

VET in Slovenia



Formal vocational education and training (VET) in Slovenia starts at upper secondary level and is provided mainly by public schools that are founded and financed by the State. The education and labour ministries share responsibility for preparing legislation, financing, and adopting VET programmes, standards and qualifications. While the education ministry deals with VET at systemic level, the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET (CPI) is responsible for VET at the practical level; it monitors and guides the development of VET and provides in-service teacher training and VET curricula. The CPI also acts as a link between ministries, schools and social partners.

VET programmes

After completing compulsory basic education, VET students can enrol in the following upper secondary programmes:

- technical upper secondary programmes (ISCED 354): four-year programmes that lead to vocational *matura* (two general and two vocational – theoretical and practical – exams, partly external). These programmes consist of 40% general subjects and at least eight weeks of in-company work-based learning;
- vocational upper secondary programmes (ISCED 353): for the three-year labour-market-oriented programmes there are two paths:
 - school-based path: approximately 20% (at least 24 weeks) of the programme is undertaken at an employer and the rest at the school (consisting of general subjects and VET modules);
 - apprenticeship path: a minimum 50% of the programme is undertaken at an employer, while at least 40% – general subjects and VET modules – is delivered in school. Changing paths midway is possible. After final exams, students from both school and apprenticeship paths can enter the labour market or enrol in two-year vocational technical education programmes at ISCED 354 that lead to vocational *matura*;
- short vocational upper secondary programmes (ISCED 353): two-year programmes that qualify learners for less demanding occupations (at assistant level) or continuing education in vocational programmes.

In the school year 2019/20, 35% of students enrolled in general upper secondary programmes and 65% in upper secondary VET programmes: 41.8% in technical programmes, 16.8% in vocational programmes, 1.5% in short VET programmes and 4.9% in vocational-technical education.

Graduates with a vocational *matura* can enrol in two-year higher vocational programmes (ISCED 554) or First-cycle professional education (ISCED 655) and, under special conditions, also in First-cycle academic education (ISCED 645).

Higher vocational programmes are practice-oriented and include 40% of work-based learning in companies. These were developed to meet the needs of the economy, as they train graduates for managing, planning and controlling work pro-

cesses. In 2019/20, 14% of all tertiary students enrolled into higher VET schools.

Adult learning and CVET

Adults can enrol in the same formal VET programmes as young people. Adults can also participate in continuing VET, offered by public and private providers; regulation of provision of such programmes is not covered by legislation. Many activities to support adult education are organised by adult education centres.

The recognition of non-formal and informal learning is possible within the national vocational qualifications (NVQ) system that has been in place since 2000. In 2020, an NVQ certificate can be obtained for approximately 172 qualifications. Candidates must prepare a personal portfolio and take part in a validation procedure.

Distinctive features of VET

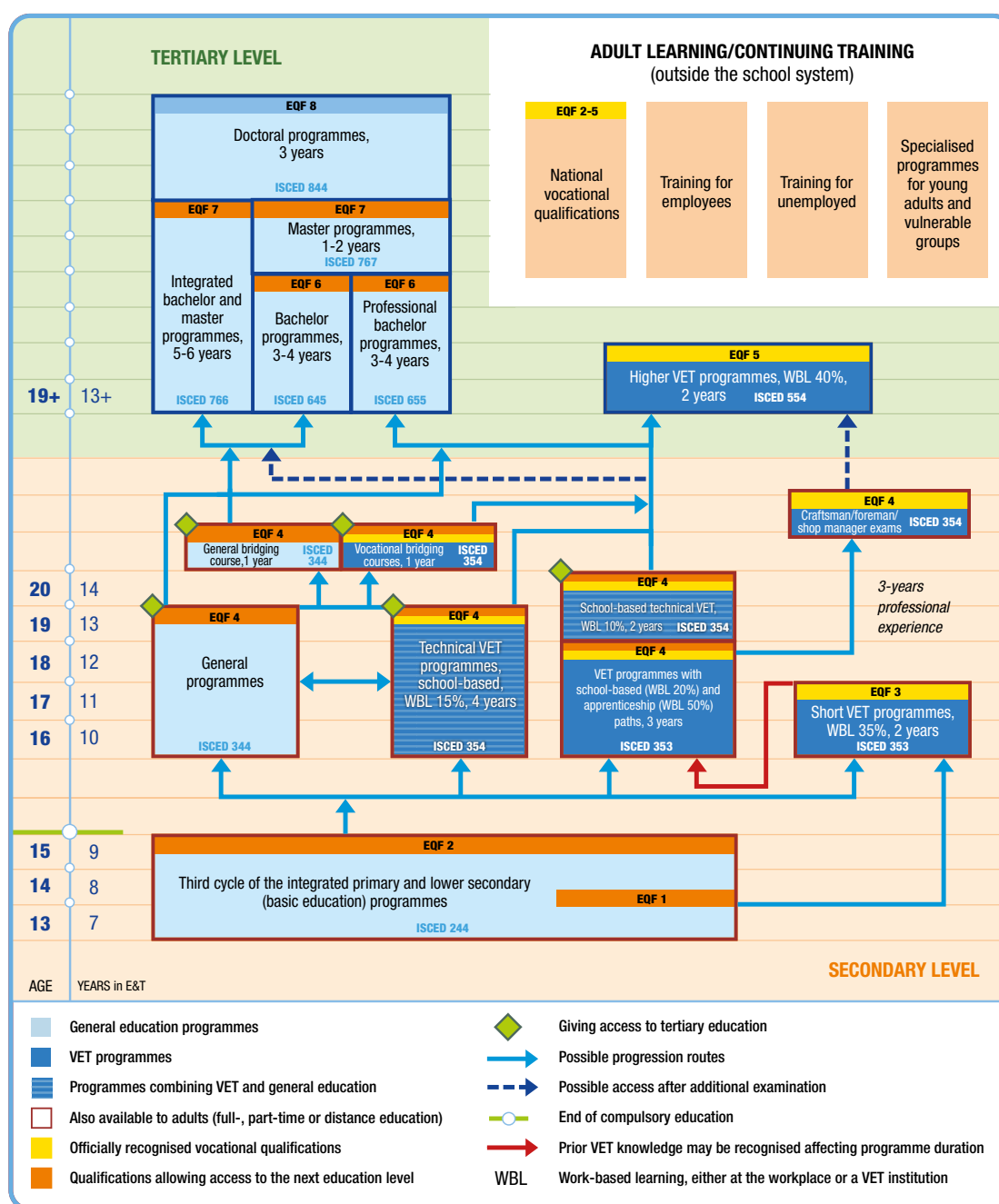
VET in Slovenia is characterised by the following main features:

