

Estonia

VET in Europe - Country Report

2011

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Abstract:

This is an overview of the VET system in Estonia. Information is presented according to the following themes:

1. General context - framework for the knowledge society
2. Modernizing VET to support LLL, internationalization and mobility
3. VET to support recovery from the crisis
4. Historical background, legislative and institutional framework
5. Initial vocational education and training
6. Continuing vocational education and training
7. Training VET teachers and trainers
8. Matching VET provision (skills) with labour market needs (jobs)
9. Lifelong guidance for lifelong learning and sustainable employment
10. Financing - investment in human resources
11. Authors, sources, bibliography, acronyms and abbreviations

This overview has been prepared in 2011 and its reference year is 2010. Similar overviews of previous years can be viewed at:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/vet-in-europe-country-reports.aspx>

More detailed thematic information on the VET systems of the EU can also be found at:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/detailed-thematic-analyses.aspx>

Keywords:

vocational education and training (VET) systems; initial vocational training; continuing vocational training; lifelong learning; VET policy development; financial crisis and VET policies; VET legislative and institutional frameworks; validation of non-formal and informal education; teachers and trainers; anticipation of skill needs; vocational guidance and counselling; VET financing mechanisms; allocation of national VET programmes; national and international qualification systems.

Geographic term:

Estonia

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1. GENERAL CONTEXT - FRAMEWORK FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

1.1 POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Estonia is a sovereign and independent democratic republic where the supreme power is vested in the people and the head of the state is the President. The government and its courts are organised in conformity with the constitution and according to the principle of a separation and balance of powers. Legislative power is vested in the Parliament (*Riigikogu*) with 101 members elected by proportional representation for four years. Executive power is vested in the Government of the Republic (*Vabariigi Valitsus*) which executes domestic and foreign policies and manages relations with other states; directs and co-ordinates the activities of government agencies; administers the implementation of laws and legal acts. President represents Estonia in international relations and he/she also has some controlling and co-operational functions with regard to the Parliament and the Government of the Republic. Ministries are established, pursuant to law, for the administration of the areas of government. The educational area in Estonia is managed by the Ministry of Education and Research (*Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium*).

In Estonia, the political context for all policies is defined by the programme of the coalition 2011-2015, who started working in March 2011 and which now consists of 2 parties. As to education and research, the goal of the Governing Coalition is: "The key for continuance of Estonia is educated people, therefore the priority for coming years is educational sphere. The aim is to lead Estonian education to the Nordic Countries top level. Good education means bigger salary, better protection against unemployment and greater retirement benefit in the future. Good and accessible education is also a greater certainty for families to have children and assurance for healthier and happier life. To build up prosperous country, merged into the Baltic Sea region, export orientated, based on high-tech and sensed as destination for big investments, proceeding with educational rearrangements is seen unavoidable." (*Program of the Coalition 2011-2015*).

For VET, the uplift as educational choice and popularity among people, is emphasised. For achieving that, coalition intends to: renovate/build new study bases and dormitories for all VET institutions; support the evolvement of VET institutions as local competence centers, who has bigger role in the regional development; create new opportunities for complementary admission in VET; foster cooperation between general- and VET institutions and create possibilities for self-education for people who have finished VET and wish to continue in higher education. For that, students in VET have the opportunity to acquire similar amount of general subjects as in gymnasium. The quality of training is also pointed out: VET graduate must have vocational qualifications that are sufficient for labour market participation. Increasing the participation in lifelong learning is also brought forth. Two programs, "TULE" and "KUTSE", are also considered as important means in promoting dropouts to continue with studies either at VET or higher education.

Estonia is divided into 15 counties, 47 towns, and 194 rural municipalities. County governments, run by governors are the regional administration of the state. All local issues are resolved and managed by local governments, whose responsibilities include management of pre-school child care institutions, basic schools, upper secondary general schools, vocational educational institutions, libraries, community centres, museums, sports facilities, nursing homes and shelters, healthcare institutions and other local institutions in the rural municipality or town, provided they are owned by the local government.

One specific cultural feature of Estonia is its bilingual community (education in Estonian and Russian) and multicultural society. In 2010, about 68.83% of the population were Estonians. The instruction in most VET institutions is in Estonian, though there are schools where the curricula is taught in both languages or the instruction is in Russian only. One common feature is the significant improvement in the knowledge of English and the knowledge of languages is becoming more expected on the labour market. The experience of bilateral co-operation with the Nordic countries (especially Finland) is also a feature of the VET system. Active co-operation between (vocational) educational institutions has lasted over 10 years and has influenced their development.

Despite the positive image of some vocational educational institutions, vocational education has traditionally had an unfavorable image. People tend to value upper secondary general education and higher education. According to Statistics Estonia, at the beginning of the academic year 2010/2011, 243,100 persons were studying in formal education. 60% of them were enrolled in general education, 12% in vocational education and 28% in higher education. That has contributed to the situation where over 32% (25-64) of Estonians have no professional qualification acquired in formal education system. However, in recent years the image of industry and production has improved as having the image of skilled labour.

1.2 POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The area of Estonia is 45 227 km² with the population of 1 340 127 in 2010. In 2010, the natural increase was positive by 35 persons due to a decline in the number of deaths. The external migration that had been stable for the last few years underwent a leap in 2010 in immigration and emigration. One of the reasons for the increase in emigration was a slow recovery of the labour market from the economic recession and long-term unemployment that forced people to find a job abroad. Immigration decreased for the same reason. The birth rate has been improving, but the proportion of young people in the population continues to decrease. Increase in the share of women with higher education giving birth to children shows the desire to attain education before having children. Five years ago the percentage of women with higher education who gave birth to a child was 27%, in 2010 the percentage was already 39%.

TABLE 1: TOTAL POPULATION (ON 1ST OF JANUARY), 2003, 2006, 2009, 2010

GEO\TIME	2003	2006	2009	2010
EU 27	486647831	493226936	499723520(p)	501105661(p)
EST	1356045	1344684	1340415	1340127

Source of Data: Eurostat (Demographic Statistics); Date of extraction: 19 May 2011

(p) - provisional

Description: The inhabitants of a given area on 1 January of the year in question (or, in some cases, on 31 December of the previous year). The population is based on data from the most recent census adjusted by the components of population change produced since the last census, or based on population registers

Last update: 16.05.2011

Link to data:

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tps00001>

Original label: [tps00001] - Total population; Further selection: none

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/demo_pop_esms.htm

General Disclaimer of the EC: http://europa.eu/geninfo/legal_notices_en.htm

The government has an attractive bonus package for new mothers to encourage new births and counteract the impact of the ageing society. The Parental Benefit provides parents with their average salary from the preceding calendar year for the time that they temporarily take off work to care for their children. Any parent, adoptive parent, step-parent, guardian or foster parent who is raising a child and who is a permanent resident of Estonia or a foreigner living in Estonia on the basis of a temporary residence permit has the right to the parental benefit. Also, as one of its measures promoting the national birth rate, the state partially annuls the interest of study loans of graduates of vocational and higher education institutions who are raising small children.

TABLE 2: AGE-SPECIFIC DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS (BASELINE SCENARIO UNTIL 2025)				
AGE GROUP/YEAR	2010	2015	2020	2025
0-24	390 934	361 563	352 220	354 749
25-64	720 435	734 856	718 195	678 179
65+	228 772	238 777	253 494	270 628
TOTAL	1 340 141	1 335 196	1 323 909	1 303 556

Source: Statistics Estonia, Eurostat

TABLE 3: PROJECTED OLD-AGE DEPENDENCY RATIO, 2010-2060							
GEO\TIME	2010	2015	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
EU 27	25.9	28.26	31.05	38.04	45.36	50.42	53.47
EE	25.01	26.7	29.18	34.42	38.96	47.19	55.55

Source of Data: Eurostat (EUROPOP2008 - Convergence scenario, national level (proj_08c))

Date of extraction: 19 May 2011; Last update: 16.05.2011

Description: Population aged 65+ divided by population aged 15-64 (projections)

Link to data:

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tsdde511>

Eurostat original label: [tsdde511] - Projected old-age dependency ratio

Further selection: none

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/proj_08c_esms.htm

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Note: This indicator is defined as the projected number of persons aged 65 and over expressed as a percentage of the projected number of persons aged between 15 and 64. If we take the EU 27 countries, we will see that in 2010 the proportion will be 1 to 4, meaning 1 retired against four employed/active population; whereas in 2060, the proportion will be 2 to 2, meaning 2 retired against 2 employed/active population.

Estonian demographic trends are similar with European tendencies. Though the negative natural increase in 1990-s has not yet affected the proportion of working-age population, its impact will appear in the coming years. According to Eurostat prognosis, 20 years from now, there are 100 000 working-age people less than now. At the same time, relatively high proportion of non-citizens among Estonian inhabitants sets definite limits for bringing in foreign work force, the practice that many other European countries have used to increase the labour force supply.

TABLE 4: VET SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS BY INDICATOR AND YEAR								
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	73	67	58	48	47	45	45	43
STUDENTS TOTAL	28 183	29 915	29 013	28 651	27 381	27 239	28 363	28 012
STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION WITHOUT BASIC EDUCATION	264	267	28	169	307	414	420	354
STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL COURSES AFTER BASIC EDUCATION	17 132	18 886	18 884	19 004	18 454	18 153	18 225	17 478
STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL COURSES AFTER SECONDARY EDUCATION	10 787	10 762	10 101	9 478	8 620	8672	9718	10 180

Source: EHIS, November 2010

The admissions of 2009/2010 exceeded all expectations. There was an increase in all levels, but the greatest increase was among the students who had already acquired the secondary education. There was a small decrease in admissions in 2010/2011.

Previous years, around 30% of students went to IVET after the basic school, but in 2010, 26% of basic school leavers continued in IVET. Due to demographic reasons, the falling trend in admissions will continue if this ratio is maintained. However, since 2008, the number of people in VET after secondary school has increased as more students opt for a VET institution after the secondary school.

Another measure to counteract the falling number of students has been the concentration of VET both in regions and sectors. In 2002, there were 58 state owned VET institutions. The number has been reduced to 30 through very decisive actions. The objective of these actions was to increase the quality, accessibility and efficiency by reducing the number of VET institutions. Many smaller institutions have been merged into regional VET centres, the so called "centres of excellence" with a wide variety of specialities taught in one institution.

As the number of basic schools and VET institutions has decreased from year to year, the adjustment with demographic trends has taken place. For the reason that same has not

happened in secondary and higher education, regulation of schools network has planned to put into practice.

1.3 ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

TABLE 5: EMPLOYED PERSONS AGED 15+ BY ECONOMIC SECTOR OF ACTIVITY (IN THOUSANDS AND AS % OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT), 2010

geo	primary sector and utilities		manufacturing		construction		distribution and transport		business and other services	non marketed services		
	persons	%	persons	%	persons	%	persons	%	persons	%	persons	%
EU 27	15175.8	7.0	33992.7	15.7	16573.2	7.7	57099.0	26.4	38733.1	17.9	53694.1	24.8
EST	39.7	7.0	108.3	19.0	47.9	8.4	155.4	27.2	85.4	15.0	131.1	23.0

Source: Eurostat (Labour Force Survey); Extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 12-05-2011

Description: Employment persons aged 15+ by economic sector of activity (NACE rev2) in thousands and as % of total employment

Eurostat lable: *lfsa_egan2-Employment by sex, age groups and economic activity (from 2008, NACE rev.2) (1000)*

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=lfsa_egan2&lang=en

Further selections: year=2009, sex=total, age=15+, all sectors selected

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/lfsq_esms.htm

In 2009 and 2010, big changes took place on the Estonian labour market because of the worldwide financial and economic crisis. Employment, which had been increasing continuously since 2001, decreased rapidly and dropped in 2009 to the level of 2004 and in 2010 to the level fixed ten years ago i.e. to the level of the previous economic crisis. Bigger changes in the economic activity of the population took place in 2006-2008. The labour force participation rate for the population aged 15-74, which had been around 62-63% in 2000-2005, rose to 66.6% in 2008. The economic crisis has had an essential impact on the employment and unemployment indicators, but a relatively small impact on the economic activity of the population.

The structure of employment changed. As the economic crisis influenced above all manufacturing and construction, the share of secondary sector in employment, which had been increasing in 2007-2008, decreased from 35% to 31% during 2009-2010. The share of tertiary sector, which had been 61% in 2008, increased to 65% in 2010. The share of primary sector stayed at the level of 2008 (4%) during the last two years. Employment decreased due to the decreasing number of full-time workers.

TABLE 6: EMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE GROUPS AND HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2003, 2006 AND 2010

	TIME	2003			2006			2010		
GEO	ISCED / AGE	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
EU 27	0-2	25.1(i)	66.1(i)	41.9 (i)	24.8	66.9	43.5	21.5	62.8	43.1
	3-4	47.2 (i)	79.1 (i)	54.9 (i)	48.1	80.5	57.9	45.0	79.7	59.6
	5-6	62.0 (i)	88.0 (i)	72.4 (i)	60.5	88.5	74.2	57.1	87.4	74.5
	No a.	14.9 (i)	72.6 (i)	39.1 (i)	5.1	76.0	5.6	5.2	72.8	62.2
	Total	36.0 (i)	77.4 (i)	51.5 (i)	36.6	79.1	54.4	34.1	78.1	56.7
EE	0-2	12.2	60.3	44.1	14.4	65.4	46.6	9.6 (u)	52.1	34.4 (u)
	3-4	41.7	78.2	58.3	47.9	84.1	66.5	37.7	73.3	60.1
	5-6	75.7 (u)	84.9	70.8	72.6 (u)	90.8	80.3	55.0 (u)	83.8	72.3
	No a.	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	Total	27.5	78.8	59.4	31.6	84.7	67.3	25.7	75.0	61.1

Source: Eurostat (Labour Force Survey); Extracted on 19-05-2011; Last update: 12-05-2011

Description: Employment rates represent the number of employed persons as percentage of the total population. Specific rates are calculated by age groups and educational level

No A.: No answer

Eurostat original label: Ifsa_ergaed-Employment rates by sex, age groups and highest level of education attained (%)

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ifsa_ergaed&lang=en

Further selection: time=2003, 2006, 2009; age=15-24, 25-49,50-64, 15-64, ISCED=0-2, 3-4,5-6, not answer; sex=total

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/Ifsq_esms.htm

SEX= Total; INDICATORS= OBS_FLAG

In 2007, the labour market indicators were at their highest. 62.6% of the people aged 15-74 were employed. The starting economic recession had not affected employment and unemployment yet. The rapid economic growth of the previous years, which entailed a growing demand for labour force, brought a record number of people to employment in 2007 and in the beginning of 2008. Both the employment and unemployment indicators were comparable with the levels prevailing at the beginning of the 1990s. The economic crises changed the situation, the employment rate which had been growing since 2001, decreased sharply and in 2010 reached the level of previous crisis ten years ago.

TABLE 7: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE GROUPS AND HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2003, 2006 AND 2010

	TIME	2003			2006			2010		
GEO	ISCED / AGE	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
EU 27	0-2	20.2 (i)	11.6 (i)	7.2 (i)	21.2	11.2	7.5	27.4	16.3	10.2
	3-4	17.7 (i)	8.4 (i)	7.7 (i)	15.4	7.3	6.9	18.1	8.2	6.7
	5-6	12.0 (i)	4.8 (i)	3.7 (i)	13.4	4.3	3.6	16.2	5.3	3.6
	No a.	13.9 (i)	7.8 (i)	7.4 (i)	20.1	:	:	:	8.2	:
	Total	18.0 (i)	8.3 (i)	6.6 (i)	17.2	7.3	6.3	20.8	8.9	6.9
EE	0-2	33.9 (u)	:	:	:	:	:	46.8 (u)	30.4 (u)	:
	3-4	23.4	10.2	13.5	:	5.8 (u)	:	31.2	18.6	16.6
	5-6	:	4.7 (u)	:	:	:	:	:	7.2 (u)	13.1 (u)
	No a.	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	Total	24.2	8.6	11.2	12.0 (u)	5.6	4.5 (u)	32.9	15.4	15.5

Source: Eurostat (LFS); Extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 12-05-2011

Description: unemployment rates represent the number of unemployed persons as percentage of the active population (employed + unemployed)

Eurostat original label: Ifsa_urgaed-Unemployment rates by sex, age groups and highest level of education attained (%)

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=Ifsa_urgaed&lang=en

Further selection: time=2003, 2006, 2009; age=15-24, 25-49,50-64, 15-64, ISCED=low, medium, high, not answer; sex=total

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/Ifsq_esms.htm

SEX= Total; INDICATORS= OBS_FLAG

In 2009 and at the beginning of 2010, labour market experienced a serious shock manifested in a mass disappearance of jobs, which in turn led to a rapid increase in unemployment and a decline in employment. The unemployment rate in 2007 was 4.9% which is the lowest rate since 1994. The second half of 2008 saw a rapid increase in unemployment due to the economic crisis. The rate of unemployment rose to 14.4% in 2009. The number of the unemployed was the highest in the first quarter of 2010 when the unemployment rate reached 20%. In the first quarter of 2011 it dropped to 14%. As you can see from the following table, the youngest people were hit the most. Also, the gap between the unemployment of men and women was widened in 2009, due to rapid decrease of the employment of men. The employment rate of women has been higher than the employment rate of men since the end of 2009.

The situation on the labour market improved in the second half of 2010 when difficulties on the labour market did not, fortunately, aggravate, instead new jobs were added and unemployment fell. However, these slight positive changes have not taken the labour market back to the same state witnessed a few years before. In 2010 and at the beginning of 2011, the unemployment figures were significantly higher than they could be in case of natural unemployment rate.

The unemployment in Estonia grew more than the average of the EU. In 2008, the unemployment rate in Estonia was 1.5 percentage points lower compared to the average of the EU, but in 2009 by 4.9 percentage points and in 2010 by 7.3 percentage points higher. The youth unemployment rate differed even more from the EU average. In 2009, the unemployment rate of persons aged 15-24 increased to 27.5% in Estonia, being 7.7 percentage points higher compared to the EU average.

Due to a decrease in employment possibilities, unemployment increased among persons with a lower educational level as well as among persons with a higher educational level. However, persons with lower education had more problems with finding a job. In 2010, 30.9% of the labour force with up to basic education were unemployed (28.6% a year ago), being nearly two times higher compared to the overall unemployment rate. The unemployment rate of persons with secondary or vocational education also increased remarkably (from 15.8% to 19.3%). The unemployment rate of persons with higher education, Master's or Doctor's degree (8.4%) was still the lowest, but compared to 2009 (5.1%) it was nevertheless higher.

At the moment, special measures are planned aimed at decreasing youth unemployment. The goal is to lessen youth unemployment rate at least to the same level as it was before the crises.

TABLE 8: TOTAL PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS % OF GDP, AT SECONDARY LEVEL OF EDUCATION (ISCED 2-4), 2002-2008							
Geo	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
EU27	2.32 (s)	2.35 (s)	2.29 (s)	2.25 (s)	2.23 (s)	2.20 (s)	:
EE	2.44	2.56	2.46	2.35	2.33	2.25 (i)	2.54

Source: Eurostat (UOE); extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 12-04-2011

s - Eurostat estimate i - see explanatory notes b - break in series

Description: Total public expenditure on education, at ISCED level 2-3-4, by programme orientation (million PPS, % of GDP, % of public expenditure)

Original Eurostat table: educ_figdp-Expenditure on education as % of GDP or public expenditure

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_figdp&lang=en

Further selections: INDIC_ED=Total public expenditure on education as % of GDP, at secondary level of education (ISCED 2-4)

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/educ_esms.htm

INDIC_ED= Total public expenditure on education as % of GDP, at secondary level of education (ISCED 2-4); INDICATORS= OBS_FLAG

Financing general education has remained invariant despite the consistent decrease in the number of students. Therefore the financing ratio per student in VET versus general education is in favor of general education and schooling expenditure per student in general education is higher than in VET. Hence, the financing of different educational levels needs to be looked over.

1.4 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF POPULATION

In comparison with the EU average, the proportion of the population with low level qualifications is small (11%). For tertiary education, the percentage of the population aged 25-64 with higher education was higher than in most of the EU member states in 2007. Education has been traditionally highly valued, both in Soviet times and currently. Tertiary level education is appraised more than VET, therefore the participation rate in higher education has been high for several years.

TABLE 9: EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS (%), 2002-2009								
GEO/ TIME	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
EU 27	17.0	16.6 (b)	16.1	15.8	15.5	15.1	14.9	14.4
EST	13.2	12.9	13.1	13.4	13.5	14.4	14.0	13.9

Source of data Eurostat (LFS); Extracted: 19-05-2011; Last update 01-04-2011

Description: Percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training

Eurostat original label: *lfsi_edu_a*-Youth education, lifelong learning, early school leavers - Annual data

Link to data http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=lfsi_edu_a&lang=en

Further selections: *indic_em*=Early school-leavers - Percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training

Link to metadata http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/lfsi_edu_a_esms.htm
INDICATORS= OBS_FLAG; INDIC_EM

Dropping out of school is essential problem in Estonian education. In 2009/2010, the share of discontinuers decreased at the secondary school level, but increased a little at the basic school level compared to the previous year. More dropouts occur among boys who learn in Estonian and in diurnal studies. The amendments to the Vocational Education Institutions Act in 2006 allow such people to get a profession without fulfilling the requirements of the basic or upper secondary education.

