students' involvement in apprenticeship and work placements. Enterprises, vocational schools and students receive a financial support while implementing the project.

Work-based learning (WBL) is a relatively new concept in Latvia. Before the start of the WBL pilot project in 2014/2015, vocational education in Latvia was mainly school-based, with a practical learning period of at least 960 hours in a company at the end of a vocational programme (OECD, 2016). The newly introduced work-based learning approach foresees that a VET student will spend at least 25% of the VET programme in a company, starting from the first study year (where possible), according to the individual learning plan. There will also be an employment contract or stipend agreement between an enterprise and student. A recent employer's survey by the LDDK showed growing support from both employers and students to participate in work-based learning (Cedefop, 2018). To facilitate work-based learning, Latvia created a legal framework for the organisation and implementation of WBL which determines the rights and responsibilities of the involved parties (mainly WBL providers, VET schools, sectoral expert councils and students). Regulations from the Cabinet of Ministers state that WBL students should receive a stipend or salary according to the agreement with the company.

Incentives for enterprises to boost their participation in VET provision

The Employers' Confederation of Latvia started a national level ESF project (2017-23) on vocational education student involvement in apprenticeship and work placements. Enterprises, vocational schools and students receive financial support while part of the project. The main incentives for companies to provide apprenticeships are:

- opportunity to prepare the employees they need in a timely manner;
- to create a positive image of the company in society;
- to receive financing from the ESF project in this process;
- an opportunity to pay a student motivational apprenticeship scholarship without paying taxes.

The project is a good support tool to provide additional funding for an employee who trains a student. It provides work safety tools, the opportunity to cover student insurance from the project funds, and purchase a mandatory health check; the project has also provided funding to cover travel costs for learner to get to the company where apprenticeship takes place

NEET programme

Latvia has already initiated several general policy initiatives to reduce drop-out rates, such as the Youth Guarantee Programme, launched in 2014, that targets young people not in

employment, education or training (NEET) aged 15-29 years. Taking into account the specific rural context that seemingly leads to higher drop-out rates, local authorities, and initiatives such as the Youth Guarantee Programme, should build on the innovations and specificities of the VET system (modular programmes, work-based learning, etc.) to motivate and re-enrol general and VET students who have dropped out, while monitoring student performance to identify early on the students at risk, and take the appropriate measures.

VI. *Key challenges and development opportunities regarding SKILLS*

Latvia has already reached most of its targets for Europe 2020 Strategy (employment, early school leaving and tertiary education attainment rate). Vocational education policy aims to increase the share of vocational learners by offering them better future work opportunities and updating the curriculum according to the needs of labour market.

Vocational education and training (VET) plays an essential role in preparing young people for work and responding to the skill needs of the labour market. Latvia estimates that demand for VET graduates will be higher than supply by 2035 (Ministry of Economics, 2018). In recent years, Latvia has undertaken several reforms to strengthen its VET system, including a curriculum reform, the development of educational standards and qualifications, modular VET programmes, teacher training and closer co-operation with employers, and has begun to develop a work-based learning framework based on the results of pilot projects. While these reforms are significant steps in the right direction, there remain important challenges in the VET system, such as the difficulty to attract candidates, and high drop-out rates (Ministry of Economics, 2018).

Figure below reveals the national VET development as stated in OECD Skills Strategy report of 2019.

Opportunity 4: Strengthening vocational education and training (VET)

Boosting vocational education take-up.	Embed career/learning guidance for students and their parents in the education system.
Reducing the drop-out rates of VET students.	Establish a VET graduate tracking system to improve the tracking of drop-outs.
Improving the quality and labour market relevance of VET.	Mainstream the "Effective management for VET schools" (SO 8.5.3.) project that promotes, among other, teacher and school leader training. Continue strengthening work-based learning implementation. Develop a co-funding instrument to fund Sector Expert Councils for the medium term.