- occupational standards form the basis for competence-based VET programmes and for the NVQ;
- vocational and technical programmes are offered in all professional fields, all VET programmes combine general subjects with vocational modules that integrate theoretical and practical learning; permeability between education levels and programme types is high;
- work-based learning represents an integral part of all types of VET programme. Students are trained in modern inter-company training centres and companies, in selected vocational programmes, as well as in apprenticeship form;
- upper secondary school autonomy: framework curricula are set on a national level, while VET schools are responsible for design curricula. They adapt 20% of the curricula (open curricula) to the local company's needs.

Slovenia has one of the lowest rates of early leavers from education and training in the EU. In 2019 the percentage of NEETS aged 18-24 with a maximum of primary education was less than 5%. The reasons are the traditionally high value of education in society, availability of State scholarships, progression opportunities, and a well-developed guidance system in schools provided by the school counsellors as well as a well-developed network of formal adult education providers.

Challenges and policy responses

Improving VET response to labour market needs has been at the heart of the development of competence-based curricula since 2006. The implementation period has brought changes in school curriculum planning, school-company cooperation culture, didactic and student assessment approaches and VET attractiveness. Significant efforts were made through investing in new training facilities (intercompany training centres) and reinforcing in-company work-based learning (WBL). The quality of WBL and competence-based assessment remain a challenge.



NB: ISCED-P 2011.

Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Slovenia, 2020.

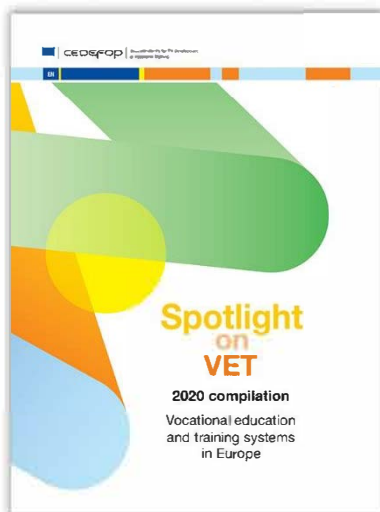
Development of career guidance services and promoting more flexible and individualised paths are current priorities.

With the adoption of the new Apprenticeship Act in 2017, implementation of the apprenticeship path in 12 vocational programmes (ISCED 353) has started. Along with companies and schools, chambers have a significant role in assessing suitability of training places, approving apprenticeship agreements and monitoring companies. Companies are financially supported to train apprentices. CPI has carried out four evaluations of the apprenticeship system as a basis for further development. The new training programme for in-company mentors is in preparation.

Development of accredited CVET programmes for upskilling specific vocational competences is another response to labour

market needs. It offers training to SME employees to develop their competences and acquire new or in-depth specialisation. The first programmes have been prepared.

In an effort to create quality jobs and full employment, the labour ministry is preparing a competence forecasting platform project. This will build on and improve the current short-term competence forecasts methods and tools – the Occupational barometer and the Employment forecast – and provide medium-term (3 to 5) and long-term (up to 10 years) predictions.



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