Dropping out of school is also a problem in VET, but the situation has shown some signs of improvement over past few years. In 2006/2007, 20.3% of students dropped out, the same figure for 2009/2010 is lower - 18.1%. The highest rate of dropout is in VET after basic school without general upper secondary subjects.

Another trouble spot is big share of working-age population (age group 25-64 32%) who has basic or general secondary education and don't have any professional education (vocational or higher). In 2010, the biggest share (35%) of people without any professional education was among youngest age group (25-34). In 2010, the percentage of young people (18-24) with basic or lower education who did not continue studies was 11.7%.

TABLE 10A: GRADUATES AT ISCED LEVEL 3 AND LEVEL 4 BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION, PROGRAMME ORIENTATION AND SEX (NUMBERS), 2007, 2009

Year		2007						2009					
geo	S	3 GEN	3 PV	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 PV	4 VOC	3 GEN	3 PV	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 PV	4 VOC
EE	T	12457	:	4166	:	:	3481	11517	:	4218	:	:	3169
	M	4932	:	2790	:	:	1163	4652	:	2834	:	:	1103
	F	7525	:	1376	:	:	2318	6865	:	1384	:	:	2066
EU 27*	T	2393291	:	2595569	49493	:	424537	2319746	:	2480373	:	:	394682
	M	1022202	:	1400317	23958	:	194372	995733	:	1344532	:	:	188195
	F	1371089	:	1195251	25535	:	230165	1324013	:	1135842	:	:	206487

Source: Eurostat (UOE Data collection); Extracted: 19-05-2011; Last update: 29-04-2011

* Available total - calculated by Cedefop;

S= sex; T= total; M=males; F=females; GEN=general; PV=pre-vocational; VOC=vocational

Eurostat original label: educ_grad2-Graduates in ISCED 3 and 4 by age and sex

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_grad2&lang=en

Further selections: Level=ISCED 3 general, ISCED 3 prevocational, ISCED 3 vocational, ISCED 4 general, ISCED 4 prevocational, ISCED4 vocational, sex =Total, male, female, age =total

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/educ_esms.htm

AGE=Total; INDICATORS= OBS_FLAG

Admittance and enrolment in vocational education institutions in 2010/2011 was quite similar to last year (slightly declined), but the number of graduates increased. The value of vocational education has risen bit by bit against the background of economic recession and unemployment. According to Statistics Estonia, most of students enrolled in vocational education in the academic year of 2010/2011 were studying in the vocational upper secondary programme after basic school (62%). 36% of students were receiving post-secondary vocational training, 1.3% were taking vocational courses without educational requirements (mostly doesn't have basic education). The proportion of female and male students in vocational education is the opposite of higher education - male students accounted for 57%. However, in post basic vocational programs 67% are male, but in post-secondary vocational training only 40% (Estonian Education Information System (EHIS)). The most preferred field of study for men is engineering and engineering trades. Women are mostly studying personal service, business and administration.

TABLE 10B: GRADUATES AT ISCED LEVEL 5 AND LEVEL 6 BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION, PROGRAMME DESTINATION, 1ST/2ND STAGE AND SEX (NUMBERS), 2007, 2009

Year		2007						2009					
geo	S	5 A1	5 A2	5 B1	5 B2	6	5-6	5 A1	5 A2	5 B1	5 B2	6	5-6
EE	T	5820	2129	4510	:	153	12612	4926	2267	4136	:	160	11489
	M	1900	614	1335	:	74	3923	1501	716	1101	:	86	3404
	F	3920	1515	3175	:	79	8689	3425	1551	3035	:	74	8085
EU 27*	T	2348435	916150	691661	10355	109512	4076113	2465221	915360	706581	10850	100723	4198735
	M	971270	357768	280571	2703	59335	1671647	1020740	365808	278346	2568	54413	1721875
	F	1377165	558382	411090	7652	50177	2404466	1444481	549552	428235	8282	46310	2476860

Source: Eurostat (UOE Data collection); Extracted: 19-05-2011; Last update: 29-04-2011

* Available total;

S= sex; M=males; F=females; T= total; 5A1= 5a all first degrees; 5A2=5a second degree; 5B1= 5b first qualification; 5B2= 5b second qualification, 6=level 6, 5-6= level 5-6

Eurostat original label: educ_grad4-Graduates in ISCED 5 and 6 by age and sex

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_grad4&lang=en

Further selections: Level=ISCED 5a first degrees, 5a second degree, 5b first qualification, 5b second qualification, 5-6 combined, sex =Total, male, female, age =total

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/educ_esms.htm

AGE=Total; INDICATORS= OBS_FLAG

Even though the image and the quality of professional higher education have improved, it has not reached the level of popularity of the academic higher education yet. During the last five academic years, the number of students in the Bachelor's study has declined, influenced by the decreased number of gymnasium graduates. However, the total number of students in higher education has grown at the expense of the growing number of students in Master's and Doctoral studies. The number of students in applied higher education has decreased. While 34% of students were enrolled in applied higher education in 2008, during the two following years this percentage dropped to

Young people's educational choices are particularly influenced by professional perspectives. Although in recent years the number of learners in law and business and administration has diminished, business and administration is still the most popular field of study in applied as well as academic higher education - 21% of Estonian students have chosen this field of study. Not only in Estonia, but in most countries, the largest proportion of young people is studying the so-called soft disciplines. Taking into consideration the demands of labour market, the need for technical and science graduates grows.

If we observe graduates by sex and educational level, the gap between women and men are especially apparent in higher education. According to statistics Estonia, around 70% of graduates at tertiary level are women, the same figure in VET is around 50%. In 2009/2010, the number of dropouts from higher education institutions grew (most in the Bachelor's study).

TIME	2002			2005			2009		
GEO	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M
EU 27	76.7	79.3	74.0	77.5	80.2	74.8	78.6	81.4	75.9
EE	81.4	85.8	77.1	82.6	87.6	77.6	82.3	86.4	78.2

Source: Eurostat (LFS); Extracted: 19-05-2011; Last update: 01-04-2011

Description: Youth education attainment level - Percentage of the population aged 20 to 24 having completed at least upper secondary education

Eurostat original label: Ifsi_edu_a-Youth education, lifelong learning, early school leavers - Annual data

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=Ifsi_edu_a&lang=en

Further selections: sex=total, male, female, indic:em=youth education attainment total, youth education attainment male, youth education attainment female

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/Ifsi_edu_a_esms.htm
INDICATORS= OBS_FLAG

The figures on education attainment are high for Estonia, the EU benchmark has already been reached. As mentioned before, the problem here is that almost a half of these people enter the labour market without any skills, because they prefer higher education, but are not able to stay in the program and graduate.

time	2002			2005			2009		
geo	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M
EU 27	7.2	7.8	6.6	9.8	10.5	9.0	9.3 (p)	10.2 (p)	8.5 (p)
EE	5.4	6.9	3.6	5.9	7.3	4.3 (u)	10.5	13.2	7.6

Source: Eurostat (LFS); Extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 01-04-2011

(b) - break in series (p) - provisional value (u) - unreliable/uncertain data

Description: Life-long learning (adult participation in education and training) - Percentage of the population aged 25-64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey

Eurostat original label: Ifsi_edu_a-Youth education, lifelong learning, early school leavers - Annual data

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=Ifsi_edu_a&lang=en

Further selections: sex=total, male, female, indicator=lifelong learning total, lifelong learning male, lifelong learning female, year =2002, 2005, 2008

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/Ifsi_edu_a_esms.htm
INDICATORS=OBS_FLAG

In 2001-2006 the participation in lifelong learning was between 4-7%. Sudden change took place in 2008 when Estonian figure surpassed EU average. In 2009 it was 10.5% and in 2010 10.9%. Government has set the goal to reach 15% by 2015 and 20% by 2020.

1.5 DEFINITIONS

TERM: ALTERNANCE TRAINING

Education and training combining periods in an educational institution or training centre and in the workplace. The alternance scheme can take place on weekly, monthly or yearly basis. Depending on the country and applicable status, participants may be contractually linked to the employer and/or receive the remuneration.

Comment: the German “dual system” is an example of alternance training.

Source: Cedefop. Terminology of European education and training policy: a selection of 100 key terms. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Available from Internet: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Glossary.cspn> [cited 22.07.2010].

There is no alternance training in Estonia apart from apprenticeship.

TERM: APPRENTICESHIP

Systematic, long-term training alternating periods in a school or training centre and at the workplace; the apprentice is contractually linked to the employer and receives remuneration (wage or allowance). The employer assumes responsibility for providing the trainee with training leading to a specific occupation.

Source: Cedefop. Terminology of European education and training policy: a selection of 100 key terms. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Available from Internet: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Glossary.csp> [cited 22.07.2010].

(Please note: this definition is not prepared specifically for the context of statistical data collection. Further definitions exist at Eurostat, but no single standard definition has been agreed).

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one.

TERM: COMPETENCE

The proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

Source: EQF, 2006

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one.

TERM: CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (CVET)

Vocational education or training after initial education and training - or after entry into working life aimed at helping individuals to:

- improve or update their knowledge and/or skills;
- acquire new skills for a career move or retraining;
- continue their personal or professional development

Comment: CVET can be provided and undertaken at the initiative of public authorities, social partners, sectors, enterprises, individuals as well as a range of voluntary and community organisations.

Source: adapted from Cedefop. Terminology of European education and training policy: a selection of 100 key terms. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Available from Internet: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Glossary.csp> ;Glossary of the EknowVET database [cited 22.07.2010].

The Estonian term differ from the international terminology. CVET is a synonym for adult education, and it is not the next logical step after IVET.

TERM: FIRST STAGE OF TERTIARY OR HIGHER EDUCATION (ISCED 5)

Includes tertiary programmes with: (a) academic orientation (type A), which are largely theoretical; (b) occupational orientation (type B), usually shorter than type A and geared towards entry to the labour market. Type A programmes provide access to advanced research studies and professions with high skill requirements. Type B programmes prepare students for direct entry into a specific occupation. Entry to ISCED level 5 normally requires successful completion of ISCED levels 3 or 4.

Comment: Level 5 A programmes with academic orientation are typically outside the scope of VET.

Source: Cedefop, 2008, based on Unesco, 1997; Eurydice, 2006. Terminology of European education and training policy: a selection of 100 key terms. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Available from Internet: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Glossary.csp> [cited 22.07.2010].

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one.

TERM: FORMAL LEARNING

Learning that occurs in an organised and structured environment (e.g. in an education or training institution or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or resources). Formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It typically leads to validation and certification.

Source: based on Cedefop, 2004

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one.

TERM: GENERAL EDUCATION

Education which is mainly designed to lead participants to a deeper understanding of a subject or group of subjects, especially, but not necessarily, with a view to preparing participants for further (additional) education at the same or a higher level. Successful completion of these programmes may or may not provide the participants with a labour-market relevant qualification at this level. These programmes are typically school-based. Programmes with a general orientation and not focusing on a particular specialization should be classified in this category.

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "International Standard Classification of Education - ISCED 1997", Paris, November 1997

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one.

TERM: INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (IVET)

General or vocational education and training carried out in the initial education system, usually before entering working life.

Comment: some training undertaken after entry into working life may be considered as initial training (e.g. retraining); initial education and training can be carried out at any level in general or vocational education (full-time school-based or alternance training) pathways or apprenticeship.

Source: Cedefop. Terminology of European education and training policy: a selection of 100 key terms. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Available from Internet: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Glossary.csp> [cited 22.07.2010].

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one.

TERM: LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION (ISCED 2)

Lower secondary education generally continues the basic programmes of primary, although teaching is typically more subject-focused, often employing more specialised teachers to conduct classes.

Comment: in some countries, this level may appear as an artificial division which does not correspond to the national education system (nine years of basic education including ISCED level 2). In such cases, ISCED 2 level is called 'second stage of basic education'.

Source: Cedefop, 2008, based on Unesco, 1997; Eurydice, 2006. Terminology of European education and training policy: a selection of 100 key terms. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Available from Internet: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Glossary.csp> [cited 22.07.2010].

In Estonia, this level is an artificial division.

TERM: NON-FORMAL LEARNING

Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support). Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view.

Comments:

- non-formal learning outcomes may be validated and lead to certification;
- non-formal learning is sometimes described as semi-structured learning.

Source: based on Cedefop, 2004.

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one.

TERM: OCCUPATION

Group of activities that necessitate a homogeneous series of techniques and skills within a specific field and speciality.

Source: Cedefop, working definition.

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one.

TERM: POST-SECONDARY (NON-TERTIARY) EDUCATION (ISCED 4)

These programmes straddle the boundary between upper secondary and tertiary education. They serve to broaden the knowledge of upper secondary education graduates. These programmes are designed to prepare students for studies at first stage of tertiary education or for direct labour market entry. They do not lead to a tertiary qualification.

Comment: students entering will have usually completed upper secondary education. Programmes usually have a full-time equivalent duration of between 6 months and 2 years.

Source: Cedefop, 2008, based on Unesco, 1997; Eurydice, 2006. Terminology of European education and training policy: a selection of 100 key terms. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Available from Internet: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Glossary.csp> [cited 22.07.2010].

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one.

TERM: PRE-VOCATIONAL OR PRE-TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Education which is mainly designed to introduce participants to the world of work and to prepare them for entry into vocational or technical education programmes. Successful completion of such programmes does not yet lead to a labour-market relevant vocational or technical qualification. For a programme to be considered as pre-vocational or pre-technical education, at least 25 per cent of its content has to be vocational or technical.

Source: ISCED 1997

The Estonian does not differ from the international one

TERM: PROFESSION

Professional activity or group of professional activities, access to which, the pursuit of which, or one of the modes of pursuit of which is subject, directly or indirectly, by virtue of legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions to the possession of specific professional qualifications.

Source: European Parliament and Council of the European Union (2005). directive 2005/36/EC of the European parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications. Available from Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:255:0022:0142:en:PDF> [cited 03.05.2011].

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one.

TERM: QUALIFICATION

A formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

Source: EQF, 2006

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one.

TERM: SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMMES

Programmes in which instruction takes place (either partly or exclusively) in educational institutions. These include special training centres for vocational education run by public or private authorities or enterprise-based special training centres if these qualify as educational institutions. These programmes can have an on-the-job training component, i.e. a component of some practical experience at the workplace.

Source: UOE data collection on education systems, Volume 1, Manual, Concepts, definitions and classifications

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one.

TERM: SKILLS

The ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

Source: EQF, 2006

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one.

TERM: UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (ISCED 3)

Final stage of secondary education that normally begins at the end of compulsory education. The entrance age is usually 15 or 16 years. Entrance qualifications (completion of compulsory education) and other minimum entry requirements are generally needed. Instruction is often more subject-oriented than lower secondary education (ISCED 2). The typical duration of ISCED level 3 varies from two to five years.

Source: Cedefop, 2008, based on Unesco, 1997; Eurydice, 2006. Terminology of European education and training policy: a selection of 100 key terms. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Available from Internet: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Glossary.csp> [cited 22.07.2010].

The Estonian term does not differ from the international one. It is divided in two in Estonia: 1) general upper secondary (3 years) and 2) vocational upper secondary (3-4 years).

2. MODERNISING VET TO SUPPORT LLL, INTERNATIONALISATION, AND MOBILITY

2.1 VET POLICY DEVELOPMENTS AND PRIORITIES IN SUPPORTING LLL

The previous National Lifelong Learning Strategy set the course for 2005-2008. The new strategy for 2009-2013 focuses on adult education. Important goal is to increase the proportion of people with qualifications framework level IV-VIII education among people aged 25-64. The aim is to increase the participation rate in LLL to 13.5% by 2013. By 2020 the participation rate is expected to grow further - to the level of 17% (the goal is adopted in Estonian 2020 strategy).

These objectives will be achieved by focusing on five priority areas, underlined below.

- Firstly, to help to improve the labour market and economic situation by training adults, three measures are foreseen: to make the labour market training more effective and diversify the training opportunities for the unemployed, to offer training to those in danger of losing their jobs and partially employed and to assure the relevance of training for the adults.
- Secondly, to make the education system more open to offer formal education to adults, access will be increased both in general education and VET institutions.
- Thirdly, non-formal training will be offered at the workplace and through non-formal courses to increase the competitiveness of adults and develop creativity, initiative and social responsibility.
- Fourthly, supporting measures will be developed to assure the quality and flexibility of training and to increase awareness. Training provision will be matched with the needs of the labour market and target group, the quality of non-formal training will be increased, recognition of prior learning will be implemented and awareness of training opportunities and the need to study will be raised.
- Fifthly, the management of adult education is inclusive and effective by implementing sustainable financing mechanisms, and assuring effective and efficient management.

There was a broad based discussion in the society which aim was leading the creation of a comprehensive Estonian Education Strategy 2012-2020 (*Haridusstrateegia*) also called as Lifelong Learning Strategy (*Elukestva Õppe Starteegia*), a concise document interlinking all the other strategies and levels of education in Estonia. Draft of this document has been drawn up in 2010.

The initiatives and latest developments in the current national policy debates on VET are as follows:

- **Governance and Funding**

In Estonia, there is one infrastructure for both, IVET and CVET. The school network has been optimized, many schools have been combined into regional centres of excellence, yet, highly specialized schools have been preserved. The number of state-owned VET institutions has decreased from 58 in 2002 to 30 in 2011. In addition, 8 institutions of professional higher education offer vocational education and training. The decrease has enabled to pool the resources and improve training provision. The school buildings will all be renovated and by the 2015, 232 million € will be invested in the remaining schools. Part of VET institutions are already renovated, part of them is in the process of modernisation.

According to the Amendments to Vocational Education Institutions Act (2006) at least fifty per cent of the people on VET school boards have to be social partners, representatives of employers and employees. Thus, the circle of people involved in crucial decisions about VET on the local level has been broadened.

The new scheme of state funded study places (*riiklik koolitustellimus - RKT*) was first implemented in 2007/2008 study year. The new scheme allocates study places within the curriculum group for the coming 3 years, giving the schools the additional flexibility to decide the number and time of admission of the new applicants. At the same time the schools are obligated to fill all the state funded study places during the whole calendar year. Thus, if the school sees it cannot admit enough students in some curricula, it can try to increase enrolment to a different curriculum in a same curriculum group or go to a local basic or secondary school and offer to teach VET courses for their students in the same curriculum group. The measure has increased the flexibility of funding and autonomy of the school. In 2007, the scheme of state funded study places was extended to provide short period courses for continuous and retraining of working adults, who can themselves choose what and where to study. This measure was taken to prevent unemployment. In 2009, the opportunity to receive continuous training and retraining was extended to the unemployed as well.

In 2010, working team began the development work with renewing of the Vocational Education Institutions Act (2006). Main planned changes are as follows: output-based approach; transition to output-based VET study programs, closely linked with Estonian Qualifications Framework; new accreditation system in VET; VET management will be more optimal, taking into consideration the particularity of VET institutions.

- **Guidance and counselling**

In March 2008, a contractual agreement regarding career and guidance services in Estonia was signed between two Ministries - the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Research. As an outcome, the new ESF programme "Development of Career Services system in the Republic of Estonia" was started and the National Career Guidance Forum (NCGF) was set up. The forum unites policy makers and practitioners from many different levels and sectors. (See chapter 9 for detail).

- **Teacher and trainer training**

An ESF project (2005-2008) for developing VET teachers' further training possibilities and system as a whole was very successful and many initiatives were taken and carried out as a result. For example, curricula for continuing education for vocational teachers and practical training supervisors were established and VET teacher's career model was compiled in 15 curriculum groups. Through the 2005-2008 project "The Development of VET Curricula" VET teachers were involved in revising the content of VET training through participation in curricula committees and creating the school curricula.

The activities will continue and new activities are within the new programme „Modernizing the content of VET 2008-2013“. (See chapter 7 for detail).

- **Accreditation**

The principles of accreditation of vocational educational institutions and broadening of the renewed education licence system have been developed – today, education licences only cover private and municipal vocational education institutions.

The system of internal evaluation, in place for 2006-2010, during which time the schools needed to present at least one internal evaluation report, will be supplemented by the accreditation of the curriculum groups. If the result is positive, the school will be granted the right to carry out teaching for 6 years. If the result is “conditional”, the right will be granted for 1-3 years with the need to undergo accreditation again after that period. With the negative result, the training in curriculum group will be closed. The pilot accreditation will be carried out in 2011-2012 in seven curriculum groups: construction and hotel and catering (2011) and computer sciences, management and administration, agriculture, electrical engineering and energetics and transportation (2012). In pilot round, schools participate in voluntary basis.

- **Curriculum reform and innovative approaches to teaching and assessment**

In 2005-2008 there was an ESF project “VET curricula development” by which 44 new national curricula, which are a basis for school curricula, were developed. The new curricula are based on qualification standards and thus correspond to the needs of the labour market. The unified content of the new curricula assures equity and comparability of all VET programmes across the country. The process will be followed up in the new ESF programme “Modernizing the content of VET” in 2008-2013. In 2011, a study mapping the situation on how national curricula are put into practice was conducted.

