European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

EN

spotlight on VET

HUNGARY

2017

VET in Hungary

The education system has undergone substantial transformation since the 1990s. Since 2013, governance of schools has been centralised and vocational training was reformed in 2015 to offer quality training in accordance with changing labour market needs. IVET and adult training are led by the economy ministry, with other ministries having responsibilities on specific vocational qualifications and the human resources ministry on learning outcomes and framework curricula.

Business and industry are involved in national advisory bodies and, increasingly, in decision-making on VET-related issues. Apprenticeships were introduced in upper secondary VET in 2012 and have been coordinated by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The chamber's role in shaping VET and adult training was expanded by the introduction in 2015 of a chamber guarantee for securing training places for VET learners.

Social partners are involved in VET policy through participation in advisory bodies; particularly active is the National Council for Vocational and Adult Training, the main advisory body on VET. The council has a consultative role preparing opinions, proposals and draft legislation for decision-making.

VET for young people

Vocational programmes are available to learners at age 14. VET is offered at upper secondary, post-secondary and tertiary levels and includes work-based learning to various extents. To increase VET attractiveness, the content of upper secondary VET programmes was reformed in 2015. It now offers:

- four-year (five in bilingual courses) VET programmes (szakgimnázium) combining vocational and general education. Learners acquire an upper secondary school leaving certificate (ISCED 344) giving access to higher education and a basic qualification registered in the national qualifications register (NQR). Learners can continue with one additional VET year at post-secondary level to acquire a higher level VET qualification at ISCED level 454;
- three-year practice-oriented VET programmes (szakközépiskola) leading to ISCED 353 NQR qualification. These do not allow access to higher education, but offer increased share of practical training in relation to the earlier system being phased out. Learners can enrol in two-year follow-up programmes to obtain the upper secondary school leaving certificate allowing progression to higher education. Those who hold a master craftsperson certificate and have at least five years' relevant work experience can enrol in two-year post-secondary VET programmes to acquire a VET qualification at ISCED 454;
- bridging programmes for learners who have completed at least two years of lower secondary education, but have not completed all four years, leading to partial or a first basic vocational qualification listed in the NQR and giving access to upper secondary three-year practice-oriented VET programmes.

Higher education VET programmes are provided by higher education institutions. Programmes require an upper secondary school leaving certificate and award ISCED 554 vocational qualifications. Graduates can transfer credits to a bachelor (BA/BSc) programme in the same field.

Apprenticeship is getting more popular. Since 2015, apprenticeships can also be offered in higher VET. In upper and post-secondary VET, learners sign a contract with the company; in higher VET the company concludes a cooperation agreement with the higher VET institution and an employment contract with the student.