Source: OECD Skills Strategy report of 2019

Skills imbalances imply costs for individuals, firms and the economy as a whole. As the skills needed in the labour market continue to undergo changes due to globalisation, digitalisation, and demographic change, reducing skills imbalances remains a pressing policy priority. In Latvia, the emigration of highly-educated workers is a significant challenge and has contributed to skills shortages. Most employers report that skills shortages are a major obstacle to long-term investment decisions (EIB, 2017). These shortages appear particularly acute in STEM fields but also in occupations related to health and social welfare. The share of Latvian workers who are under-skilled for their jobs is high by international standards, and 18% of workers are under-qualified (compared to 12% who are over-qualified). De-population may push employers to hire workers who do not have the skills or qualifications necessary for the job, because they cannot find workers who do. Addressing skills imbalances has been a key challenge for Latvia in recent years, and has been highlighted in several national policy planning documents (Latvia2030, NDP2020, Guidelines on National Industrial Policy for 2014-2010).

Improving VET reputation

Promoting participation in vocational education is one of challenges outlined in the Latvian national reform programme for implementation of EU 2020 strategy. Regardless of past investments in modernisation of vocational schools and reform, basic school graduates prefer general education. This relates with results of recent public opinion survey (17) which shows that general education has a more positive image than VET. Furthermore, the perception of the VET image is narrowed to the widespread opinion that VET is mainly for students of lower academic performance, and does not relate to respondents' own views on the greater benefits of VET than general education in the world of work. VET labour market outcomes in Latvia are perceived controversially. Therefore, feedback loops for VET should be developed and potential of career guidance/education especially at lower secondary education level should be used to greater extent regarding information on labour market needs and labour market outcomes of education.

The VET curriculum reform

The VET curriculum has been reformed to ensure that vocational education is of high quality and relevant to labour market needs in Latvia. Reforms began in 2010 and included the transformation of the whole VET system through a transition from subject-based curricula to learning outcomes-

based curricula and a VET programme modularisation. Furthermore, Latvia introduced sectoral qualification frameworks in the context of upgrading its curriculum by 2022.

Designing qualifications

Vocational education programmes are designed in line with the State education and occupational standards or qualification requirements (if occupation does not have a standard) and sectoral qualifications frameworks. The new modular approach for vocational education programmes (Cedefop, 2013a) includes use of learning outcomes, relevant teaching/learning methods and indicators of achievement.

Anticipating skills needs

According to a report on labour market medium- and long-term forecasts (Ministry of Economics, 2018c), the highest rise of three quarters in labour market force demand until 2025 is expected in manufacturing industry and transport and storage. Almost two thirds of the increase will be in education, State administration and information and communication services. The demand is expected to decrease in traditional sectors such as agriculture. As a result, demand for highly qualified specialists (with higher and vocational secondary education) will increase rapidly. In the agriculture and forestry sector, similar to the EU average, the number of the employees in the sector will decrease. In the future, the demand for labour force in the construction sector will gradually increase. The fastest increase in the number of employees is expected in the commercial services sectors. The growth of the commercial services sector will be driven mainly by the development of other sectors of the economy and the growing demand for outsourcing. In the long-term, the fastest increase in demand is expected in services and manufacturing, as well as in trade and transport.

Quality assurance

The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for policies and strategies to ensure accessibility and quality of education. Quality is assured through:

- elaboration of education policy;
- registration and accreditation of education providers; (c) licensing and accreditation of education programmes;
- supervising the education process.

Only accredited local governments' and private vocational education institutions may apply for State funding for continuing vocational education, professional development and vocationally oriented education programmes. During the licensing or accreditation process, State Education Quality Service hires external experts and representatives of sectoral NGOs and employers to evaluate the programmes' compliance with State education standards, occupational standards or professional qualification requirements and other regulations. All experts have specific knowledge of the accreditation process.

Expanding the provision of adult learning

Participation in formal adult education in Latvia is below the average. Improving the provision of adult learning opportunities in formal adult education could raise the overall participation rate. With population ageing and emigration combining to decrease the size of Latvia's traditional student population, it is in the long-term interest of these institutions to expand their course offering to adult learners. VET schools, in particular the Vocational Education Competence Centres, as well as tertiary institutions could train their staff to accommodate adult students, tailor their course offerings to the specific needs of adults, deliver courses in flexible and modular formats and play a proactive role in reaching out to adult learners (*OECD Skills Strategy report of 2019*).