In relation with the updating of basic schools’ and upper secondary schools’ national curricula (implementation will start from the academic year 2011/2012), a discussion has been started concerning the general education subject group in vocational secondary education. Unlike several other countries, Estonia has made a vast volume of general education subjects compulsory in vocational secondary education curricula. At the moment, curriculum development focuses on key and social competencies and development of personal qualities which are considered more important than the volume of general education subjects and should be integrated in vocational studies.

The ESF project *E-Võti* (E-key) launched in 2006 aimed to create a modern study opportunities. 2 310 teachers, IT- and education specialists took part in the training focusing on the compilation of electronic study materials (mainly web-based). This project is continued through the follow-up program “E-learning development in VET 2008-2013”. Teacher training programme in e-learning is coordinated by e-learning Development Centre of the Estonian Information Technology Foundation. (See paragraph 5.1 in detail).

- **Skills needs strategy**

The anticipated skills needs have been studied by the Ministry of Economics and Communications since 2003. These forecasts (last update to 2018) have been used to plan formal education and training, both in VET and in higher education. (See chapter 8 for detail).

- **Validation of non-formal and informal learning**

Previously, the skills and competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning were validated case by case, taking into account the accomplishments of the applicant. The process was governed by arbitrary rules, the validating depended on the person or organization doing the validation. In 2005, an ESF sub-project VÕTA (*Varasema Õppe ja Töökogemuse Arvestamine*) or RPEL (Recognition of Prior Experience and Learning) was started to promote lifelong learning and to develop the procedures how to take into account the previous study and work experience. In higher education, the principles of VÕTA have been adopted and included in the Standard of Higher Education. In 2009 it was included in the VET standard.

- **Continuing education**

Vocational schools offer, in addition to formal education, an increasing proportion of in-service training and retraining provided in order to ensure the accessibility of vocational education and training to all interest groups in all regions. Since autumn 2007, training for adults has been ordered from vocational educational institutions and institutions of professional higher education offering vocational training, primarily using the funds of the European Social Fund. In 2008, more than 27 000 people attended adult education courses in vocational educational institutions. In years 2009-2010, this number decreased a little bit, but has remained quite high. As this has been one of the growing sections of VET institutions, the quality and finance issues are arising.

2.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF EUROPEAN TOOLS AND PRINCIPLES

The development of a holistic qualifications system was explicitly set in the political agenda by the Ministry of Education and Research in 2007, supported by the corresponding master plan and legislation. Thorough discussions are held upon creating a link between the European Qualifications' Framework (EQF) and the national qualification system. Transition from the old five level framework to the new one is carried out in accordance with the vocational standard renewing process of 2009-2013. In 2008, 8 level Estonian Qualifications Framework (EKR) was enacted and in 2009 the Estonian Qualification Authority (*SA Kutsekoda*) got the licences and obligations of the EQF reference point in Estonia. The goal is to develop a holistic, flexible and sustainable, competence based qualifications system, which supports lifelong learning and mobility of the people, and enhances the competitiveness of the society. The system will integrate three major processes:

- Translation of society's and labour market expectations for competences and learning outcomes into educational or professional (vocational) standards and curricula;
- Assessment, valuation and certification of persons' actual competences and learning outcomes;
- This system is envisaged as part of a quality assurance system in lifelong learning, functioning as flexible interface between the society and the lifelong learning system, or in case of the professional qualifications system, an interface between the labour market and the lifelong learning system. As a result, the academic recognition and professional recognition of competences will be integrated into a single qualifications system compatible with EQF.

The following major conceptual and cultural changes are underway:

- Systematic shift towards learning outcomes based curriculum development in all sectors of formal education (general, vocational, higher and adult education);
- Development of competence (learning outcomes) based professional standards, which can serve as an input for curriculum development, and as a standard for assessment, valuation and certification of persons' competences;
- Modularized approach to professional standards and curriculum development, complemented with rules and procedures for modularized assessment, valuation and certification of qualifications and partial qualifications;
- Unit based credit system will be implemented and ECVET will be incorporated into the modules, in parallel with renewing the qualification standards, where different skills and competences will be expressed through ECVET.
- Gradually widening valuation of prior learning. The development has been faster in higher education sector as part of the Bologna process, also supported by ESF sponsored projects and underpinned by the corresponding amendments in the Higher Education Standards (2008). Similar developments are underway in the VET sector.

Estonian National Europass Centre (NEC) operates since 2005 and celebrated its 5th anniversary in 2010. The statistics on CEDEFOP Europass website indicates a greater increase of visits and composed documents comparing the previous years. In 2010, Europass CV was composed by Estonian users 13 204 times, 94 Europass Certificate Supplement in English are obtainable from Estonian Qualifications Authority web-page and 608 Europass Mobility were issued. In 2010 the number of Europass CV users increased significantly. One of the reasons has been the situation in the labour market that has forced people to seek opportunities that could help them to find a job. The other reason is that the awareness of Europass CV has increased year by year and new possibilities for promotion have been used. 2010 was particularly successful reaching different target groups through various activities, especially to employers. In 2010, the Europass electronic mobility system was installed and tested.

NEC cooperation with VET institutions is quite good. VET students take professional exams and in connection they get information about Europass documents. As in Leonardo da Vinci project, the Europass mobility is mandatory, over 90% of mobility passes are obtained by VET students. Europass Diploma Supplement is coordinated by Estonian ENIC/NARIC Centre. As the cooperation with universities should be stronger, NEC carried out a study among universities to research how they issue and promote Europass Diploma Supplement. On the basis of that survey, cooperation with universities should improve in 2011.

2.3 INTERNATIONALISATION¹ AND TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY IN VET²

2.3.1 POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION AND TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY IN VET

Since 1998, Estonia has participated in the education programmes of the EU. Participation in the EU's cooperation programmes has been very successful and has promoted partnership with Europe in all spheres of education, including both formal and non-formal education. The common education space of the EU makes a significant contribution towards inter-state education cooperation as well as towards free movement of students and workers. A significant part of the resources of the EU structural funds are targeted at supporting people's education and readiness for the needs of the labour market. Competition with other European educational and research institutions makes Estonia increase its efforts and improve study opportunities.

In Estonia, several institutions engage in exchange and it takes place on the levels of general, vocational and higher education. The geographic mobility of students is more widespread in higher education. Therefore, studying a semester or a year at an educational institution in Europe to acquire experience, extend one's horizon and find new acquaintances has become increasingly common. This trend is also growing in vocational schools.

According to the Development Plan of General Education 2007-2013 (*Üldharidussüsteemi arengukava 2007-2013*) general education system is opened for international cooperation and exchange programmes for general education students are available.

In 2007, the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research ratified the Estonian Internationalisation Strategy for Higher Education 2006-2015 (*Eesti kõrghariduse rahvusvahelistumise strateegia*). In 2010, Estonian Development Fund presented report "High school 2018: Worldwide trends and practices of internationalization" (*Kõrgkool 2018: rahvusvahelistumise trendid ja praktika maailmas*).

The Development Plan of Adult Education 2009-2013 does not place a specific focus on the internationalisation of education in Estonia. But it does clearly stress the importance of quality of education and high level competencies of providers. Therefore, the activities supported by Grundtvig are all relevant as these facilitate acquisition of knowledge and skills, sharing best practice and updating competencies. Nordic-Baltic cooperation programme NordPlus is supporting several activities similar to LLP through its funding schemes (Junior, Higher education, Adult, Horizontal).

The issues of international cooperation and mobility of students and teachers feature in the Development Plan for Estonian Vocational Education System 2009-2013. Leonardo da Vinci activities are linked to national priorities and goals. The development plan also prioritizes quality of education to which Leonardo da Vinci mobilities, especially for staff, but also partnerships and projects clearly contribute through the exchange of international knowledge and best practice.

¹ *Internationalization of education is understood as the process of integrating an international, intercultural and/or global dimension into the goals, functions (teaching/learning, research, services) and delivery of education* (adapted from Internationalization of Higher Education: New Directions, New Challenges, IAU 2005 Survey).

² *Transnational mobility in VET is understood as any period that a worker, jobseeker, VET student, teacher or trainer spends abroad in an education or training institution, a company or any other organisation for learning or teaching purposes. Comment: knowledge, skills and competences acquired during the period spent abroad may be validated and lead to certification.* (Cedefop definition).

In addition, VET institutions sometimes organise mobilities or student exchanges in the framework of bilateral agreements or professional networks but these tend to be on a much smaller scale. Yet, the experience of bilateral co-operation with the Nordic countries (especially Finland) is a feature of the Estonian VET system. Active co-operation between (vocational) educational institutions has lasted over 10 years and has influenced their development.

According to the Leonardo da Vinci program experience, the main obstacle that prevents transnational mobility is scarcity of finances. Every year more than half of the projects submitted won't get funding. The mobility of VET teachers is sometimes hampered because of insufficient language knowledge, but at the moment there is a possibility to improve their language skills through projects. As in the Leonardo da Vinci program only organisations can apply, it is not possible to participate by own initiative and sometimes this is an obstacle.

2.3.2 TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY PROGRAMMES AND SCHEMES IN VET

The main and biggest mobility program in VET in Estonia is Leonardo da Vinci Programme (part of EC LLL program). The mobility opportunities of Leonardo da Vinci program are highly valued by the target groups as it is the main measure providing larger scale placement opportunities in the field of vocational education in Estonia. Leonardo da Vinci program is implemented by Archimedes Foundation. Other programs, for example the European territorial cooperation programmes (INTERREG), are not specifically targeted to VET mobility, but there are some cross-border cooperation projects where VET institutions participate as partners. In addition, projects to develop VET and share good experience between VET professionals from different countries have been implemented. For instance, VETLAM and project in Georgia. VET institutions also participate in different networks and cooperate with foreign partners. Table 2.3.2 only presents major mobility programmes in VET.

As a part of Leonardo da Vinci programme there are three types of programs: transnational mobility of persons undergoing initial vocational education and training (IVT); transnational mobility of workers, self-employed or people available for employment (including graduates) undergoing a training period abroad in a vocational training context (PLM); VET professionals such as: human resource managers in undertakings, vocational training programme planners and managers, trainers and occupational guidance counsellors, teachers/trainers/other educational staff, persons responsible for training establishments and for training planning, who are connected to organisations involved in professional education and training (VETPRO). In 2007-2011 the number of projects funded is: 1606 (IVT), 243 (PLM) and 943 (VETPRO). During this period, Leonardo da Vinci beneficiaries have gone to all countries that participate in the program. The most popular destinations have been Finland (23%) and Germany (20%), followed by Norway (11%) and Italy, Spain and Great Britain (all less than 10%). IVT practice is usually 3-5 weeks long, PLM lasts on an average 6-9 weeks and VETPRO 1 week.

All participants will get Europass Mobility and most of VET institutions consider practice during this program in a foreign country equal with practice that is prescribed in school curriculum. To get funding for a mobility project, an application is required. If project is financed, costs related to travel, insurance and living arrangements and if needed, language-cultural preparation, are compensated. Apart from that, organisation has a right to request finances for preparing and organising the project.

Table 2.3.2. - Overview of VET transnational mobility programmes and schemes

Title of program/scheme and geographical coverage	Managing authority	Sources of funding ⁽³⁾ and corresponding level of funding for the programming period	Start - end date (programming period)	Target groups ⁽⁴⁾	Average duration of mobility per target group (in months)	Number of participants ⁽⁵⁾	Implementation mechanisms ⁽⁶⁾	Practices to recognize the KSC acquired abroad	Sources of information (including evaluation reports)
EU programs									
1. Leonardo da Vinci programme	ARCHIMEDES Foundation	ESF	2007-2013	IVT, PLM and VETPRO	IVET Students* 3-5 weeks VET Professionals*** 1 week Others (please specify) PLM 6-9 weeks	IVET Students* 1606 VET Professionals*** 943 Others (please specify) 243 (PLM) (all in period 2007-2011)	Standard procedure is applied	Europass documents	http://www2.archimede.s.ee/hkk/?leht=61 and Interim Evaluation of the European Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2009 The National Report of Estonia (2010) http://www2.archimede

⁽³⁾ EU programmes, EU Structural Funds (e.g. ESF), National budget, Employer contribution, Individuals' funds/savings, etc.

⁽⁴⁾ E.g. students, apprentices, VET professionals, etc.

⁽⁵⁾ The number of students who have spent a period abroad in one single year (please specify year). In case statistics are collected differently, please specify.

⁽⁶⁾ Please briefly present the application procedure & the eligibility requirements for the applicants. In case of EU programs, please indicate if standard procedure is applied. In case of exceptions, please briefly describe.

									s.ee/hkk/Fille/LLP-vahehindamine-final.pdf
2. ESF measure "Developing learner orientated and innovative VET and broadening the opportunities for lifelong learning" (3 mobility projects for VET professionals)	Foundation Innove	ESF	2010-2013	VET teachers	VET Professionals*** 2-6 months	VET Professionals*** 28 (all projects together)	Standard procedure is applied	Certificate of participation	
Multi-country programs (between several countries, including your country)									
1. Support to the development and promotion of VET systems, lifelong learning and active labour market measures for the northern part of Cyprus (VETLAM)	Foundation Innove	European Commission	2009-2013	VET professionals	VET Professionals*** 1 month	VET Professionals*** 2	Standard procedure is applied	Certificate of participation	http://www.vetlam.eu/v1/

Bi-lateral programs (between your country and another country)

1. Let`s help to develop VET in Georgia - vocational training and school management today	Tartu VET Centre	National budget, co-financed by participants	2007-2009	VET professionals	VET Professionals*** 2 weeks	VET Professionals*** 10	Standard procedure is applied	Certificate of participation	
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* IVET students in school-based programs;

** IVET students in apprenticeship

*** Teachers, and trainers

2.3.3 ARRANGEMENTS TO SECURE WORK PLACEMENTS FOR TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY IN VET

The growing rate of new applicants in mobility projects shows that information distribution targeted at companies has been effective. However, in Estonia, the focus is on VET institutions greater participation in mobility programs. Positively, as the number of mobility projects rise, more and more companies are involved in this process.

All the participants in Leonardo da Vinci projects will get Europass Mobility, where every detail of practice abroad is illustrated. There is no special treatment for apprenticeship students in IVET and no registry/database of companies participating in transnational mobility projects in VET.

3. VET TO SUPPORT RECOVERY FROM THE CRISIS

3.1 OVERVIEW

In the course of the crisis, unemployment rates have increased considerably. The decrease in the number of jobs came primarily from the private sector. Decrease in the number of jobs and the economic recession narrowed down primarily to those areas where economic growth had been the greatest - construction and real estate sectors and several branches of the processing industry. However, the crisis has influenced every aspect of life in Estonia, including the public sector.

Unemployment rates have increased in all age groups, but it has happened the fastest among youth (15-24), where it reached 27.5% in 2009. Also, the gap between the unemployment of men and women was widened. Due to rapid decrease of the employment of men - the employment rate of women has been higher than the employment rate of men since the end of 2009.

Due to a decrease in employment possibilities, unemployment increased among persons with a lower educational level as well as among persons with a higher educational level. However, persons with lower education had more problems with finding a job. On the other hand, economic crisis has brought along the population's active participation in lifelong learning. In 2009, 10.6% of people aged 25-64 attended different courses in the four weeks prior to the interview carried out for the work force survey. This is the highest rate since 1993.

In 2009, employment decreased in most economic activities, but in 2010 improvement in some economic activities could already be noticed. In 2010, like in 2009, the decrease in total employment was most of all influenced by construction and manufacturing. In this sector, the number of employed persons also decreased drastically in 2009 compared to a year earlier and continued decreasing also in the 1st quarter of 2010, but in the next quarters the number of the employed was already increasing. In some economic activities, mainly in the services sector, employment increased slightly in 2010 - for example in real estate activities, administrative and support service activities, public administration and defence, human health and social work activities.

By occupations, employment decreased mainly among blue-collars (elementary occupations, plant and machine operators and assemblers, skilled and craft workers, service and sales workers) during 2009-2010. The white-collars (legislators, senior officials and managers; professionals, technicians and associate professionals; clerks) were less influenced by the economic crisis.

3.2 EFFECTS OF THE CRISIS ON VET AND CORRESPONDING MEASURES

3.2.1 TRENDS IN LEARNERS' BEHAVIOUR

In 2010, compared to 2009, admission in VET decreased a bit. The fall of 2009 saw an increase in admissions in VET. Thus, the demographic influence was reversed and the admission was very successful. However, the number of young students is falling due to demographic reasons, the number of older students (24+) has been increasing every year. VET colleges would previously face the challenge of losing their students to companies, as often they would not return from practical training, but stay in the company and work. This situation has changed and dropout rates have decreased.

Although in engineering, manufacturing and construction the number of students have been decreasing year by year, still the biggest number of students is in this field of study. This is followed by service activities, where the number of students has increased over the past years. Decrease has been in the field of social sciences, business, law and justice.

3.2.2 TRENDS IN ENTERPRISES' BEHAVIOUR

In times of high unemployment, it is difficult for schools to find places for practical training in the companies. The situation also varies sector by sector. Generally, the student can no longer expect any stipend from the employer, which used to be the case previously. As one possibility to offer practical training, schools use their own workshops or model companies and sell their services to the general public, so that the students can practice their skills.

During the crises, one of the first fields where the cuts were made, was continuing training in enterprises, so less training were offered. As the economy recovers, investment in training will be provided in a larger amount.

3.2.3 MEASURES TAKEN TO ADDRESS THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OR AS A RESULT OF THE CRISES (BY PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AT NATIONAL, REGIONAL, LOCAL AND BY SOCIAL PARTNERS)

The structure of the post-crisis economy will be largely the same as before the crisis. Nevertheless, there is a need to respond quicker to the labour market needs. The school curricula are being restructured. Students can study a speciality as part of their initial training and later come back for advanced training or opt for an additional speciality. The system will be more flexible and correspond better to the labour market needs.

The present economic crisis gives many opportunities to raise the prominence of VET in the society. Retraining and continuous training are especially important. The Ministry of Education and Research has designated state commissioned study places for VET for working adults. The state commissioned study places have been allotted to those working adults who are contemplating career change or want to raise their qualification level. It is especially important in the present situation where they may be only partially employed, thus the time off work could be dedicated to studies. In 2009 these opportunities to receive continuous training and retraining at VET colleges at one's own initiative became available also for the unemployed. The use of resources has already been optimized as VET colleges work both, as centres of IVET and CVET.

In 2010, the program for students whose studies have been interrupted started. During the next four years (2010-2013), 400 students who have discontinued their studies during 2000-2010 in institutions of vocational education and institutions of professional higher education that provide vocational training, can continue their studies. The purpose of this program is to create opportunities for vocational education students whose studies have been disrupted, to finish up their studies. Students must have previously fulfilled 50% of the curriculum (in the beginning of 2011, changes were made and only 35% of curriculum must be fulfilled). To make it more flexible, RPL principles (Recognition of Prior Learning and Experience) allow the schools also to take into account the previous work experience. The program, which is funded by the European Social Fund and the state, is called "KUTSE" (a pun on words, meaning profession/calling/call), which will provide the needed study places in the respective institutions. The total cost of the program is 1.92 mEUR.

Using the support from European Structural Funds, some VET institutions are offering study opportunities combined with other support (career guidance, stipends, support activities for entering labour market, baby-sitter possibilities for parents etc.) for young (16-29) unemployed persons.

In addition, entrepreneurship education is emphasised by employers and trade unions. In 2010, the representatives of the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre, the Enterprise Estonia and the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed an entrepreneurship education program called "I am enterprising!" The aim of entrepreneurship education is to increase the number of people in the community who can and want to turn ideas into realization. This program, composed by the experts of Entrepreneurship Education Think Tank, presents the nature of entrepreneurship education, verbalizes the ideal of enterprising individual and his/her competences at different ages, analyses how current standards in education contribute to the designing of enterprising individuals and determines the course of action and levels for next steps. Various activities, which are needed to achieve the goal of this program, are performed by organizations who signed the program. Different parties involved and interest groups in the society are welcomed to contribute to the development of entrepreneurship education in Estonia. The activities of the program are supported by the Enterprise Estonia. This program is one part of the implementation of joint declaration contracted in 2007 between the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications.

4. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first VET schools in Estonia were founded in the early part of the 18th century. One of the first vocational schools established was a navigation school working in Tallinn and Narva. A more consistent development began during the first decades of the 19th century. The first subjects taught were arts, midwifery and agriculture.

During the first Republic, VET enjoyed a special attention. There were many schools and they were situated conveniently for the learner. Figuratively speaking, there was a VET institution at every learner's doorstep. The opportunities to acquire VET were also quite flexible and skills were appreciated in the society. The most popular fields taught were industry, agriculture, homemaking and medicine.