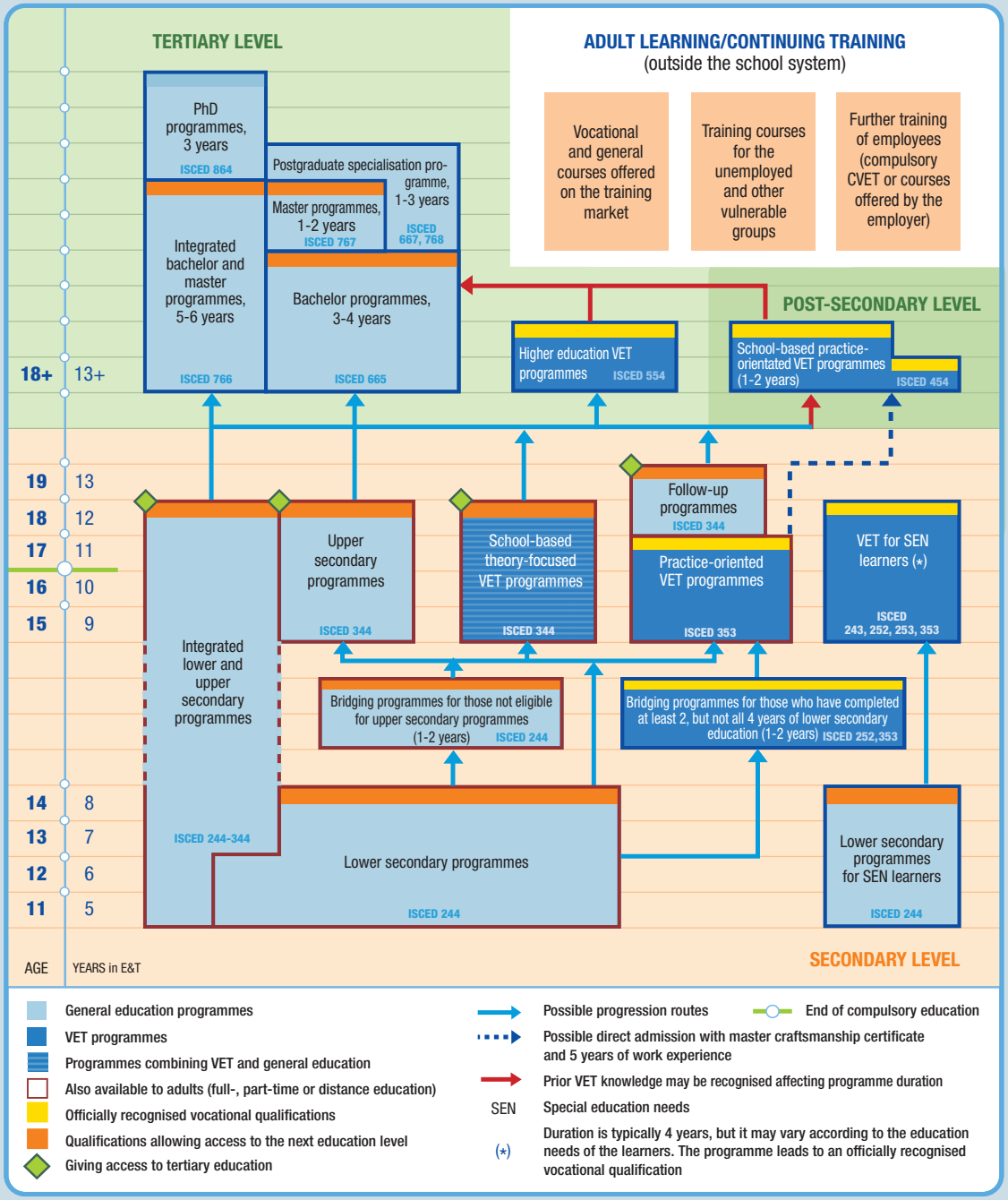
VET for adults

VET programmes at secondary, post-secondary and tertiary education are open to adults in full-, part-time or distance learning.

Adult training outside the formal school system includes: courses run by economic chambers preparing for master craftsperson exams; mandatory further training programmes for a given occupation; vocational programmes leading to NQR qualifications; courses for the unemployed and other vulnerable groups; and other vocational, language and general courses.

The Chamber of Commerce has recently developed new training programmes for occupations in demand in the labour market. A major characteristic of adult learning is that training is open to the training market and adapted to learner needs. The prerequisite for enrolling in such programmes is that a contract be signed between the VET provider and the learner and that the content of the programme be formally approved by the State before the course starts.

VET in Hungary's education and training system



NB: ISCED-P 2011. EQF levels have not yet been defined.
Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Hungary.

Distinctive features of VET

The national qualifications register (NQR), in place since 1993, comprises State-recognised (partial, full or add-on) vocational qualifications that can be acquired either in formal upper and post-secondary IVET or outside the formal education system. NQR qualifications entitle holders to practise the occupation specified in the vocational and examination requirements set for a given qualification. The register has a modular, competence-based structure and is updated annually in accordance with labour market needs. Since 2015, the revision process has been run by the Chamber of Commerce in coordination with the ministries responsible for the qualifications, companies and VET schools. It closely follows the economy.

Young people and adults need to pass the practice-oriented complex examination to complete upper and post-secondary VET programmes.

To improve quality and efficiency in a heavily fragmented institutional VET structure, 44 regional integrated VET centres were created and, since 2015, have run under the responsibility of the economy ministry.

A shortage job list is issued each year on the basis of recommendations from the county development and training committees; it is based on employment and employability data and labour market needs forecasts. Practice providers are offered incentives to encourage training in shortage jobs and students receive grants. In school-based VET, students enrolled in programmes to acquire a first qualification in shortage jobs may receive a scholarship, based on their performance.

Challenges and policy responses

Despite a slight decrease in 2015, youth unemployment remains crucial and coexists with great skills shortages and mismatches. The demographic decline has negatively affected enrolment in VET, especially in practice-oriented programmes. One third of VET learners leave education without qualifications, mainly due to disadvantaged socioeconomic background and low basic skills.

Changes in VET-related legislation in 2015 aim to support the image, quality and attractiveness of vocational education and training in line with European policies and national priorities set for 2016-20.

Bridging programmes replaced the previous catching-up variants. They are available in both general and vocational streams, and allow underperformers and/or students from deprived backgrounds to acquire the basic skills necessary to enrol in upper secondary education and training. In the vocational stream learners can achieve a partial basic qualification before moving to upper secondary VET.