Opportunity 3: Expanding the provision of adult learning

Expanding the provision of adult learning in VET, especially Vocational Education Competence Centres.	Strengthen the management and pedagogical capacity of the VET schools, in particularly Vocational Education Competence Centres to deal with adult students.
Expanding the provision of adult learning in tertiary education.	Promote a strategic role of tertiary education institutions to engage adult learners.

Career guidance and counselling

One way to improve VET take-up is to set up efficient career guidance and counselling. Young people, their parents, teachers and other intermediaries often demonstrate insufficient information or poor understanding of some options, and in particular those related to VET, and their potential to support young people into ultimate employment. As young people stay in education and training longer, VET opportunities are often overlooked, despite providing tangible employment opportunities (Musset and Mytna Kurekova, 2018)

List of references (web pages, national reports, VET actors, etc)

Policy reports:

1. OECD Skills Strategy Latvia available at <https://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/media/1366/download>
2. VET in Europe 2019, *Latvia report*, available at <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/print/pdf/node/30802>

Law and regulation:

1. Saeima (1998). *Izglītības likums* [Education law]. Last amended 20.09.2018. <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=50759>
2. Saeima (1999a). *Profesionālās izglītības likums* [Vocational education law]. Last amended 22.06.2017. <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=20244>
3. Cabinet of Ministers (2000). Regulations on the State vocational secondary education standard and the State vocational education standard. Regulation No 211 (last amended 19.09.2017, No 564). <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=8533>
4. Reports:
5. CEDEFOP (2013). *Latvia – modularisation of VET and work-based learning*.
6. <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/latvia-modularisation-vet-andwork-based-learning>
7. CEDEFOP (2015). *Latvia - establishing legal framework for employers' participation in developing vocational education*. <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-andpress/news/latvia-establishing-legal-framework-employers-participation-developing>
8. Cedefop (2018). *Latvia: sectoral qualifications frameworks support vocational education development*. <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/latvia-sectoralqualifications-frameworks-support-vocational-education-development>
9. Daija, Z.; Kinta, G.; Ramiņa, B. (2014). Innovation in VET: Latvia. CEDEFOP ReferNe thematic perspectives series. https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2014/2014_Innovation_in_VET_LV.pdf
10. Daija, Z.; Ramina, B.; Seikstule, I. (2014). *Apprenticeship-type schemes and structured workbased learning programmes: Latvia*. CEDEFOP ReferNet thematic perspectives series. https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2015/ReferNet_LV_2014_WBL.pdf
11. Daija, Z.; Kinta, G.; Ramina, B. (2016). *Supporting teachers and trainers for successful reforms and quality of vocational education and training: mapping their professional development in the EU – Latvia*. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2016/ReferNet_LV_TT.pdf
12. Eurostat (2016), Obstacles to participation in education and training, [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php/File:Obstacles_to_participation_in_education_and_training,_2011_\(%C2%B9\)_\(%25\)_YB16.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php/File:Obstacles_to_participation_in_education_and_training,_2011_(%C2%B9)_(%25)_YB16.png)
13. Cedefop (2018), Latvia: growing support for in-company training, <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/latvia-growing-support-companytraining>
14. Musset, A. and M. Kurekova (2018[50]), “Working it out: Career guidance and employer engagement”, OECD Education Working Papers, No. 175, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/51c9d18d-en>

Web sites:

1. ReferNet Latvia: www.refernet.lv
2. Ministry of Education and Science: www.izm.gov.lv
3. VISC: www.visc.gov.lv
4. IKVD: www.ikvd.gov.lv
5. VIAA: www.viaa.gov.lv
6. Latvian Chamber of Crafts: www.lak.lv
7. Employers' Confederation of Latvia: www.lddk.lv
8. Latvian Trade Union of Education and Science Employees: www.lizda.lv
9. National database on learning opportunities: www.niid.lv
10. CSB: www.csb.gov.lv
11. Academic Information Centre: www.aic.lv
12. Quality Agency for Higher Education (AIKA): <https://www.aika.lv/en>
13. Latvian Qualifications Database: <https://www.latvijaskvalifikacijas.lv/en/>
14. Ministry of Culture: www.km.gov.lv
15. Ministry of Economics: www.em.gov.lv
16. Ministry of Welfare: www.lm.gov.lv
17. NVA: www.nva.gov.lv