Until 1935, skilled workers were trained in 3-year industrial schools, girls were trained in women's vocational schools. In 1935, the Skills department was founded in the Ministry of Education. That department was responsible for all the state-owned VET institutions. Thus, the foundation for the uniform development of VET was laid. After a new Vocational Training Schools' Act (1937), which began to regulate the VET system and set objectives for VET development, more attention was paid to vocational training. On the basis of already existing schools, 15 vocational schools with the period of study of one to four academic years were established. In 1939/40, after 21 years of independence, there were 159 VET institutions with 12 497 students (44%). Also, there were 10 workshops with the training license and 7 long terms courses. In addition, one could study VET in 20 applied higher education institutions like the Teachers' Seminars, Music Schools, etc. All this was halted by the start of the World War II and the Soviet invasion.

The Soviet VET system was launched in Estonia in the fall of 1944 when the Soviets regained the power. VET was seen as a narrow specialization for preparing skilled workers for the economy and system was complicated and clumsy. In addition to lower level VET schools, a dead end choice after the basic school, there were also higher level VET colleges or technicums. Those technicums were under the auspices of the respective Ministry whom they prepared skilled workers for (e.g. Agricultural technicums were under the ministry of Agriculture). The lower level VET schools were under the Soviet Union State VET Committee. This committee had branches in all the republics. In fact, all the central offices were doubled on the state level, so there was no independent VET system for Estonia. All the development came as central directives and the directives were just translated in the languages of the republics.

In 1967, Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic began to experiment to transfer all VET to the level of secondary VET. In 1971-1982, Estonia was one of the first republics to fully succeed in the process. All VET institutions were reformed into 4-year secondary VET schools. Some schools had 1-2 year programs for students who wished to acquire only the skills, but they needed to have completed the secondary school. In the mid-1980s the tension between the supply of the students' skills and the demand of the society became evident. In response, new specialties began to be taught, the VET system and the schools began to take the needs of the economy into consideration more than they had done it before in the planned economy. With the downfall of the Soviet state, the VET system was also in shambles. The system was too inflexible for the completely new needs of the market economy.

The initiative to carry out the vocational education reform dates back to the second half of the 1990s. In 1995, the first Vocational Educational Institutions Act was passed. In the

years 1996 to 2000, a social agreement was reached on the ways of reforming vocational education; a constructive dialogue was started between trainers and social partners; a legislative basis and conditions were created for directing the development of the system according to the changes taken place in Estonia. In 1998, the Government of the Republic endorsed the education policy development plan called "The conceptual bases of vocational education" and the thoroughly updated Vocational Educational Institutions Act was passed. In 2001, the Government endorsed the Action Plan for Developing the Estonian Vocational Education and Training System for 2001-2004, the objective of which was to determine the main courses of development in the vocational education system and to inform the public, training providers and social partners. This was the first step in the right direction to bring the VET system out of the chaos it had fallen in the years of transition. Additionally, in the pre-accession time until May 2004, VET infrastructure and curricula were greatly improved by using Phare support.

Since 2004, two development plans have served as basis for the development of Estonian VET. 1) "Development Plan for the Estonian Vocational Education System for the years 2005-2008" and two important documents: "The vocational education standard" (2006) and "The plan for reorganising the network of state owned vocational educational institutions in 2005-2008". 2) "Development Plan for the Estonian Vocational Education and Training System 2009-2013". The development plan states four main goals for the vocational education system, which concern learner-centered education, quality of education, connection between education, society and the labour market and organisation of vocational education.

4.2 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR IVET

The legislative framework for the education and training system originates from Parliament (*Riigikogu*). The government (*Vabariigi Valitsus*) decides national strategies by adopting and implementing state education development plans. It determines procedures to establish, reorganise and close public educational institutions and to determine remuneration principles for staff.

The legal basis for VET was created in the late 1990s. The main laws related to vocational education:

- **Vocational Education Institutions Act** (*Kutseõppeasutuse seadus, 1998*) regulates the provision of VET at upper and post-secondary (non tertiary) level, as well as the foundation and operation of VET institutions. It was amended considerably in 2006. The changes stipulated the involvement of social partners in VET, providing new and flexible ways to enter VET and continue to general higher education, etc. The next amendment started in 2010 and the main principle is output-based approach in VET.
- **Vocational Education Standard** (*Kutseharidusstandard, 2006*) is a set of uniform requirements for vocational and professional training at the level of basic and secondary education. It applies to all vocational education institutions which organise vocational training. In 2009, RPEL principles were added.
- **Policies of Implementing Workplace Based Training** (*Töökohapõhise õppe rakendamise kord, 2007*) regulates the provision of apprenticeship training.
- **Private Schools Act** (*Erakooliseadus, 1998*) regulates the provision of training longer than 120 hours organised by legal persons in private law as well as the foundation and operation of private educational institutions.

- **Applied Higher Education Institutions Act** (*Rakenduskõrgkooli seadus, 1998*) regulates the foundation and operation of applied higher education institutions (tertiary education); provision of applied higher education, including that in VET institutions.
- **Adult Education Act** (*Täiskasvanute koolituse seadus, 1993*) regulates education and training provisions for adults. The preparation work for amendments started in 2010.
- **Conditions and Policies for Arranging Professional Training for Working Adults in VET Institutions** (*Täiskasvanute tööalase koolituse kutseõppeasutuses korraldamise tingimused ja kord, 2007*) regulates the provision of IVET, CVET and retraining in VET institutions.
- **Professions Act** (*Kutseseadus, 2000*) regulates the work of the Vocational Councils and the qualifications system. The act is the basis for developing vocational qualification requirements and the conditions and procedure for their attestation and award as well as the organisation of work of professional councils. The new Professions Act to make the qualifications system more compatible with EQF was adopted by the parliament in May 2008.
- **The recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications Act** (*Välisriigis omandatud kutsequalifikatsiooni tunnustamise seadus, 2000*) is employed in regulated professions and takes European Union Directives into account.
- **Study Allowances and Study Loans Act** (*Õppetoetuste ja õppelaenu seadus, 2003*) provides the bases, conditions and procedure for the grant of study allowances and study loans in order to ensure access to secondary vocational education and higher education.
- **Youth Work Act** (*Noorsootöö seadus, 1999*) regulates the required conditions for youth activities (for 7-26 year olds), which take place outside the family and formal education/work and on the voluntary basis. This act is not directly related to VET.

4.3 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR IVET AND ORGANIGRAM

- *Decision making (policy and legislative level)*

ROLE OF EU

The EU has had a monumental impact in guiding the planning and administration, as well as funding of developments in IVET. Policy priorities of the Copenhagen Declaration are the guiding principles in planning VET at the Ministry of Education and Research. In addition, investments from Phare, ESF and ERDF have taken the whole VET system to a completely new level in the past 10 years. Extensive EU support will continue during the next programming period 2007-2013.

ROLE OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The VET and Adult Learning Department of the Ministry of Education and Research (*Haridus- ja Teadusministeeriumi Kutse- ja Täiskasvanuhariduse osakond*) co-ordinates the preparation and implementation of education policies through local governments and other relevant Ministries. The role of the Ministry of Education and Research is to establish, reorganise and close public educational institutions (except universities and applied higher education institutions); to direct and organise the preparation of curricula, study programmes, textbooks and teaching/study aids (except for universities); and to administer public assets allocated to the education system. The implementing arm of the Ministry is the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre (NEQC) - (*Riiklik Eksami- ja Kvalifikatsioonikeskus (REKK)*), whose main objective is to implement the national education and language policy in the field of primary, basic and secondary education as well as in vocational and adult education.

There is a methodological centre for VET at the NEQC that deals with establishing state curricula and the competence based modular curricula in all the fields on which the school curricula have to be based on. The VET methodological centre also organises continuous training for VET teachers and trainers and prepares methodological materials. There is an internal evaluation department at the NEQC whose responsibility is to counsel VET schools in undergoing the internal audit.

Other Ministries involved include:

- *The Ministry of Social Affairs (Sotsiaalministeerium)* is responsible for the organising and financing training for unemployed people;
- *The Ministry of Culture (Kultuuriministeerium)* participates in devising state education in culture and sports and co-ordinates in-service training in their area of government;
- *The Ministry of Defence (Kaitseministeerium)* - administers The Non-commissioned Officers' School of the Estonian National Defence College.

Several advisory bodies assist the Ministry of Education and Research in policy development, for example the Estonian VET Promotion Organization, the VET Teachers' Union, the Education Organisation Council, the Estonian Education Forum, the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Estonian Employers' Confederation, the Estonian Employees' Unions' Confederation, the Estonian Qualification Authority, the Estonian Research and Development Council, the Association of Estonian Adult Educators Andras, the Foundation for Lifelong Learning Development Innove, and many others.

ROLE OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

At local level, county and local governments have an administrative role to play in VET. County governments and their education departments prepare and implement education development plans for their administrative county. They provide supervision of pre-primary institutions and organise vocational guidance and counselling of children and young people. Local governments plan and implement the educational programmes on local level, coordinate and organise the activities of municipal educational institutions.

ROLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS

Social partners' participation in VET is regulated by national legislation as well as by the partners' charters, action plans and agreements with other stakeholders. Their involvement in the administrative and consultative bodies of the education system has been increased in the last decade. In particular, employers play a more active and influential role through their participation in professional councils, by creating professional standards for each profession (Professions Act, 2000). Professional Councils develop qualification requirements and vocational standards, which are used as the basic reference in curricula development at educational institutions. At local level, social partners participate in School Boards (established under the amendments to the Vocational Educational Institutions Act, in 2006), which consist of at least 7 people, out of which more than one half have to be social partners (representatives of local municipalities, registered organisations and trade associations of employers and workers and labour market boards).

At national level, social partners are represented by the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (*Eesti Kaubandus-Tööstuskoda*) and the Estonian Employers' Confederation (*Eesti Töoandjate Keskkliit*) and the Confederation of Estonian Trade Unions (*Eesti Ametiühingute Keskkliit*). The trilateral Agreement on Joint Activities (*Ühise tegevuse kokkulepe kutseharidussüsteemi arendamiseks ja kvalifitseeritud tööjõu ettevalmistamiseks aastatel 2006-2009*) declared that good will will be shown by all participants to develop VET according to priority areas of development plan. At regional level, social partnership depends on cooperation agreed between VET providers and enterprises. Good cooperation exists at provider/enterprise level especially within specific sectors. This cooperation applies to initial and continuing training provision.

In recent years, the VET teachers have organized in the VET teachers union (*EKÜ*) and also by sectors into several networks. More active VET students have also organized into their union, but they are not very active yet.

- *Implementation level*

LOCAL SCHOOL LEVEL

VET providers can be under local or central government or privately owned, but they have a common management form. A VET school is managed by the head of the school whose function is to ensure the effective operation of the school. The head of a school (director) is responsible for the activities, general state, development and legitimate use of financial resources of the school. The head of a school reports to the school board and to the person who authorised him or her to office. The head of an educational institution enters into employment contracts with its staff (including teachers). Vacancies are filled via competitions and the whole procedure is carried out with the approval of the school board.

ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

There are a number of non-governmental organizations promoting and developing VET. Foundation Innove started in 1998 as "Foundation VET Reform in Estonia". It mediated Phare support and started piloting the Apprenticeship program, career guidance and entrepreneurship as well as housing the Estonian National Observatory. In 2003, it was reorganized into "Foundation For Lifelong Learning Development Innove" and started mediating EU support on education and training from ESF and ERDF. In 2004, Innove began with the following projects from ESF funds: Apprenticeship program, Quality Award in VET Institutions, Entrepreneurship and Career guidance. Innove is now an official member of WorldSkills and EuroSkills. In 2008, a VET promotion programme was added.

QA - Estonian Qualification Authority (*Kutsekvalifikatsiooni Sihtasutus*) was established in 2001 in order to continue developing the professional qualifications system launched by the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 1997. Their aim is to facilitate the establishment and development of an integrated and organised professional qualifications system, and to establish prerequisites for achieving the comparability of qualifications of Estonian employees as well as the acknowledgement of the qualifications other countries.

EKEÜ - "Association for Advancement of Vocational Education" unites VET schools directors and teachers as well as officials who are connected with VET in any way. The organization meets twice a year in the form of a 2-3 day conference and stays connected throughout the year via an electronic mailing list. It is a custom for the VET department of Ministry of Education and Research to ask for input from EKEÜ regarding strategic developments, legal acts and other initiatives, which has led to a more holistic policy-making.

4.4 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR CVET

IVET and CVET are largely governed by the same laws and regulations, as the training takes place on the same premises and is administered by the same staff. Please see 4.2 for more information.

4.5 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CVET AND ORGANIGRAM

Institutional framework for IVET and CVET is the same as the training takes place on the same premises and is administered by the same staff. Please see 4.3 for more information.

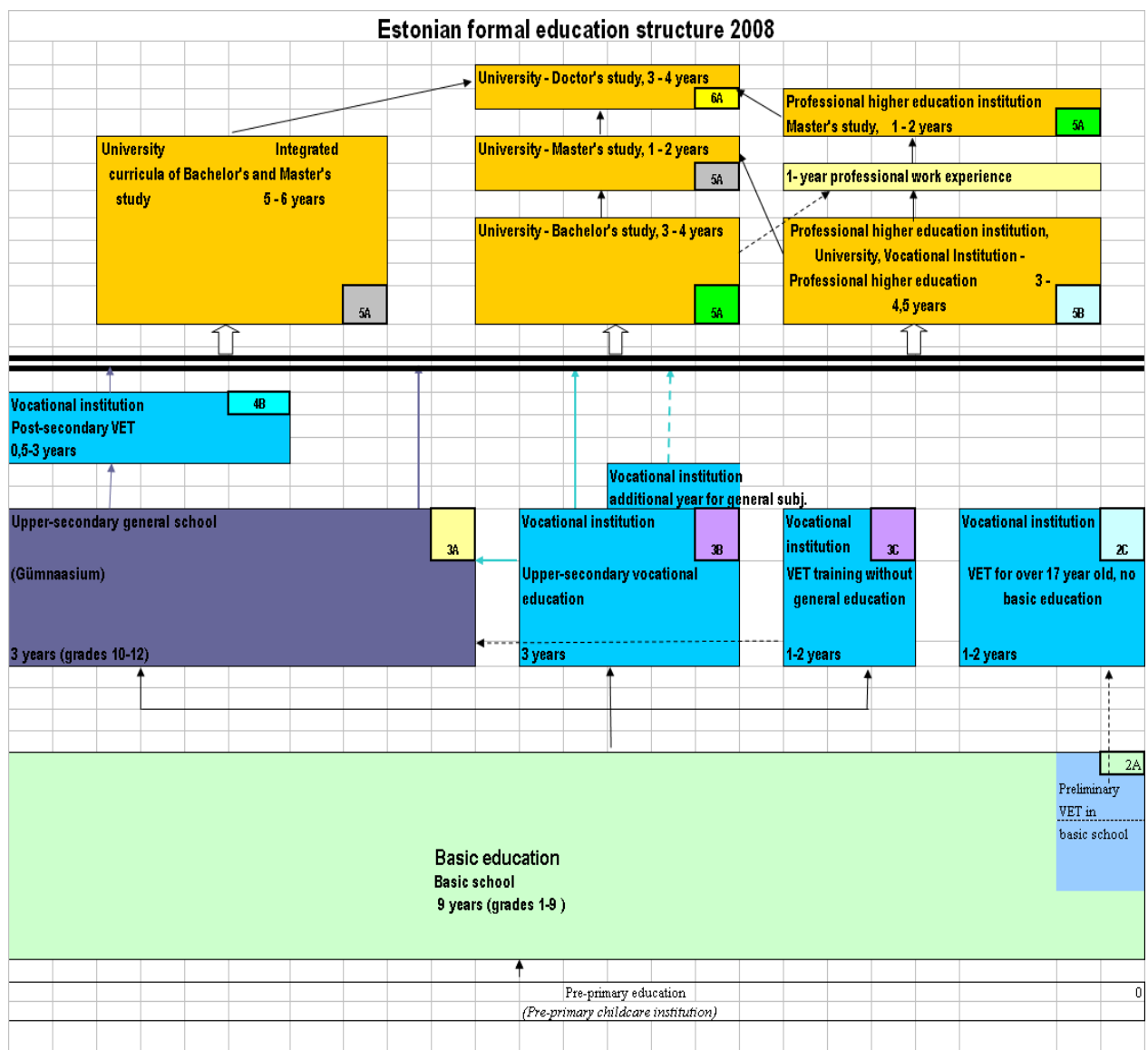
5. INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

5.1 BACKGROUND TO THE INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM AND DIAGRAM OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

According to the education and training system, students are obligated to finish the basic school (the first nine years of training) or attend the basic school until the age of 17.

A preliminary VET (ISCED 2A and 3A) lasting up to 15 study weeks is based on co-operation between lower and upper secondary schools and VET institutions. Such courses do not require a curriculum. Their focus is on career guidance and they are offered as elective courses not funded separately by the state, but solely from the general school budget.

DIAGRAM 1: THE DIAGRAM OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM



Vocational education in lower secondary school (ISCED 2A) and *gümnaasium* (upper-secondary school - ISCED 3A) is based on a separate curriculum and can last from 15 to 40 study weeks. VET for over 17-year-olds without basic education (ISCED 2C) allows drop-outs to re-continue their education. The study volume is 20-100 study weeks of which school-based practical work and practical training in enterprises constitute at least 50%.

At the end of compulsory schooling, one can choose between several options. If the student wants to go to a university, he/she will choose the general upper secondary school (*gümnaasium*) (ISCED 3A). In order to graduate, one has to pass state exams and the successful graduate will receive a certificate.

Upper-secondary vocational education (ISCED 3B) lasts at least 120 study weeks and students are required to have basic education as a prerequisite. Students acquire the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for independent work. 25% of VET is dedicated to school-based practical work and 25% is passed at practical training in enterprises. In order to graduate, students are required to sit a vocational final examination or a professional examination.

VET without upper secondary general education (ISCED 3C) suits students who have difficulties with acquiring general upper-secondary education. General subjects are limited to that required for learning the vocation. Like in other VET options, 50% is undertaken as school-based practical work and practical training in enterprises. The study volume is between 40 and 100 study weeks. In order to graduate, students are required to sit a vocational final examination or a professional examination.

Post-secondary non tertiary VET (ISCED 4B) lasts from 20 to 100 study weeks and students must have upper-secondary education (ISCED 3A) as a prerequisite. In order to graduate, students are required to sit a vocational final examination or a professional examination.

In 2010, the majority of VET institutions (30) belonged to the state and are run by the Ministry of Education and Research. 3 of 43 VET institutions are run by municipalities (Tartu VET Centre is the biggest even among all VET schools), 10 are private institutions. The financing of state and municipal VET institutions happens via state funded study places, where the state orders a specific number of students to be educated in a particular curriculum group. Public and municipal VET schools have become more independent, as the School Board is the most important administrative body whose responsibilities include, among other, to prepare and supervise the fulfillment of the development plan and activity plan and approve a draft school budget and the investment plan.

Private institutions are supported by the government to the extent that the scheme of state funded study places is also applied to the private schools if the state considers it important to order such specialities (e.g. hotel management). Private schools are always invited to policy discussions and other such initiatives. They take active part in the Association for Advancement of Vocational Education (EKEÜ). The private schools, even though they are generally expensive to study at, are well accepted by the general public. Private schools are autonomous and are managed by their school boards.

Social partners also support participation in IVET. Several municipalities support their students with different financial subsidies. There are also good examples of grants implemented by the private sector for VET students in their sector.

As to quality assurance, self-assessment (internal evaluation) has become mandatory for VET institutions. The plans to implement external evaluation or accreditation are underway. The system will be fully operational by 2012.

The curriculum development process is the same on all the levels and programmes. The national curriculum is a document which determines the purposes and functions of

vocational training, the requirements for starting and graduating from the studies, the modules of curricula and the volumes thereof together short descriptions, the possibilities of and conditions for electing modules and possibilities of specialisation.

The national curricula are reviewed and if necessary, a new version is approved if the professional standard which constitutes the basis for the national curriculum is repealed, a new professional standard is established, or the name of the professional standard or the requirements for professional skills provided in the standard are amended.

The school curriculum is the source document of vocational training. Schools prepare a curriculum for each profession or speciality being taught and for every type of vocational training, basing such curricula on the Vocational Education Standard and the national curriculum, and taking into account the different forms of study. The school curriculum is registered in the Estonian Information System for Education (EISE) formed on the basis of subsection 366 (4) the Republic of Estonia Education Act. The volume of study prescribed by a school curriculum shall be calculated in weeks of study whereas the volume of one academic year shall be at least forty weeks of study. In the case of curricula for internationally regulated professions or specialities, the prescribed volume of study shall arise from the requirements established by international conventions.

Where necessary, a school shall prepare an individual curriculum for a student on the basis of the curriculum of the corresponding institution of vocational or speciality education. Subjects of general education make up an independent part of the curricula of secondary vocational education. The volume of study prescribed by the curricula for vocational training which is based on secondary education may be up to two thirds of the volume of study prescribed by the curricula for applied higher education.

The school curricula consist of the general part, modules of general and basic skills determined by the national curriculum and modules of elective studies. The general part of a school curriculum sets forth: the purpose and functions of the school curriculum; the requirements for the commencement and completion of studies; the structure of the school curriculum; a list of general, basic and elective study modules, and their volumes. The school curriculum sets forth the purposes of the general, basic and elective study modules, contents of study, study results and principles for assessment of modules. If necessary, the school may amend the school curriculum once a year concerning the elective study modules. The renewed version of the school curriculum shall be approved by the head of the school after co-ordinating it with the teachers' council and school board.