VET programmes updated in 2015 and offered as of 2016/17 aim to ease access to occupations in demand, balancing labour shortages and skills gaps. Upper secondary VET programmes offer a first vocational qualification while easing progression routes.

The quality and relevance of practical training is a priority. The percentage of practical training in companies has increased considerably; minimum pedagogical knowledge has been made compulsory for in-company trainers. The chamber guarantee (2015) measure creates closer links with the labour market. Enrolment in apprenticeships has increased by 74% since its introduction in 2012.

Adult learning for all is being promoted. Acquiring a second qualification registered in the NQR is free of charge and, since 2015, has no age limit; the measure opens up 300 out of a total of 650 NQR qualifications to older workers. The Chamber of Commerce has been developing new training programmes for occupations in demand in the labour market. Programmes supporting further education are designed to help the inclusion of the Roma in those areas where they are mostly affected.

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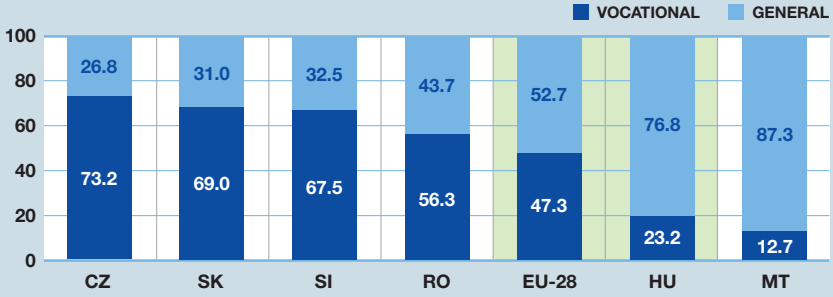
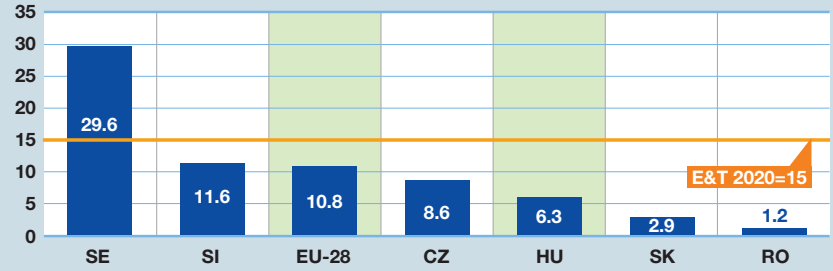
Education and training in figures

Upper secondary students (ISCED 2011 level 3) enrolled in vocational and general programmes
% of all students in upper secondary education, 2015



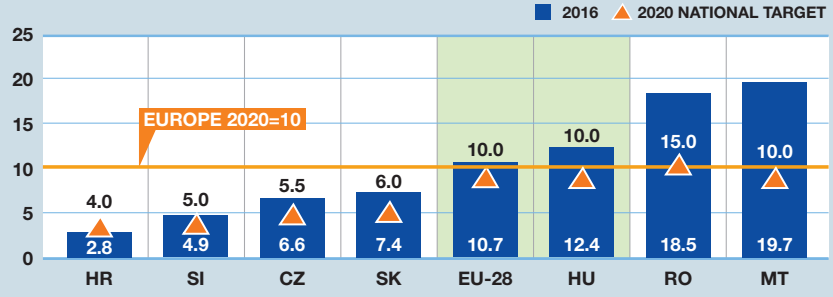
NB: EU-28 value is based on estimated Eurostat values.
Source: Cedefop calculations based on Eurostat, UOE data collection on education systems, date of extraction 8.12.2017.

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



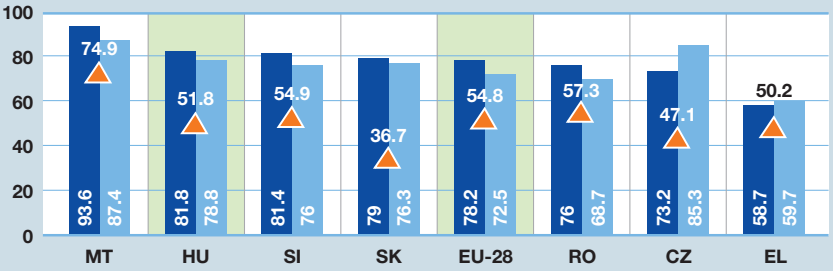
Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, date of extraction 8.12.2017.

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



NB: Low reliability for 2016 HR value.
Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, date of extraction 8.12.2017.

Employment rates of young graduates
% of 20 to 34 year-olds no longer in education and training, 2016



Upper vocational secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)
Upper general secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)
Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)

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

Further information

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