The content of vocational training established by a school curriculum shall be set forth in the form of modules. A module is a comprehensive content unit within a curriculum which is directed towards study results and determines the knowledge, skills and attitudes conforming to the professional requirements. A module is made up of one or several subjects or topics. The volume of a module depends on the purpose and content of the module. The volume of study prescribed by a module is calculated in weeks of study whereas the volume of a module shall be expressed in full numbers and the smallest volume of a module shall be one week of study. One week of study corresponds to forty hours of work that a student spends on the studies. If in several areas of specialisation, the general and basic study modules within a single programme coincide to the extent of at least 25%, the content of study of such specialities may be described in a single national curriculum. Modules are divided into general, basic and elective study modules. General study modules define sets of knowledge and skills which run through broad groups of studies and are common to several areas of specialisation. Basic study modules define sets of knowledge and skills necessary for operation in a profession, speciality or occupation. Subjects of general education are included in general and basic study modules in the volume and selection which is necessary for acquiring the corresponding profession or area of specialisation. Elective study modules define the knowledge and skills which support

and extend professional skills or are related to additional qualifications. Elective modules may make up 5-30% of the volume of a curriculum.

Studies take place in the form of auditory work, practical work, practical training and independent work. Auditory work is a study in the form of lectures, seminars, lessons or other formats established by the school. Practical work means the application of the acquired skills and knowledge in a study environment. Practical work takes place in the form of practical lessons, training lessons, laboratory work or other formats established by the school. Practical training is a practical work with specific study goals which is carried out within the framework of a curriculum in a working environment under the instruction of a supervisor. Independent work is the independent activity of a student for reaching a study goal. Independent work shall make up at least 10% of the entire volume of studies.

The implementation of national curricula is in progress. The standardized national curricula will be the main tool allowing progression. The new system will bring along a systematic approach to study programmes. The national curricula are connected to the new NQF through professional standards which are the basis for the curricula. New study materials are being created, a special focus will be on study aids for students with special needs. These activities are a part of the ESF programme "VET content development 2008-2013", carried out by the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre.

As a result of the ESF project *E-Võti* (E-key) (2006-2008), run by the Estonian IT Foundation EITSA, the teachers' involvement in creating a modern study environment has been increased. 2 310 teachers, IT specialists and education specialists took part in the training of how to compile electronic study materials (mainly web-based). As a result of the training, the teachers created 615 weeks of electronic study courses and over 600 study aids, which are all gathered in one data mart, available for everybody. Thanks to the programme, 11 professional networks emerged, which have been conducive to promoting the new learning and methodology. E-VET thematic networks work together with E-University networks in Estonia, and cooperate with specialists in the fields and national VET curricula development work groups of National Examinations and Qualifications Centre.

The assessment in VET programmes is analogous to that in the general schools. An examination or assessment is considered positive if a student receives a grade ranging from 1 (E) to 5 (A). The practical learning outcomes are described in the modules and those outcomes are evaluated at the end of the learning process.

5.2 IVET AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL

TABLE 13: IVET PROGRAMMES

NAME OF IVET PROGRAMME	MAIN ECONOMIC SECTORS ⁷	CORRESPONDING ISCED LEVEL / ORIENTATION	BALANCE BETWEEN GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	BALANCE BETWEEN SCHOOL- AND WORK-BASED TRAINING	AVERAGE DURATION OF STUDIES	TRANSFER TO OTHER PATHWAYS
Vocational training in basic schools (and upper secondary schools)	Humanities and arts Engineering, manufacturing and construction Services	(VET for students in 2a)	General subjects mostly, VET subject is optional	N/A	15 weeks	3a, 3b
Vocational training for persons beyond minimum school-leaving age, lacking basic education	Humanities and arts Engineering, manufacturing and construction Agriculture Services	2c	Vocational subjects only	50/50% (latter 50% is usually divided into: 25% practical training and 25% practical work in enterprise)		2a

Two programs can be identified in IVET at lower secondary level. "Vocational training in basic schools and upper secondary schools" is organized by the VET school in cooperation with the basic school. The students follow the basic school curriculum and are enlisted as the students of a basic school. The study is conducted according to a VET curriculum which is a shortened version of a school curriculum.

There is no official minimum age limit, the training is usually offered in grades 7-9, thus the students are about 13-16 years of age. The training is offered to students by a VET institution, yet the students remain the students of a basic school. The training can be carried out on the premises of either the basic school or the VET institution. The volume of the studies is usually 15 study weeks. The graduates receive the diploma of the basic school and a certificate of the VET school, which certifies the course taken. The courses will be taken into account if the student continues in a VET school. The graduate can also enter the labour market or attempt to take a professional exam.

The second programme is "Vocational training for persons beyond minimum school-leaving age who lack basic education" (ISCED 2C). In vocational training, students beyond the minimum school-leaving age who lack basic education acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for performing skilled work in a profession, speciality or occupation.

No restrictions related to the level of education shall be set for persons beyond the minimum school-leaving age who lack basic education upon commencing vocational training.

The volume of studies established by school curricula for persons beyond the minimum school-leaving age who lack basic education shall be 20 to 100 weeks of study. Practical work and practical training shall make up at least 50% of the volume of vocational training.

⁷ It is very difficult, if not impossible, to convert ISCED classification to NACE - (Primary sector and utilities; Manufacturing; Construction; Distribution and transport; Business and other services; Non-marketed services). In Estonia, the statistics follow only the ISCED classification and the NACE allocation is not available. Therefore, only ISCED classification can be given in this table and onwards.

Upon graduation, the person has completed, to the full extent, the studies prescribed by the school curriculum and passed the final exam of the profession or area of specialisation. Instead of a final examination prescribed for the profession or area of specialisation, a student may graduate from a school by taking a professional examination. Upon graduation from vocational training, the school issues a graduation certificate together with a results report in proof of concluding the vocational training to a graduating student beyond the minimum school-leaving age who lacks basic education. A person beyond the minimum school-leaving age who lacks basic education may acquire basic education pursuant to the general procedure, simultaneously with vocational training or after graduating from vocational training.

TABLE 14: STUDENTS ENROLLED IN LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION BY PROGRAMME ORIENTATION (VALUES AND SHARE OF THE TOTAL), 2009

GEO	Total isced2	isced2gen (num)	isced2gen (%)	isced2pv (num)	isced2pv (%)	isced2voc (num)	isced2voc (%)
EU 27	22064045	21484802	97.4	335599	1.5	243644	1.1
EE	44380	43928	99.0	43	0.1	409	0.9

Source: Eurostat (UOE); Extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 13-05-2011

Description: Students at ISCED level 2 by programme orientation (values and share of the total)

Source of data: Eurostat (Unesco-Eurostat-OECD Data collection on education and training systems)

Eurostat original label: educ_enr11ad-Students by ISCED level, study intensity (full-time, part-time) and sex

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_enr11ad&lang=en

Further selections: Full time/part time=total, sex=total, isced level = isced2gen, isced 2 prevocational, isced 2 vocational

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/educ_esms.htm

Additional notes: Totals and Percentages are Cedefop's calculations

FT_PT = Total; INDICATORS = OBS_FLAG; SEX = Total

As VET is not very popular in Estonia, relatively small amount of students receive vocational training in basic or general school level. A big share of these students acquire professional knowledge in the field of musical specialities, other popular areas are hotel and tourism management and metal work.

5.3 IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL

TABLE 15: IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL							
TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME	MAIN ECONOMIC SECTORS (PLEASE REFER TO FOOTNOTE 7)	CORRESPONDING ISCED LEVEL/ORIENTATION	BALANCE BETWEEN GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	BALANCE BETWEEN SCHOOL- AND WORK-BASED TRAINING	AVERAGE DURATION OF STUDIES	TRANSFER TO OTHER PATHWAYS	
VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOLS	Humanities and arts Social sciences, business and law Science Engineering, manufacturing and construction Agriculture Services	(VET for students in 3a)	Mostly general subjects	50/50% (latter 50% is usually divided into: 25% practical training and 25% practical work in enterprise)	15-40 study weeks	3b- can go directly to the 2 nd year in VET school if takes 1 year of VET subjects	
SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	Humanities and arts Social sciences, business and law Science Engineering, manufacturing and construction Agriculture Services	3b	2:1	50/50% (latter 50% is usually divided into: 25% practical training and 25% practical work in enterprise)	At least 3 years, general subjects at least 1 year.	4b, 5a (with the help of an optional year)	
VOCATIONAL TRAINING BASED ON BASIC EDUCATION	Social sciences, business and law Engineering, manufacturing and construction Agriculture Services	3c	VET subjects only	50/50% (latter 50% is usually divided into: 25% practical training and 25% practical work in enterprise)	0,5-2 years	3a, 3b	

Three programmes can be distinguished in Secondary Vocational Education:

- **Ad 1: “Vocational Training in Upper Secondary Schools”**

Students studying under the curriculum for secondary vocational education (ISCED 3A) acquire the vocational, professional and occupational knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for independent skilled work and the general education knowledge and skills prescribed by the curriculum. The prerequisite for commencing studies under the curriculum for secondary vocational education is the acquisition of basic education.

The volume of studies prescribed by the curriculum for acquisition of secondary vocational education shall be at least 120 weeks of study, including at least 40 weeks of study for general education subjects. The volume of vocational training shall constitute at least 50% of the volume of studies prescribed by the curriculum. Practical work and practical training shall make up at least 50% of the volume of vocational training.

In order to graduate, the person has to have completed, to the full extent, the studies prescribed by the school curriculum and passed the final exam of the profession or area of specialisation. Instead of a final examination prescribed for the profession or area of specialisation, a student may graduate from a school by taking a professional examination. A person graduating from secondary vocational education shall be issued, by the school, a graduation certificate together with a results report in proof of concluding secondary vocational education.

- **Ad 2: “Secondary vocational education” (ISCED 3B)**

Students studying under the curriculum for secondary vocational education acquire the vocational, professional and occupational knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for independent skilled work and the general education knowledge and skills prescribed by the curriculum. The prerequisite for commencing studies under the curriculum for secondary vocational education is the acquisition of basic education.

The volume of studies prescribed by the curriculum for acquisition of secondary vocational education shall be at least 120 weeks of study, including at least 40 weeks of study for general education subjects. The volume of vocational training shall constitute at least 50% of the volume of studies prescribed by the curriculum. Practical work and practical training shall make up at least 50% of the volume of vocational training.

In order to graduate the person has completed, to the full extent, the studies prescribed by the school curriculum and passed the final exam of the profession or area of specialisation. Instead of a final examination prescribed for the profession or area of specialisation, a student may graduate from a school by taking a professional examination. A person graduating from secondary vocational education shall be issued, by the school, a graduation certificate together with a results report in proof of concluding secondary vocational education.

- **Ad 3: “Vocational Training Based on Basic Education” (ISCED 3C)**

The students undergoing vocational training based on basic education acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for performing skilled work in a profession, speciality or occupation. The prerequisite for commencing vocational training based on basic education is the acquisition of basic education. The studies take place at the VET school and the students are enrolled as VET students.

The volume of studies based on basic education prescribed by a school curriculum shall be 40 to 100 weeks of study and up to 120 weeks of study under the programmes of music and performing arts. Practical work and practical training shall make up at least 50% of the volume of vocational training.

Upon graduation the person has completed, to the full extent, the studies prescribed by the school curriculum and passed the final exam of the profession or area of specialisation. Instead of a final examination prescribed for the profession or area of specialisation, a student may graduate from a school by taking a professional examination. A person graduating from vocational training based on basic education shall be issued, by the school, a graduation certificate together with a results report in proof of concluding vocational training based on basic education.

TABLE 16A: STUDENTS ENROLLED IN UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION BY PROGRAMME ORIENTATION (VALUES AND SHARE OF THE TOTAL), 2009

GEO	Total isced3	isced3gen (num)	isce3 gen (%)	isced3pv (num)	isce3pv (%)	isced3voc (num)	isced3 voc (%)
EU 27	20633767	10946188	53.0	:	:	9687579	47.0
EE	55182	36947	67.0	:	:	18235	33.0

Source: Eurostat (UOE); Extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 13-05-2011

Description: Students at ISCED level 3 by programme orientation (values and share of the total)

Eurostat original label: educ_enr1ad-Students by ISCED level, study intensity (full-time, part-time) and sex

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_enr1ad&lang=en

Further selections: Full time/part time=total, sex=total, isced level = isced3gen, isced 3 prevocational, isced 3 vocational

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/educ_esms.htm

SEX=Total

This proportion has been fairly stable in the past five years. It is the objective of VET policies and initiatives to increase the participation in VET. Compared with other European countries, the proportion of students who continue their studies in VET is smaller. Apart from students preferences, this situation is also affected by the system of planning the study places, which is different for VET and general education and gives privilege for the latter. In addition, state funded study places in VET and higher education is planned separately, without taking into account the real need for specialists in different sectors and educational levels. These aspects have seen behind the situation where the relationship between VET and general education is 26/74 and is not complying with the needs of labour market. One of the solutions is seen in the separation of basic school and gymnasium with proper guidance and counselling services for basic school students to make their first choice in educational field and career planning at the end of the 9th grade. Apart from structural changes, it is also a question of changing attitudes, because general education has been valued more than VET for several years.

5.4 ALTERNANCE TRAINING

TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME	MAIN ECONOMIC SECTORS (PLEASE REFER TO FOOTNOTE 7)	CORRESPONDING ISCED LEVEL / ORIENTATION	BALANCE BETWEEN GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	BALANCE BETWEEN SCHOOL- AND WORK- BASED TRAINING	AVERAGE DURATION OF STUDIES	TRANSFER TO OTHER PATHWAYS
Apprenticeship training	Humanities and arts Social sciences, business and law Science Engineering, manufacturing and construction Agriculture health and welfare Services	2c, 3c, 3b, 4b	Depends on the programme	1/3 school based, 2/3 practical	Mostly 0,5-1 year	Varies

In March 2007, a regulation was issued by the Ministry of Education and Research concerning the procedure of workplace based training (apprenticeship training).

Apprentices can study on all levels and in all programmes in the Estonian VET system. The only exception is 3C, where the apprentices can enter directly, while the other students have to enter the 3B programme first and show that they have difficulties with the general education part of the curriculum. There is no age limit in the apprenticeship programme. Based on the school curriculum, the school works out an individualised curriculum for the apprentice. The programme is meant and has been popular for people already working and need formal qualifications. The programme has been very successful in the Retailing and Services sectors in recent years.

The general characteristics of an apprenticeship program are:

- the study duration of at least 40 weeks (dependent on the curriculum) for students with lower secondary education and at least 20 study weeks for students with upper secondary education;
- 1/3 of the curriculum is delivered through theoretical instruction and 2/3 through practical training in an enterprise;
- apprentices sign a study and work contract and have a 4-month probation period;
- apprentices receive a wage during enterprise training and study allowance during theoretical studies in school;
- study groups are small (up to 8 apprentices);
- the structure of study is based on an agreement between the school and the enterprise;

- studies are complete after passing a professional or final examination.

The school has to evaluate the workplace before sending an apprentice there to make sure the workplace is ready to meet the objectives of the curriculum and ensure the safety and health of the apprentice. The result of the assessment is an expert opinion, which will be appended to the three party contract between the school, the apprentice and the workplace. The school cannot carry out apprenticeship training if the expert opinion is negative.

The apprentice has 2 appointed supervisors, one from the school and the other from the workplace. If the apprentice has a valid work contract, he/she does not get an extra wage for being in the programme. Apprenticeship programme is usually funded by the state according to the state funded study places scheme. In that case, the school pays also the salary for the supervisor in the enterprise. There can be other arrangements to fund the programme. The law has provided that the student with special needs (especially with limited legal capacity) must have a legal guardian.

The Estonian Employers' Confederation carried out an ESF project aiming to develop a continuing education system for VET teachers. It included training courses organised for both school and enterprise supervisors. As an outcome of the project, instruction materials for the enterprise supervisor were created. The preparation of practical training supervisors will be continued in the next programming period 2007-2013.

TABLE 16B: STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION BY TYPE OF PROGRAMME, 2008 [%]	
geo	EE
School based	99
Combined	1
Total VET	100

Source: Cedefop's calculation based on Eurostat, UOE data collection on education systems, date of extraction 25.7.2010.

(:) - not available

(N) - negligible

Note: According to the method adopted in the UOE data collection on education systems, vocational programmes may be defined as: a) school-based programmes (if at least 75% of the programme curriculum is presented in the school environment); b) combined school- and work-based programmes (if less than 75% of the curriculum is presented in the school environment). Data presented here originate from the UOE data collection on education systems and are subject to its methodology.

VET Students: Regardless, of such distinction, VET students are counted if the school-based component accounts for at least 10 percent of the study over the whole length of the programme (Usual UOE coverage)

Regulation for the procedure of workplace based training was issued by the Ministry of Education and Research in 2007. This system has not yet entirely rooted in VET.

5.5 PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The project "New Opportunity" was piloted in one Estonian VET institution from 01.09.2004 to 31.12.2007. The aim of the project was to give young men who have not finished compulsory lower secondary education (ISCED 2A), an opportunity to finish their studies and to continue their education and training. During the project, they were helped to acquire knowledge, skills and experience necessary for life as well as preliminary vocational training in a study group with military type rules.

Training was based on lower secondary and preliminary vocational education curriculum with additional civic education course. 60 students were admitted each year and during the study period, students had free food and clothes and received an allowance to cover routine costs (study materials, etc.). During free time, students were encouraged to pursue interests to develop their physical and mental abilities and their character.

One other alternative pathway is the VET education in prisons. According to the amendments to the Vocational Education Institutions Act in 2006, all VET institutions can offer VET courses in prisons. This will ensure the comparable level of education with other VET students. In addition, the graduates cannot now be discriminated against, based on the diploma (which was possible earlier, since prison VET schools were easily distinguishable by name).

5.6 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT POST-SECONDARY (NON TERTIARY) LEVEL

TABLE 18: VET AT POST-SECONDARY (NON TERTIARY) LEVEL						
TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME	MAIN ECONOMIC SECTORS (PLEASE REFER TO FOOTNOTE 7)	CORRESPONDING ISCED LEVEL/ ORIENTATION	BALANCE BETWEEN GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	BALANCE BETWEEN SCHOOL- AND WORK-BASED TRAINING	AVERAGE DURATION OF STUDIES	TRANSFER TO OTHER PATHWAYS
Vocational Training Based on Secondary Education	Humanities and arts Social sciences, business and law Science Engineering, manufacturing and construction Agriculture health and welfare Services	4B	No general subjects	50/50% (latter 50% is usually divided into: 25% practical training and 25% practical work in enterprise)	0,5-2 years	5a 5b

Students undergoing vocational training based on secondary education acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for independent skilled work requiring secondary education. The prerequisite for commencing vocational training based on secondary education is the acquisition of secondary education.

The volume of studies based on secondary education prescribed by a curriculum shall be 20 to 100 weeks of study and up to 120 weeks of study under the programmes of music and

performing arts. Practical work and practical training shall make up at least 50% of the volume of vocational training.

There are 10 national curricula where one can only study on the post-secondary level. These are: Military Management for senior officers, business, secretarial work, accounting, hairdressing, small port specialist, air traffic services, land surveying, photography and massage.

It is also possible to acquire the skills and competencies as partial qualifications. For example, in construction, there are 5 different professional standards which can all be acquired separately. Yet, in IT there is only one professional standard and partial qualification is not possible. The school is responsible to create a school curriculum for a partial qualification. As over 32% (25-64) of Estonians have only general education and have no specialty, it is a growing trend to take part in courses on this level, especially to acquire partial qualifications. There is no age limit for entering the programme. The student body has become older in the recent years.

Upon graduation, the person has completed, to the full extent, the studies prescribed by the school curriculum and passed the final exam of the profession or area of specialisation. Instead of a final examination prescribed for the profession or area of specialisation, a student may graduate from a school by taking a professional examination. The person graduating from vocational training based on secondary education shall be issued, by the school, a graduation certificate together with a results report in proof of concluding the vocational training based on secondary education.

TABLE 19: STUDENTS ENROLLED IN POST-SECONDARY NON TERTIARY EDUCATION BY PROGRAMME ORIENTATION (VALUES AND SHARE OF THE TOTAL), 2009

GEO	Total isced4	isced4gen (num)	isce4 gen (%)	isced4voc (num)	isced4 (%)
EU 27	1501995	173928	11.6	1328067 (s)	88.4
EE	8567	:	0.0	8567	100.0

Source: Eurostat (UOE); Extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 13-05-2011;

Description: Students at ISCED level 4 by programme orientation (values and share of the total)

Eurostat original label: educ_enr11ad-Students by ISCED level, study intensity (full-time, part-time) and sex

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_enr11ad&lang=en

Further selections: Full time/part time=total, sex=total, isced level = isced4gen, isced 4 prevocational, Isced 4 vocational

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/educ_esms.htm

SEX = Total

Post-secondary VET is a growing trend, since over 32% (25-64) of Estonians have no occupational skills. Thus, especially older students are returning to VET schools to get a specialty. Since there are no general programmes on ISCED 4 level, the programme orientation is purely vocational.

5.7 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT TERTIARY LEVEL

Higher education (HE) system consists of an academic branch (ISCED 5A) and a professional branch or applied higher education (ISCED 5A). Higher education is available for all graduates of upper-secondary general (ISCED 3A) education or upper-secondary vocational (ISCED 3B) education, as well as post-secondary (non-tertiary) vocational education (ISCED 4B).

Professional HE may be provided by:

- applied HE institution (*rakenduskõrgkool*);
- university college (*ülikooli kolledž*);
- VET institution (*kutseõppeasutus*).

Applied higher education is the first level of tertiary education and it was established in 2002/2003 academic year. Studies last for 3 to 4 years and practical training forms at least 30% of the total volume of the curriculum. Graduates who have completed their studies are awarded a diploma (*rakenduskõrgharidusõppe diplom*). In full-time study, a student can cumulatively complete at least 75% of the study load by the end of each academic year, and in part-time study - less than 75%. The minimum study load per academic year is determined by the school. For example, health sector specialties (nursery, therapy and recovery treatment) can only be studied on the tertiary level at present in Estonia.

According to the Standard of Higher Education, applied HE provides students with the competences necessary for employment in a particular profession or to continue his/her studies at Masters' level. All the people having completed upper-secondary level education or training or who have equivalent foreign qualifications have the right to compete for admission to professional HE. Each provider may set more specific entry requirements which can differ by specialisation. The number of study places at public-sector HE institutions is decided by the Ministry of Education and Research, who determines the state-commissioned education provision taking into account propositions by schools, other ministries, employers as well as budget restrictions of the state. Each HE institution is also allowed to admit students on additional study places which are subject to fees. 40% of those who continue their education and training at tertiary level attend applied higher education institutions.

Where applied higher education is provided by VET institutions, it is subject to all regulations of the Applied Higher Education Institutions Act (*Rakenduskõrgkooli seadus*). In 2010, professional higher education was provided by 22 institutions of professional HE (12 of them private schools) and 2 VET institutions.

Students are evaluated through a unified system for both academic and applied HE branches. The same system is also used to evaluate students studying applied HE curricula at VET institutions. An examination or an assessment is considered positive if a student receives a grade ranging from 1 (E) to 5 (A).

TABLE 20: STUDENTS AT ISCED LEVEL 5 BY PROGRAMME DESTINATION (VALUES AND SHARE OF THE TOTAL) AND AT ISCED LEVEL 6 (VALUES), 2009

GEO	Total isced5	isced5a (num)	isced 5a (%)	isced5b (num)	isced 5b (%)	total isced 6
EU 27	19505749	16370782	83.9	2617882	13.4	517085
EE	68399	42915	62.7	23019	33.7	2465

Source: Eurostat (UOE); Extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 13-05-2011

Description: Students at ISCED level 5 by programme destination (values and share of the total) and at ISCED level 6

Additional note: Totals and percentage are Cedefop's calculation

Eurostat original label: educ_enr11ad-Students by ISCED level, study intensity (full-time, part-time) and sex

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_enr11ad&lang=en

Further selections: Full time/part time=total, sex=total, isced level =isced5a, isced 5b, isced6

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/educ_esms.htm

SEX = Total

Higher education has always been very popular and desired. Now that the opportunities have increased, students tend to favour higher education over vocational education.

5.8 LANGUAGE LEARNING IN IVET

Development of foreign language proficiency is a part of general studies in VET, emphasising the language of the specialisation. The independent learning skills of a graduate have developed to a level where he or she is able to obtain information and follow the developments of the specialisation locally and internationally. By means of different international projects, joint curricula according to subject fields have been compiled, teaching aids developed, and students have been granted opportunities for acquiring work experience and working abroad.

According to the Estonian Strategy of Foreign languages 2009-2015, foreign languages are taught in VET institutions on the basis of national and school curricula. In 2007, out of all students: 73% studied English, 41% Russian, 31% Estonian as second language, 18% German, 11% Finnish, 1.2% French and 0.1% Italian. In curriculum, there are two descriptions for foreign languages: foreign language or language of the specialization. The volume of languages studies differ according to schools and specialties. For instance, in service related curricula, up to three languages may be taught. VET programmes after basic school (acquiring also general education) must have one foreign language in part of studies. VET after secondary education has more foreign languages in part of studies. The languages taught most are English, Russian, German and Finnish.

One specific cultural feature of Estonia is its bilingual community (education in Estonian and Russian). The instruction in most VET institutions is in Estonian, though there are schools where the curricula is taught in both languages or the instruction is in Russian only. One of the aims of the development strategy of the Estonian language 2004-2010 is to

ensure a level of Estonian language skills of VET graduates that would enable them to be successful in work life.

VET training groups whose basic study language is Russian, big share of languages studies is Estonian language learning and the choice of foreign languages are narrower. In order to improve the competitiveness of graduates of Russian-language education in the labour market, more effective measures to teach Estonian and to develop Estonian-language VET are applied. It is considered necessary to support application of integrated vocational and language training methods in Russian-language curriculum groups, to contribute to teacher training and to the development of motivational systems that would be adaptable to new immigrants if necessary.

The planning of volume and content of foreign language learning in VET is according to the needs of Estonian and European labour market needs. Certification is set according to the requirements of European Language Learning frame document. VET students at upper secondary level have the opportunity to take national examinations (English, German, French or Russian).

6. CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR ADULTS

6.1 GENERAL BACKGROUND

Adult education is governed by the Adult Education Act (*Täiskasvanute koolituse seadus*, 1993) which defines adult learners as those who study by distance learning, evening courses, part-time study or as an external student participating in in-service or non-formal training. Adults who participate in daytime or full-time training are not included. For example, a 40 year old who is studying full time is not an adult learner in the sense of this official categorization, yet a 17-year-old who is studying part time or by correspondence, is considered an adult learner.

The main types of adult education are:

- formal education;
- professional education and training;
- non-formal education.

The law does not differentiate initial and continuing VET, either. Thus, if a person returns to study as an adult, he might have studied the profession previously (CVET) or be first exposed to it (IVET). Both are considered the cases of adult education, yet no distinction is made between IVET and CVET. Thus, in this paragraph and elsewhere we will be talking about adult education, not CVET, because there is no data available for CVET.

The main objectives of adult education according to the Development Plan for Estonian Adult Education 2009-2013 are to provide a better access for adults to both, formal and non-formal learning, to increase the level of education of the population and increase the rate of 25-64-year-old participants in lifelong learning to 13.5% by 2013. Increasingly more people will be able to increase their level of education or qualification by one level.

National and school curricula have been developed on the principle of modules and on the basis of professional standards. Curricula ensure the acquisition of the general and basic skills required in the modern world, and enable students to specialise within the curriculum. The new professional standards, whose new format has been designed within the framework of an ESF project, are competence based and measure learning outcomes. These standards are approved by professional councils, which consist of representatives of employees, employers and professional associations of the corresponding area of activity and the representatives of the state. The national curricula are based on these professional standards, which are renewed once every four years. Consequently, the curricula are also output based and are also renewed once every four years. Thus the formal qualifications correspond to labour market as much as possible.

Since 2007 the Ministry of Education and Research has applied the state funded study places scheme to provide short term training for working adults in the existing VET colleges and professional higher education institutions in order to raise the competitiveness and well-being of workers and to improve the quality of work. The free occupational training is available in all counties of Estonia. The program, financed by ESF, is called "Work-related training and development activities for adults". Since 2010, unemployed can participate too.

Enterprise Estonia has a programme by which enterprises can apply for a grant for development of knowledge and skills by providing, among other things, professional in-

service training of employees and/or managers lasting up to 12 months in the company. The minimum amount of grant to be applied is 2237€ per project. Up to 50% of eligible costs incurred are reimbursed.

E- learning is widely used in most VET colleges and universities thanks to an ESF project E-key (E-Võti). The project will be further developed within the new project "Vanker".

6.2 FORMAL LEARNING IN CVET

Since there is no formal CVET separate from IVET, topics such as: the existing levels of qualifications, their role and main characteristics; main private and public institution/providers; main characteristics/elements of the curricula; Quality assurance mechanisms; main characteristics of the training programmes in formal education by levels of qualifications are discussed under chapter 5.

There are no obstacles for anybody to start studies at VET colleges. The previous academic background is not taken into account (unless it is a prerequisite for a programme), thus people with academic background are admitted on an equal basis with all the others as they start the studies from the very beginning.

Students who have graduated from IVET are encouraged to return to take advanced courses and acquire a higher qualification and/or an additional profession. The structure of the curriculum supports this approach that the graduate with basic training is expected to return to upgrade his/her knowledge and skills.

Distance learning no longer exists as an official category. However, the schools can offer this study form if there are interested students and the school is ready to offer it. E-learning options are widely used in such programs. The duration is usually longer than a full time/day time study. The certification takes place on an equal basis with all the other study forms.

Formal education acquired within the adult education system is free of charge on the level of lower and upper secondary general education, including evening courses, distance learning and external study. This also applies to vocational education.

Professional and non-formal education and training is charged and paid for either by the participant or the employer. Participants can be exempt from income tax on the training cost if the trainer has a valid training licence, issued by the Ministry of Education and Research. If the employer pays for non-formal training costs of the employees, the expenses are considered as taxable fringe benefit. Due to the availability of European Social Fund resources, participants and employers have paid little to participate in training, as individuals can apply for the state funded study places for short term professional training and enterprises can apply for grants from Enterprise Estonia.

In the few professions regulated by law, regular professional in-service training can be compulsory. Where this is the case, funds for training are prescribed in the annual salary fund of these employees (e.g. 2-4% of the annual salary fund of health care workers and 3% of the annual salary fund of teachers). For other professions, training costs may be covered by both the employer and the employee.

The Adult Education Act provides the right for employees to take a study leave if a written proof is presented to the employer from the educational institution. The length can be at least 30 calendar days in a calendar year at the person's request. While participating in formal education or professional training, the employer continues to pay the average wages for twenty days. Additional study leave (15 days) is granted for graduating. For

these days, established minimum wage is paid. These rights and benefits are applied in both public and private sector, in small, medium size and big companies.

There are several activities to address attitudes towards learning and to develop a support structure for promoting learning, for example through guidance and counseling and implementing a system for recognising prior learning and work experience. Much attention is also paid to learning at home through various e-study opportunities. Formal education institutions are especially keen on using e-learning for adult education.

The measure that is envisaged to be introduced as a consequence of the financial and economic crisis is to develop more flexible ways for continuing training and retraining. There is a plan to use the state funded study places scheme which so far has been successfully applied to working adults to retrain the unemployed. Also, in the Ministry of Economics and Communications there is a plan to offer a package to foreign investors, complete with the staff with the right skills to revive the economy and bring in FDI. VET colleges can help prepare for those skills.

TABLE 21A: PARTICIPATION RATE IN FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2007				
ISCED97/ GEO	0-2	3-4	5-6	Total
EU 27	2.7	6	12.7	6.6
EE	1.3	3.6	8.5	5

Source of data: Eurostat (AES); Extracted on: 24-05-2011; Last update: 30-03-2011

Description: The indicator represents the share of people (aged 25-64) that participated in formal education and training in the 12 months prior to the survey. Specific rates are calculated by highest level of education attained

Eurostat original label: trng_aes_102-Participation rate in education and training by highest level of education attained

Link to data:

http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=trng_aes_102&lang=en

Further selections: typetra1 = formal, ISCED = 0-2, 3-5, 5-6, total

Link to metadata:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/en/trng_aes_esms.htm

TYPTRAI = Formal education and training; INDICATORS = OBS_FLAG; UNIT = Percentage of total

TABLE 22B: PARTICIPATION RATE IN FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY LABOUR STATUS (%), 2007				
WSTATUS / GEO	Employment	Inactive population	Total	Unemployment
EU 27	6.6	6.3	6.6	7.1

EE	5	5.3	5	1.4
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Source of data: Eurostat (AES); Extracted on: 24-05-2011; Last update: 13-04-2011

Description: The indicator represent the share of people (aged 25-64) that participated in formal education and training in the 12 months prior to the survey. Specific rates are calculated by labour status

Eurostat original label: *trng_aes_103-Participation rate in education and training by labour status*

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=trng_aes_103&lang=en

Further selections: *typetrai=formal, wstatus=employed, inactive, unemployed, total*

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/en/trng_aes_esms.htm

TYPTRAI= Formal education and training; INDICATORS=OBS_FLAG; UNIT=Percentage of total

If recent years the participation rate among adult in formal education has been relatively stable, it increased in 2009/2010.

6.3 NON-FORMAL LEARNING IN CVET

To promote participation in adult education, it is important to raise motivation and to invest additional resources. Adult education (governed by the Adult Education Act) is a broad field of activity financed by several ministries (Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications). The funding model for adult education consists of three pillars and each pillar is under the responsibility of a different ministry.

- 1st pillar: funding the training of employed adults through enterprises (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications)
- 2nd pillar: funding professional in-service training and retraining through educational institutions (Ministry of Education and Research)
- 3rd pillar: employment training for the unemployed through the Labour Market Board (Ministry of Social Affairs)

The current programming period 2007-2013 of EU structural funds offers ample opportunities for lifelong learning. There are several activities to address attitudes towards learning and to develop a support structure for promoting learning, for example through guidance and counselling, and implementing a system for recognising prior learning and work experience.

The program, financed by ESF, called "Work-related training and development activities for adults" offers short term training for working adults in the existing VET colleges and professional higher education institutions.

Estonian Non-formal Adult Education Association (ENAEA) (*Eesti Vabaharidusliit*) is non-governmental, national umbrella organisation in the non-formal adult education field associating education-orientated NGOs (82 member organisations in 2011). The mission of the Estonian Non-formal Adult Education Association as a civic association and nation-wide organization connecting educationally oriented non-governmental associations and adult training institutions is supporting and recognizing the educational aspirations of members on the level of state government and parliament and creating the informational environment necessary for a steady civil society. During 2007-2013 ENAEA is implementing an ESF program "Adult training in non-formal training centres".

The role of libraries, museums, theatres and other cultural establishments is becoming more important in promoting lifelong learning through offering learning opportunities. As in formal CVET, various e-study opportunities enabling to study at home gain more importance.

Non-formal education and training is charged and paid for either by the participant or the employer. Participants can be exempt from income tax on the training cost, if the trainer has a valid training licence, issued by the Ministry of Education and Research. If an employer pays non-formal training costs for employees, expenses are considered as taxable fringe benefit. Due to the availability of European Social Fund resources, participants and employers have paid little to participate in training.

In a few professions regulated by law, regular professional in-service training can be compulsory. Where this is the case, funds for training are prescribed in the annual salary fund of these employees (e.g. 2-4% of the annual salary fund of civil servants and minimum of 3% of the annual salary fund of teachers). For other professions, training costs may be covered by both the employer and the employee.

In June 2007, "policies for arranging professional training for working adults in VET institutions" (*Täiskasvanute tööalase koolituse kutseõppeasutuses korraldamise tingimused ja kord*) were adopted. According to that, a VET institution shall organise adult professional education and training (non-formal CVET) if there is a demand and the relevant material resources and teachers exist. Both state and private VET institutions offer training to individuals and enterprises. Courses can be organised in the daytime, evening and through distance learning. Upon completion, participants receive a certificate.

The non-formal CVET is under the responsibility of training institutions and providers. Private training providers must be licensed by the Ministry of Education and Research according to the Private School Act (only training at licensed providers is tax deductible). A training licence is valid for three to five years. New principles and criteria for issuing training licences are being prepared. The licences will be replaced by the right to register the curriculum at the Estonian Education Information System (EHIS), an online database of the whole educational system in Estonia. Quality issues are gaining more attention as the provision of adult training increases. Raising awareness of participants and employers has had a positive impact on training quality.

Numerous policy documents emphasise the importance of continuing training for the workforce. While employers are paying more attention to continuing and re-training, there is room for improvement regarding training places, assuring content relevance, and assessment procedures.

Professional training at company level is not regulated by law, however, the Adult Education Act (*Täiskasvanute koolituse seadus, 1993*) provides for everybody's right to improve oneself and the state's, local authorities' and employers' obligation to coordinate and organise adult education.

Some enterprises have their own training agreements which may include additional support for study leave, funding, etc. There is a training support programme operated by Enterprise Estonia (*Ettevõtlike Arendamise Sihtasutus*) and co-financed from the ESF. The aim is to support in-service training and retraining of entrepreneurs and people: working in the companies to maintain or increase labour market competitiveness; developing entrepreneurship; working in research and development activities and technological change. Professional in-company training for adults is provided by many private training providers, but increasingly also by applied higher educational institutions, universities and VET institutions as well as professional associations.

Enterprise Estonia and the Ministry of Economics and Communications initiated a voucher system since June 2009 for small-sized (up to 9 people) enterprises and sole proprietors (*füüsilisest isikust ettevõtja*), who can apply to have their training reimbursed up to 100% in the sum no more than 950€ and not more than once a year. The training providers have to be approved by the ministry.

The Adult Education Act provides the right for employees to take study leave on the basis of a notice from the educational institution. The length can be at least 30 calendar days in an academic year at the person's request (except in the case of day time study and full-time study). Additional study leave is granted to complete the course. The duration of study leave depends on the level of education acquired. The employer continues to pay the average wages for ten days and the established minimum wage for the remaining days. To participate in professional education and training, study leave of at least fourteen calendar days in a year is granted and the employee continues to receive his/her average wage. To participate in non-formal education, study leave without pay of at least seven calendar days in a year is granted.

These rights and benefits are applied in both public and private sector, in small, medium size and big companies. Individuals or their employers usually pay for work-related training and non-formal education. The state contributes through tax reductions for employers and individuals paying for their own training. Pursuant to the Income Tax Act (*Tulumaksuseadus*, 1999) people can be exempt from income tax up to the extent of the sum spent on training if the training provider has a valid licence from the Ministry of Education and Research.

TABLE 23A: PARTICIPATION RATE IN NON FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2007				
ISCED97/ GEO	0-2	3-4	5-6	Total
EU 27	15.6	31.4	51.5	31.3
EE	18.5	34.2	58.3	40.2

Source of data: Eurostat (AES); Extracted on: 24-05-2011; Last update: 30-03-2011

Description: The indicator represents the share of people (aged 25-64) that participated in non formal education and training in the 12 months prior to the survey. Specific rates are calculated by highest level of education attained

Eurostat original label: *trng_aes_102-Participation rate in education and training by highest level of education attained*

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=trng_aes_102&lang=en

Further selections: *typetrai=non formal, ISCED=0-2, 3-5, 5-6, total*

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/en/trng_aes_esms.htm

TYPTRAI= Formal education and training; INDICATORS=OBS_FLAG; UNIT=Percentage of total

TABLE 24B: PARTICIPATION RATE IN NON FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY LABOUR STATUS (%), 2007				
WSTATUS / GEO	Employment	Inactive population	Total	Unemployment
EU 27	38.8	12.4	31.3	19.5
EE	47.7	11.1	40.2	16.3

Source of data: Eurostat (AES); Extracted on: 24-05-2011; Last update: 13-04-2011

Description: The indicator represents the share of people (aged 25-64) that participated in formal education and training in the 12 months prior to the survey. Specific rates are calculated by labour status. Specific rates are calculated by labour status.

Eurostat original label: trng_aes_103-Participation rate in education and training by labour status
Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=trng_aes_103&lang=en
Further selections: typetra1=formal, wstatus employed, inactive, unemployed, total
Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/en/trng_aes_esms.htm
TYPTRAI= Formal education and training; INDICATORS=OBS_FLAG; UNIT=Percentage of total

The participation rates in lifelong learning by different groups in population are diverse. Older and less educated tend to participate less than younger and more educated. People who are active in the labour market are more active in non-formal learning too.

6.4 LANGUAGE LEARNING IN CVET

There is no formal CVET separate from IVET. See paragraph 5.8 for more detail.

As one of the eight key competences of lifelong learning is communication in foreign languages, foreign language courses are part of non-formal education and training. Whereas language learning in non-formal education is not studied separately, there is no systematic information about it.

6.5 TRAINING PROGRAMS TO HELP JOB-SEEKERS AND PEOPLE VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

The Employment Services and Benefits Act (*Tööturuteenuste ja toetuste seadus, 2006*) regulates the provision of employment services to job seekers (including training provision) and to employers. Training is commissioned by county employment offices and paid for by the Ministry of Social Affairs (*Sotsiaalministeerium*), local authorities may also allocate resources for this purpose. Training may be commissioned from any licensed body approved by the Ministry of Education and Research.

In recent years the Ministry of Social Affairs has commissioned employment training from more than 50 education providers (adult education institutions, VET institutions and institutions of higher education) annually. The types of employment training are professional training, retraining and continuing training. Upon course completion, a certificate is issued and some training participants may sit an examination and obtain a professional qualification. Courses may last up to 6 months (20 credit points) and may be provided in employment offices or in a range of other education and training providers. Employment offices offer a package of services - information, training and re-training, vocational counselling, subsidy to start a business, etc.

The administrative arm of the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (*Töötukassa*) has 15 regional employment offices. Its aim is to reduce unemployment and assist job-seekers and employers. EURES (European Employment Services) has consultants to advise people wishing to work in an EEA (European Economic Area) country and employers who wish to recruit new employees from EEA. EURES is coordinated by the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund. Employment services can also be provided by private agencies although the services must be free of charge.

Quality assurance is guaranteed by the requirement to verify the training commissioned with professional standards. In addition, all training must be commissioned from providers with a licence.

At the beginning, work-related training and development activities for adults (ESF program) were only meant for employed people. During the period of high unemployment and the need to offer training opportunities for people without place of work, the

possibilities were increased. On account of this, since autumn semester 2010, target group for the work-related training and development activities for adults is broadened and these courses are available for unemployed as well.

7. TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

7.1 PRIORITIES IN TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

An ESF project (2005-2008) tackled developing VET teachers' further training possibilities and system. Some results of the project, which, as a whole, has been successful, are as follows:

- A study was conducted which gave a picture of a career model of today's VET trainer and comparison to the relevant practise in Europe (June 2006)
- VET teacher's subject-specific competencies were described in 15 curriculum groups and proposals were made to enhance the frame requirements for teacher preparation (September 2006)

- Approved centres for continuing education were created on the basis of the existing vocational institutions (December 2006)
- Curricula for continuing education for vocational teachers and practical training supervisors were compiled (April 2007).
- Curricula for continuing education were tested and amended (January 2008)
- Models for the vocational teacher's training and continuing education will be compiled in 15 curriculum groups (June 2008)

Through the 2005-2008 project "The Development of VET Curricula" VET teachers were involved in revising the content of VET training through participation in curricula committees, creating the output based national curricula.

A project *E-Võti* (E-key) was launched in 2006. Through this project, the teachers were involved in creating a modern study environment. 2,310 teachers, IT specialists and education specialists took part in the training of how to compile electronic study materials (mainly web-based). As a result of the training, the teachers created 615 weeks of electronic study courses and over 600 study aids, which are all gathered in one data mart, available for everybody. Thanks to the programme, 11 professional networks emerged, which have been conducive to promoting the new learning and methodology. E-VET thematic networks work together with E-University networks in Estonia, and cooperate with specialists in the fields and national VET curricula development work groups of National Examinations and Qualifications Centre.

As to the developments for workplace supervisors, the Estonian Employers' Confederation launched a training project for workplace supervisors in the Apprenticeship programme in 2007. Together with the Open University Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) of Tallinn University, the Confederation set up a curriculum and trained 400 teachers and mentors-supervisors (325 of whom completed the course) from the 200 participating enterprises in 2005-2007. In September 2007 the Estonian Employers' Confederation, with the help of partners, launched an e-learning course, *Implementing supervisor programmes in enterprises*, which targeted beginning trainers, implementors and coordinators.

Since 2004, graduates from the initial teacher education have to pass the final 'on-the-job' qualifying phase (*kutseaasta*) lasting one school year. During this time the prospective teachers receive support from their tutors and universities (university colleges). At the end of the period they are awarded a qualification of a teacher. After working as a teacher for a minimum of three years, the person concerned can apply for a higher-level occupational grade. There are four occupational grades. A special share (around 3% of the amount earmarked for teacher salaries) of the state budget is allocated for in-service teacher training.

Thanks to the aforementioned projects a systematic continuous training network for VET teachers was re-established. These activities are continued under current ESF program "VET content development 2008-2013". VET teachers receive training according to their needs, there are several networks they are involved in. For instance, in the study year 2010/2011, the VET teacher adjustment year pilot program in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Research, universities and VET institutions, is carried out. VET teachers can also take part in courses conducted for trainers of adults, preparing them for work with adult population. They also have an opportunity to apply for the profession of a trainer of adults.

7.2 TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN VET

7.2.1 TEACHERS, TRAINERS AND TRAINING FACILITATORS IN IVET

The Teacher Training Framework Requirements (*Õpetajate koolituse raamnõuded, 2000*) and The Qualification Requirements for Teachers (*Pedagoogide kvalifikatsiooninõuded, 2002*) describes all teaching and training qualifications and occupations. Specifically for VET, there are two types of teachers at VET institutions:

- teachers of general education subjects (*üldaineõpetaja*); and
- vocational teachers (*kutseõpetaja*) for both theory and practice.

Initial teacher education is provided by universities and professional higher education institutions (*ülikool, rakenduskõrgkool*) and teacher training curricula has to be registered with the Ministry of Education and Research. Vocational teachers are trained at the first level of higher education (3 years of bachelor study or professional higher education). Training must meet the Teacher Training Framework Requirements (*Õpetajate koolituse raamnõuded*) and be equal to 180 credit points. A vocational teacher teaches speciality subjects in a vocational school and the requirements for his or her training and qualifications are lower than the requirements for teachers of general education subjects.

Teachers of general education subjects in vocational schools and special education teachers are trained at the second level of higher education, the total volume of teachers' training being 200 credit points. A person who has completed Master's study is prepared also, for example, to teach children with special needs and to provide colleagues with professional counselling. The diploma and certificate awarded provide evidence of teaching qualifications.

A vocational school general education teacher shall be able to link general education subjects to subjects related to vocations. A vocational teacher teaches speciality subjects in a vocational school and the requirements for his or her training and qualifications are different than the requirements for teachers of general education subjects: at least 75% of such teaching staff must possess pedagogical higher education or higher education related to the specialization, and all vocational teachers must in addition have specialized work experience and acquired qualifications either in pedagogy (in case of specialised higher education) or the specialization (in case of pedagogical higher education).

- ***Vocational teacher***

The role of the vocational teacher is: to manage the process of vocational training (supervision, assessment, etc.); to prepare study materials; to prepare and improve subject syllabi and curricula. Pursuant to the Vocational Teachers Professional Standard (*Kutseõpetaja kutsestandard, 2006*) the aim of the vocational teacher is to support the acquisition of skills and knowledge required at work. Vocational teachers must also support the personal development of students and foster a lifelong learning attitude. The Standard defines vocational teachers according to professional levels III, IV and V.

- ***Teacher of general education subjects***

According to Teacher Training Framework Requirements the teacher of general education subjects in VET institution should to create an environment favourable for studying and for spiritual, physical, social, emotional and ethical development; to co-operate with other teachers, parents or guardians and with other institutions in the region and adults, following the education and schooling goals of the educational institution and the learning group; to support the development of a student's learning abilities and development of

individual learning methods; to supervise a student in learning a subject, in using manuals, Internet and other source materials, and in individual work; to be a person of confidence and contact in relationship between a student and the adult world; to provide counselling to a student in questions related to his or her efficient personal educational path and learning, taking into account the principle of life-long learning. Additional requirement is that teacher of general education subjects should be able to link general education subjects to subjects related to vocations.

- *Workplace supervisors*

Workplace supervisors (vocational trainer - *ettevõtte praktikajuhendaja*) supervise students during their work placement. They provide students with practical skills and theoretical knowledge at the workplace in a real working situation. They help students to adapt to working life and provide feedback to the VET provider on student performance. The activities, obligations and liability of and qualification requirements for workplace supervisors are not regulated by national legislation.

TABLE 25: TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN IVET		
TEACHER	INSTITUTION	QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
VOCATIONAL TEACHER (KUTSEÕPETAJA)	VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION (ISCED 3B, 4B)	<p>1) HIGHER EDUCATION IN VOCATIONAL PEDAGOGY OR OTHER PEDAGOGICAL HIGHER EDUCATION (5A, 5B) AND AT LEAST 3 YEARS EXPERIENCE IN THE RESPECTIVE PROFESSION OR</p> <p>2) HIGHER (5A,5B) OR POST-SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (NON-TERTIARY) (4B) IN THE RESPECTIVE FIELD, AT LEAST 3 YEARS EXPERIENCE IN THE RESPECTIVE PROFESSION AND COMPLETED 320-HOURS COURSE IN VOCATIONAL PEDAGOGY OR</p> <p>3) HIGHER (5A,5B) OR POST-SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (NON-TERTIARY) (4B) IN THE RESPECTIVE FIELD, AT LEAST 3 YEARS EXPERIENCE IN THE RESPECTIVE PROFESSION AND ONGOING WORKING IN THE RESPECTIVE PROFESSION</p>
TEACHER OF GENERAL EDUCATION SUBJECTS (ÜLDAINEÕPETAJA)	VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION (ISCED 3B)	<p>1) HIGHER (5A,5B) PEDAGOGICAL EDUCATION IN THE RESPECTIVE FIELD OR</p> <p>2) HIGHER (5A, 5B) EDUCATION IN THE RESPECTIVE FIELD AND COMPLETED 160-HOURS COURSE IN PEDAGOGY</p>
WORKPLACE SUPERVISOR (VOCATIONAL TRAINER- ETTEVÕTTE PRAKTIKA-JUHENDAJA)	COMPANIES, ENTERPRISES	NO REQUIREMENTS

TABLE 26: REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL TEACHERS			
PROFESSIONAL LEVEL	WORK EXPERIENCE	EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	OTHER REQUIREMENTS
III	3 YEARS WORK EXPERIENCE IN	SECONDARY	PASSED VOCATIONAL

	THE SUBJECT TAUGHT AND 1 YEAR EXPERIENCE AS VET TEACHER (ADAPTATION YEAR)	EDUCATION	EDUCATION OR PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION IN THE SUBJECT TAUGHT
IV	3 YEARS WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE SUBJECT TAUGHT AND 1 YEAR EXPERIENCE AS VET TEACHER (ADAPTATION YEAR)	HIGHER EDUCATION OR EQUIVALENT IN THE SUBJECT TAUGHT	TEACHER TRAINING PURSUANT TO THE STANDARD
	3 YEARS WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE SUBJECT TAUGHT AND 1 YEAR EXPERIENCE AS VET TEACHER (ADAPTATION YEAR)	HIGHER EDUCATION OR EQUIVALENT	TEACHER TRAINING PURSUANT TO THE STANDARD, PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION IN THE SUBJECT TAUGHT
	1 YEAR EXPERIENCE AS VET TEACHER (ADAPTATION YEAR)	MASTER'S DEGREE OR EQUIVALENT IN THE SUBJECT TAUGHT	TEACHER TRAINING PURSUANT TO THE STANDARD
V	3 YEARS OF WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE SUBJECT TAUGHT OR 5 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS VET TEACHER	MASTER'S DEGREE OR EQUIVALENT	TEACHER TRAINING PURSUANT TO THE STANDARD

The main regulator of teacher and trainer training arrangements in Estonia is National Examination and Qualification Centre (NEQC). NEQC (in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Research):

- organises of the compilation and development of national curricula for vocational education institutions;
- organises the compilation of methodological and other resource materials supporting the implementation of the national curricula;
- organises the evaluation of study materials;
- makes proposals to the Ministry of Education and Research regarding legal acts pertaining to implementation of the national curricula;
- evaluates curricula of institutions providing vocational education, provides consultation to the institutions on curricula issues;
- makes proposals regarding in-service training for teachers in vocational education.
- organises the evaluation of teachers' professional skills and issuing professional certificates;
- organises the work of the national evaluation committee, provides consultation to the evaluation committees of educational institutions;
- evaluates the qualifications of teachers and makes prognosis for the need for in-service training and retraining;
- evaluates conformity of in-service training curricula to teaching qualification requirements;

- analyzes teachers' professional preparation and teachers' participation in in-service training on the basis of the EHS;
- is competent to recognize teaching qualification acquired abroad.

Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency (EKKA):

- provides counselling for preschool children's institutions, general educational schools and vocational educational institutions in matters of internal evaluation;
- analyzes the internal evaluations performed by educational institutions, provides feedback to managers and owners of the institutions;
- prepares an analytical summary for the Ministry of Education and Research once a year.

7.2.2 PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF IVET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

Pre-service (initial) training

Vocational teachers' training is provided at the level of higher education. Access to the teaching profession depends upon previously acquired professional education, be it higher education (5A) or vocational upper secondary (3B) or post-secondary (non-tertiary) (4B) coupled with teacher training (one or three years). Vocational teachers tend to receive their training together rather than according to the subjects they plan to teach due to low numbers of applicants (a maximum of 5 specialists in the same field commence teacher training each year). This means that they must have the necessary professional qualifications before embarking on a pedagogical qualification.

Under the Teacher Training Framework Requirements, studies include: general education; subject studies; pedagogics; psychology and didactics. It also includes a practical training placement lasting at least 10 weeks. Teacher training is provided in two stages: initial training, induction year for novice vocational teacher. The induction year eases novice teachers into work life and it also serves as a way to give feedback to the institution on the effectiveness of the teacher training curriculum. Novice teachers are supervised by a mentor who assesses their performance at the end of the year.

Studies are organised in the form of lectures and seminars, involving issue studies, presentations, discussions and group work. Depending on the university, students are assessed on an A-F scale or on a five point scale, where: A (5) is excellent and F (0) is fail.

Continuing, in-service training

Vocational teachers often acquire their pedagogical qualification while they are working. The Qualification Requirements for Teachers (*Pedagoogide kvalifikatsiooninõuded, 2002*) requires that vocational teachers who have professional higher education or post-secondary vocational education (non-tertiary) complete a 320 hour vocational pedagogy course. The content was defined in 2003 by the National Examination and Qualification Centre. Courses must include: organisation of vocational education and legislation, integration of general and vocational education, communication and working environment, education psychology, special education, adult education and didactics of vocational education.

Other types of in-service training is to some extent governed by the Teacher Training Framework Requirements, which states that it is provided in a state or municipal school or a private school which holds an education license. It must be provided by an accredited person. A vocational teacher is required to participate in in-service training for at least two months during each three years of service. Participation is taken into account in their evaluation.

Pursuant to the Adult Education Act (*Täiskasvanute koolituse seadus, 1993*), in-service training of teachers is paid for from the state budget and amounts to at least 3% of the respective teacher's annual salary. Like the general population, VET teachers are also entitled to study leave lasting for the duration of the course or for at least 30 days in an academic year. A higher number of days can be awarded for teacher studying for higher education. Teachers continue to receive average wages for 10 days and then at least the minimum wage for the remainder of the leave.

7.3 TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN CVET

7.3.1 TEACHERS, TRAINERS AND TRAINING FACILITATORS IN CVET

There is no difference between IVET and CVET teachers, VET teachers work in VET institutions which provide both initial and continuing training and the requirements are the same. CVET courses at VET institutions are conducted by VET teachers who have completed both professional and teacher training.

7.3.2 PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF CVET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

VET teachers, whether in IVET or CVET in state schools have to correspond to *Teacher Training Framework Requirements and Qualification Requirements for Teachers*. For the requirements, see 7.1.1 and 7.2. The pre-service and in-service requirements are the same. As to training adults, VET teachers have been able and will be able to take part in courses conducted for trainers of adults, preparing them for work with adult population. They also have an opportunity to apply for the profession of a trainer of adults.

At private training institutions which offer in-service training, the teachers are usually specialists in their field and the *Teacher Training Framework Requirements and Qualification Requirements for Teachers* are not applied to them.

For non-formal company training for employees, no special requirements are set for supervising specialists.

8. MATCHING VET PROVISION (SKILLS) WITH LABOUR MARKET NEEDS (JOBS)

8.1 SYSTEMS AND MECHANISMS FOR THE ANTICIPATION OF SKILL NEEDS (IN SECTORS, OCCUPATIONS, EDUCATION LEVEL)

The anticipation of skills and human resources needed on the labour market is organised by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. Annual forecasts have been available since 2003 (latest since 2018). In Estonian skill needs forecasting model 'skills' are defined as 'occupational skills' (based on ISCO broad groups) by business activity (based on NACE). As additional background, the information on the existing structure of employment by graduates' field of education is also included. The forecasting method includes both expansion demand (new jobs creation) and replacement demand (due to mortality and retirement). The supply side is only considered at very general level in the macro model (through wage formation due to unemployment).

Estonian skill needs forecasting is carried out in several stages. First, macro modelling, which is based on Hermin model adapted to the Estonian context, is carried out which produces overall macroeconomic trends, including employment expansion by nine broad economic sectors. These general forecasts are then used as a basis for more disaggregated forecasts which finally give results for 35 business activities. More detailed analysis is done by sector analysts who take a closer look at key business activities. Methods used vary depending on the sector, but in general they consider demand side and productivity developments. Currently, 24 activities are properly covered from a total of 35 for which the forecast is produced by five sector analysts. Very small and public sector activities are not covered by the analysis.

Detailed analysis includes forecasting occupational structure in each economic activity covered. The forecast of the occupational structure mainly grounds on recent trends and on feedback and expert opinions of different business associations. This way the forecast of employment (including expansion) by business activity and occupation is achieved. In addition to expansion demand, replacement demand is analysed. This is based on employed persons' distribution by age groups across each business activity. At this point of time same retirement age and mortality rates are assumed for all business activities. As a third major component, possible inter-sectoral movements are analysed. Again, it is a new component and currently it is a simple scenario on how employees might change their field of activity based on recent trends and on relative demand for new employment in different sectors. All these three components - new jobs creation, natural wastage and inter-sectoral movement - form the labour demand for 35 business activities.

The anticipated skills needs forecast is one of the factors considered in putting together the scheme of state funded study places in VET. That will ensure that the quantitative side of VET provision corresponds to the labour market needs. For planning the adult education courses in IVET and CVET, there is a task force, which consists of different stakeholders who gather twice a year and set priorities for immediate training needs, thus responding quickly and flexibly to labour market changes.

The Ministry and its partners prepare forecasts on sectoral basis (ISCO 88 - International Standard Classification of Occupations). The Ministry of Education and Research uses this document as a basis for allocating state funded study places in vocational and higher education.

In recent years, specific economic sectors and particular issues have been under greater attention. (See references to these studies under chapter 11). Two sectoral studies mapping situations in sectors have been published by Estonian Qualifications Authority

(Kutsekoda): 1) **Mapping key occupations and competencies in logistics** and 2) **Mapping key occupations and competencies in mechanical engineering**. The aim of these reports is to identify the key professions and -competencies in the field of logistics and mechanical engineering. The study provides support for the working teams who prepare professional standards, containing information about the competencies of professionals in the field. In addition, the survey results reflect trends in the sector, such as the competencies which importance is growing in the future. So it is a source where entrepreneurs in the field and other interest groups can obtain relevant information, compare data from their respective organisation practice and if necessary, introduce any necessary changes. The work includes the following topics: key position among professionals and qualified workers; main job tasks and basic competences and their development; competencies, which will become more important in the future and recruitment for a key position. Besides, assessment of graduates level of education and awareness about the development of professional standards and certificates.

Another survey, subscribed by the Ministry of Agriculture, is **Labour market demand and workforce competencies and level of qualifications in the agricultural-, food- and forestry sectors**. The objective of this study was to map the agricultural-, food- and forestry sectors workforce level of qualifications in order to: 1) predict the need for labour force in the near future by specialty and qualification levels and give recommendations for people working in the sectors to ensure necessary qualifications; 2) better organize the quality of professional training and in-service training in vocational schools and colleges. **Energetics sector labour force survey**, conducted among enterprises in energetics sector and educational institutions who provide respective training, to test the tendencies brought forth in development plans and prognosis. The aim of **Estonian Machine industry sectoral study 2010-2011** was to map the situation in this sector and offer solutions for strengthening its competitive position.

In 2009, The Government Office (*Riigikantselei*) political analysis on **Manpower requirement and the knowledge-based economy**, was conducted by researchers from the University of Tartu. The aim of this study was to map the labour force needed for becoming knowledge-based society. In 2009, doctoral thesis on **Technological change and labour demand** by Jaanika Meriküll was presented. The aim of this thesis was to investigate the effect of technological change on employment structure and labour demand in the Central and Eastern European (CEE) catching-up countries. Practices To Match VET Provision (Skills) With Skill Needs (Jobs)

8.2 PRACTICES TO MATCH VET PROVISION (SKILLS) WITH SKILL NEEDS (JOBS)

The preparation of curricula is based on the Vocational Education Standard as well as on national curricula and school curricula.

In 2004, the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre initiated the preparation of national curricula for vocational education (supported by the state budget and EU Structural Funds). By early 2007 the Minister of Education and Research had approved the first 5 national vocational curricula. By Jan 2009 the Ministry had approved 40 national vocational curricula. The preparation is co-ordinated by the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre and the work is organised in working groups of vocational education experts.

The new national curricula are based on professional standards which now have a new format as a result of an ESF project in 2005-2008. Activities are continued under the ESF programme "VET content development 2008-2013".

The qualifications according to the new format have to be output based, taking into account the learning outcomes and the actual competences of an applicant. Thus the new national curricula, which are based on the new qualifications, are also output based. Having been taken into consideration that during 2008-2013 the professional standards will be renewed according to the new 8-levels NQF, all the national VET curricula will be modernized, too. Through participation in professional councils, more and more employers play a more active and influential role by creating professional standards for each profession.

The main areas of attention of the national program "VET content development" are:

- modernizing national VET curricula according to the renewed professional standards,
- implementing NQF,
- implementing principles of validation of non-formal and informal learning and implementing ECVET,
- working out and publishing study materials and teachers' continuing education.

The program is lead by the National Examination and Qualification Centre and lasts until 2013. The programme uses European Social Funds for co-financing.

A VET school prepares a curriculum for each area of specialisation taught. The curriculum is a basic document for studies in a specific area of specialisation which takes into account the requirements of professional standards and the relevant national curriculum. It also defines the list of elective courses with their volume and short descriptions as well as the possibility and conditions for choosing courses. The introduction of competence-based curricula has motivated providers to strengthen their contacts with employers and graduates as a way to gauge labour market skills needs.

Several e-learning opportunities enable employed people to participate in training and allow them to plan their career and their training needs more easily. In Estonia, e-learning is coordinated by the Estonian e-Learning Development Centre which administrates two consortia: the Estonian e-University and the Estonian e-VET. The Estonian e-VET consortium consists of 27 VET schools and 7 applied higher education institutions. The objective of the consortium is to achieve a high quality and sustainable e-learning development and implementation system for e-VET schools and applied higher education institutions. There is a national programme for developing VET e-learning, established for 2008-2013. The programme is co-financed by EU Social Funds and led by the Estonian e-Learning Development Centre. Under specific attention are people with low qualifications or no professional education, especially young (16-29) unemployed. Main accent is on reducing the dropping out of school and creating the opportunities for students whose studies have been disrupted to finish up their studies. Discussions are held regarding the reorganisation of vocational training after upper secondary school. On the labour market, there is a deficit of workforce with such knowledge, skills and experience who would be trained to work as lower or middle level managers. It is planned to develop curricula with a respective potential, corresponding to the short cycle tertiary education. In this process, close cooperation with higher education is practiced. Debates are ongoing as regards possibilities to further enhance the flexibility of vocational training, offering additional professional qualifications. This means that in addition to the major professional qualification, it is possible to acquire a complementary qualification.

9. LIFELONG GUIDANCE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING AND SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT

9.1 STRATEGY AND PROVISION

Career guidance has been practiced in Estonia for about 90 years. The service has been called in different ways - the latest version being career services. The latest developments on this field have taken place due to the changes in expectations and requirements of the labour market as well as due to the advanced concept of lifelong learning.

Lifelong guidance has been embedded in the national adult education strategy and in the ESF Operational Programme for Human Resource Development. In the lifelong learning strategy, measures are taken to increase the volume of career services to employed and unemployed adults and to develop career guidance for adults in cooperation with two ministries - the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Social Affairs; the cooperation will be strengthened also on the regional level, between the career guidance units and schools.

The ESF Operational Programme for Human Resource Development states that the development of a unified guidance system within the framework of an integrated counselling model will be continued and career guidance will be initiated in vocational education institutions, the availability of the service will be ensured in all VET institutions, and these will be linked to other counselling categories. The development of career education, and of other activities supporting career planning for pupils, will be continued in general education schools. In youth work, projects on youth information for the development of information services will be supported, including the training of the practitioners, and the development of methodological and information materials.

In 2006 the Foundation Innove National Resource Centre for Guidance (NRCG) carried out a comprehensive survey, whereby the current situation was mapped in Estonia. This survey was used as an input in developing the new ESF Programme for 2007-2011 "Development of Career Services". There are also several feedback questionnaires, focus groups and surveys carried out, but they serve a narrower purpose, yet are incorporated in policies and practices wherever possible. By the end of 2011 another national survey will be carried out among a wide range of service receivers, in order to measure the citizens' awareness of career services and their career management skills, analyse the accessibility of services and co-operation between different stakeholders in providing the services. The results of this survey will be used as an input to the second period of the above mentioned programme.

In March 2008, a contractual agreement regarding career services in Estonia was signed between two Ministries - the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Research. As an outcome, the above mentioned programme was started and the National Career Guidance Forum (NCGF) was set up in the beginning of 2009. The forum unites stakeholders from many different levels and sectors including policy makers from relevant ministries, practitioners, target groups etc.

The development and provision of career services is based on the three-service-concept: career education, career information provision and career counselling.

Career guidance is provided within formal education and as part of youth work (extra-curricular activities). Pursuant to the Youth Work Act (*Noorsootöö seadus*) the organisation of information and guidance services is the responsibility of the county governor who signs a contract with a provider every year. Except for career services, since 2009 the provision of career services lies within Foundation Innove.

In each county (15), there is at least one centre (called Youth Information and Counselling Centre - YICC). As part of the national strategy, 17 centres have become partners in the above mentioned national programme. Centres provide young people with career information and career counselling. In most cases other information and/or counselling services are available. The centres provide on-the-spot information and guidance services and visit schools; they also support teachers in giving good quality guidance services, as well as organise regular thematic trainings, seminars, lectures and tests for evaluating characteristics and abilities. Services are targeted at students in general education and VET schools. They also cooperate with teachers, parents and companies.

Since 2009 career information and career counselling in the above mentioned 17 centres are provided according to the new service standards, which state the activities, the methodology, the principles, as well as documentation, the minimum volume and quality assurance of the service provision. In 2010 the standards were developed into three quality manuals - the Career Services Quality Manual, the Career Information and Career Counselling Manual and the Career Education Quality Manual.

The Quality Manual focuses on the quality of general management, which in turn affects the quality of career services - career education, provision of career information and career counselling - and, ultimately, stakeholder satisfaction.

The Career Information and Career Counselling Manual describes services, processes and quality assurance, and provides an overview of service quality assessment, reviews and improvement of quality results, and requirements concerning services and records management.

The Career Education Quality Manual contains ideas on how to ensure the quality of career education in schools. The authors of the manual seek to provide recommendations to teachers and directors of general education and vocational training institutions on how to link the various components of quality assessment systems to career education in a more effective manner.

In 2008-2011 the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre runs the ESF programme "Developing an counselling system for pupils with special needs" whose objective is to improve the quality of the special needs counselling system and create centres on the county level to prevent students from dropping out of school.

The programme target group comprises students with special educational needs, the children's parents, providers of counselling service, teachers and specialists at educational institutions, and local government officials responsible for the educational sphere.

Currently, educational and psychological counselling is fragmented and not evenly available from one region to the next. The shortage of support specialists (special education teachers, speech therapists, psychologists, social workers) in schools and kindergartens is a serious problem. The most frequent concerns that parents and teachers bring to counselling centre specialists are related to children's learning problems, behavioural problems, finding a suitable study programme, learning opportunities for children with special needs both in school and after leaving school, and emotional problems and social communication difficulties at school, at home, with peers. In several cases at regional level career guidance services and special needs guidance is offered by the same centres, thus the provision is coordinated and easily accessible.

Within general education, career education is provided as a compulsory cross-curricular theme. In addition, career issues are taught by classroom teachers and/or as elective courses. Career related issues are also discussed in student evaluations, during aptitude and professional suitability evaluations and discussions with students with learning difficulties. The schools organise information sessions and visits to fairs, seminars and lectures, include experts from outside the school or in case there are sufficient financial resources. The developments are more coordinated in 35 VET and general education schools, which are also partners in the national ESF career guidance programme. As one of the activities in these schools, the school career education activity plan has been taken in use; also mentoring scheme for school career coordinators is under construction.

Since May 1 2009 the network of career counsellors in the labour market sector is coordinated by the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (*Töötukassa*) (EUIF) that is also responsible for the provision of practitioner training. In addition, there is a network of 8 EURES counsellors who are engaged in job mediation to EU and EFTA countries. With the constantly increasing number of people wishing to work abroad, the need for and proportion of career counselling is likely to increase. There are 16 Career Information Points (CIP) all over Estonia to serve the clients information needs. CIPs offer a range of services regarding job seeking (including examples of different documentation and support in compiling a CV etc) and about study opportunities. CIPs are open for everybody. In January 2006, the Employment Services and Benefits Act (*Tööturuteenuste ja -toetuste seadus*) came into force. Its aims are to achieve a high employment rate and to prevent long-term unemployment and social exclusion by providing career services and employment support. Career counselling is provided by 21 career counsellors working in 15 EUIF departments across Estonia. Depending on client needs, a career counsellor will: help assess individual educational and job related aspirations; map their existing qualifications; assess professional suitability; inform about the labour market situation and different training possibilities; advise on how to make well-informed decisions concerning employment and training; and/or provide instructions on job seeking. Pursuant to the new legislation, career counsellors also offer other employment services (13 total), including information on the labour market situation, employment services and support, employment mediation, employment training, professional traineeship, possibilities for working in public sector, etc.

9.2 TARGET GROUPS AND MODES OF DELIVERY

The main target groups of regional youth information and counselling centres (YICC) are young people aged 7-26 who are living, studying or working in the respective counties. Parents and teachers can also access the centres for advice. The majority of services are free of charge, and are provided in the form of both individual and group counselling, often accompanied by computer-based activities. The latter include information retrieval on learning and working opportunities from the Internet, and in some cases, the completing of various personality and ability tests.

Career counsellors working at Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund generally provide their services to registered unemployed people or those who have received a redundancy notice, i.e. official job seekers. Above mentioned Career Information Points with all the information services are open to all public. Both services are free of charge. Young people aged 16-24 are considered a particular risk group, along with mothers who have small children, the elderly and people with disabilities.

Groups with special needs receive services on the same basis with all the others. The majority of service providers can relate to Russian speaking cohort in their mother tongue, many of them might be native Russians themselves. There are three counsellors working at Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation centre, we can say that these counsellors are focusing particularly on counselling people with special needs.

Career information specialists help to fulfil the target groups' need for information concerning education, labour market and professions. They deliver career lessons, instruct clients' career information search and help them with different application forms, organise thematic workshops and other events etc. As the counsellors have a strong background in psychology, they tend to use a selection of elements from a range of different counselling and therapy approaches. Main methods include solution oriented therapy, humanistic and behaviouristic approaches.

There are several tools to ensure the quality of the career services offered by the labour market sector: public service instructions, service standards, which state the minimum requirements for the service, and regular client satisfaction surveys.

9.3 GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PERSONNEL

There are 3 professional standards for career practitioners: career counsellors, career information specialists and career co-ordinators at schools (including VET institutions and higher education institutions). The professional standards regulate the required level of education and specialisation which provide the right to work in their field after having passed a professional training course.

The majority of the practitioners have a background in psychology, youth work, teacher training, information sciences or social work. Career counsellors who have worked for 3-5 years have the right to acquire a professional qualification. At present, 26 career counsellors have a formal qualification.

There are no regular accredited basic training programmes offered to the career specialists in the public universities. Estonian institutions of higher education provide career counselling education (both at the bachelor's and master's levels) primarily within the field of psychology and business management.

NRCG organises various short and long-term courses for the practitioners in the education and labour sector about innovative guidance and information retrieval methods, trends in economy and employment, mobility, mentoring etc.

In cooperation with three main public universities a joint study programme (9 ECTS) for the career specialists is offered. The study programme is based on the professional skills requirements set out in professional standards and it is registered with MoER. The study programme forms the basis for carrying out career specialists' continuing professional training.

In addition to the training programmes, practitioners are supported by methodological and informational materials which are also available on national web-portal Pathfinder. The Pathfinder is targeted at career planners.

To exchange knowledge, related to provision and development of career services, NRCG organises international study visits in co-operation with colleagues from the Euroguidance network. This enables practitioners to get acquainted with career services in other European countries.

10. FINANCING: INVESTMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES

10.1 VET FINANCING POLICY

Developing efficient financing models, which would ensure the quality and accessibility of education is an urgent issue at all levels of education. Out of 43 vocational schools 30 are owned by the state, 3 by municipalities and 10 by private owners. Operating expenses of state and municipal vocational schools as well investment expenses are covered from state budget. Also private vocational schools may apply for state commissioned student places. Vocational schools may offer payable services related to the main activities of the school and use other sources of revenue. Vocational schools may also be financed from the local government budget or other sources.

TABLE 27: EDUCATIONAL EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL (MILLION EUROS)					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	61	73	89	85	96
DIFFERENCE (%)	42,5	19,8	21,4	-5,1	13,8
GENERAL EDUCATION	314	351	393	451	437
DIFFERENCE (%)	6,6	11,8	11,9	14,8	-3,2
HIGHER EDUCATION	101	111	161	172	179
DIFFERENCE (%)	3,0	9,7	44,5	6,7	4,2

Source: Ministry of Education and Research, 05.01.2011

According to the “Estonia 2020” competitiveness strategy”, financing general education has remained invariant despite the consistent decrease in the number of students. Which is why the financing ratio per student in VET versus general education is in favour of general education and schooling expenditure per student in general education is higher than in VET. Hence, the financing of different educational levels needs to be looked over. As the number of basic schools and VET institutions has decreased from year to year, the adjustment with demographic trends has taken place. Same has not happened in secondary and higher education, so regulation of schools network has planned to put into practice and the funding schemes are likely to be changed.

10.2 FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Public funding is the main source of funding VET on all levels and types of VET. In lower secondary education, the funding comes from the budget of the general school. The state allocates the funds to the municipality who is then responsible for funding the school. There is very little VET on the lower secondary level. The funding mechanism for VET in Estonia is the scheme of state funded study places. At present, there is no connection between quality assurance and funding. The concept of accreditation has been worked out, preparations are under way to fully implement it by 2012. According to the new system, if the curriculum group has not been accredited, there will be no funding for it.

In upper secondary and post-secondary non tertiary education, the VET study places are funded according to the state funded study places scheme, which is provided to the VET institutions directly by the state. The study places within the curriculum group are approved for the next 3 years. The school has the right to decide the specific curriculum within the funded curriculum group, types of training and forms of study, as well as the number and time of admission of the new applicants. At the same time the school is obligated to fill all the state funded study places during the whole calendar year. Thus, if the school sees it cannot admit enough students in some curricula, it can go to a local basic or secondary school and offer to teach VET courses for their students in the same curriculum group. Out of 28 000 students 24 000 study on the state funded study places. In very exceptional cases, the funding can be project based.

The tertiary education is administered separately. 46% of student places are financed by the state, there is no information on how much the private sector spends on the 54% of student places in tertiary education. The share of student places through public funding has decreased from autumn 2009. Discussions about new reform in higher education are in progress since 2010 and project for changes is presented. The funding schemes are one of the aspects that will go under modification.

Another change in providing public funding is underway. If the school cannot find enough students for IVET courses, it can use the state funded study places to finance the short term adult education courses (can be called CVET).

There are no collective funds for IVET. There are quite a few sectoral bodies that motivate students by providing a small stipend for students. Often these stipends come from a designated fund which has been set up in remembrance of someone deceased.

10.3 FUNDING FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND ADULT LEARNING

10.3.1 PUBLIC FUNDING SCHEMES AND MECHANISMS TO FINANCE CVET (EXCLUDING THOSE SPECIFICALLY TARGETED AT UNEMPLOYED)

There is no distinction between IVET and CVET in the Estonian VET system. The distinction is made based on the form of study (see chapter 5.1 for lengthier explanation). The responsibility for the education of the adult population is divided between three ministries.

1) **The Ministry of Education and Research** is responsible for training working adults, those who need continuous training or retraining, contemplating career change. For all these training needs the Ministry has ordered training from VET colleges based on the state funded study places scheme.

2) The continuous and retraining of the unemployed is under the auspices of the **Ministry of Social Affairs**. The training is administered through the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund. So far, in the training of the unemployed the trainers and the courses have been selected by public procurement.

3) The training needs of the companies are the responsibility of the **Ministry of Economics and Communication**. The companies can apply to Foundation Enterprise Estonia for the support, whereby 50% of the cost of the training can be reimbursed.

In addition, enterprises and individuals invest heavily in continuous training. The relative share between public and private funding is not known, because no data is gathered on training expenditure in the companies and by individuals.

The changes that are taking place at the moment are extending the ways of selecting the training provider in the Ministry of Social Affairs. In addition to public procurement, applying the scheme of state funded study places for unemployed is under consideration. Voucher system is already working.

As part of the ESF project "Continuous training for working adults", administered by the Ministry of Education and Research, 37 VET institutions in 15 counties are offering training and re-training to adults. This program started in 2007 when the Ministry of Education and Research carried out a pilot project of adult vocational education and used funding from the ESF and the state budget. This program will continue until 2013. Courses are updated every semester.

If 2007 the participation rate in working related courses for adults was around 20 000 people in a year, in 2008, there were a leap in participation rates - more than 26 000 people took part in these courses. Following years this figure has stabilised and is around 25 000. Compared to previous years, funding from employers and learners has decreased. The state funded study places for working adults constituted approximately 50% of total funding in 2009-2010.

Enterprise Estonia supported training in companies in 2004-2006 programming period till 2007 through 2126 projects and 5 982 130€. In the next programming period (2008-2013) 461 projects have been financed with 3 277 538€ (as of May 2009).

10.3.2 PUBLIC-PRIVATE COST-SHARING⁸

The following measures are used in Estonia:

- **sectoral training funds**

In a few professions regulated by law, regular professional in-service training can be compulsory. Where this is the case, funds for training are prescribed in the annual salary fund of these employees (e.g. 2-4% of the annual salary fund civil workers and 3% of the annual salary fund of teachers).

- **learning accounts and vouchers**

Enterprise Estonia and the Ministry of Economics and Communications initiated a voucher system in June 2009 for small-sized (up to 9 people) enterprises and self-employed entrepreneurs (*füüsilisest isikust ettevõtja*), who can apply to have their training reimbursed up to 100% in the sum no more than 950€ and not more than once a year. The training providers have to be approved by the ministry.

⁸ Where Government and employers and/or individuals share the costs, namely: vouchers/ILAs, grants, tax incentives, loans, saving schemes, human capital contracts (Government and individuals); tax incentives, grants and vouchers (Government and employers).

- **saving schemes and loans**

Study loans are popular with students. An Estonian citizen or a person staying in the Republic of Estonia on the basis of a permanent residence permit, the duration of whose studies according to the study programme is nine calendar months or more, has the right to obtain a study loan if he or she is enrolled in full-time study at an Estonian university in public law, at a state institution of professional higher education or at a private university or private institution of professional higher education; is enrolled in full-time study on the basis of secondary education at a state or municipal vocational educational institution or at a private vocational educational institution operating on the basis of the Private Schools Act; or is studying abroad at an educational institution and in a form of study similar to the two other cases specified above.

- **tax incentives**

Individual participants can be exempt from income tax on the training cost, if the trainer has a valid training licence, issued by the Ministry of Education and Research. In general, if non-formal education is funded by an employer, it is treated as a fringe benefit and additional taxes need to be paid by the employer. Pursuant to the Value Added Tax Act (*Käibemaksuseadus, 2003*), enterprises are exempt from such taxes if they pay for formal education: pre-school, lower and upper secondary education, and higher education as well as private tuition related to general education and other training, except for in company training and training provided by the sole proprietor.

The state funded study places for working adults can be considered supply-led funding. The training need is identified by a task force which consists of experts across many sectors and fields, training providers and employers. Thus, though clearly supply-led, these short term courses for working adults are based on the needs in the society.

10.3.3 COLLECTIVE (EMPLOYER, EMPLOYEE) INVESTMENT TO FINANCE CVET⁹

The following measures are used in Estonia:

- **sectoral training funds**

In a few professions regulated by law, regular professional in-service training can be compulsory. Where this is the case, funds for training are prescribed in the annual salary fund of these employees (e.g. 2-4% of the annual salary fund of health care workers and 3% of the annual salary fund of teachers).

The measures that support demand-led funding of VET are as follows. The companies can apply for a grant to have up to 50% of their training reimbursed. The individuals can choose any training and course they want and get income tax reimbursed.

⁹ Where the costs are covered by employers and employees, namely private cost-sharing among enterprises (training funds) and private cost-sharing between employers and employees (paid and unpaid training leave, payback clauses).

10.3.4 REACHING THE GROUPS AT RISK THROUGH FUNDING SCHEMES AND MECHANISMS

Aiming to reach the group of people whose studies have been discontinued and offer them new opportunities in VET to acquire professional qualifications, a program has been initiated. During the next four years (2010-2013), 400 students who have discontinued their studies between 2000-2010 in institutions of vocational education and institutions of professional higher education that provide vocational training, can continue their studies. Program is called "KUTSE" (a pun on words, meaning profession/calling/call). There is similar program in the higher education. The purpose of this program is to create opportunities for vocational education students whose studies have been disrupted, to finish up their studies. Students must have previously fulfilled 35% of the curriculum. To make it more flexible, RPL principles (Recognition of Prior Learning and Experience) allow the schools also to take into account the previous work experience. This program started in 2010, but didn't apply as expected, therefore some changes has already made to the program and more changes are planned in 2011. For instance, the request for curriculum fulfillment is lowered and the length of period when studies were disrupted is broadened. The program, which is funded by the European Social Fund and the state, will provide the needed study places in the respective institutions. The total cost of the program is 1.92 mEUR.

At the beginning, work-related training and development activities for adults were only meant for employed people. During the period of high unemployment and the need to offer training opportunities for people without place of work, the possibilities were increased. On account of this, since autumn semester 2010, target group for the work-related training and development activities for adults is broadened and these courses are available for unemployed as well.

10.4 FUNDING FOR TRAINING FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for the training of the unemployed. Vocational training for unemployed people is funded by the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (*Eesti Töötukassa, EUIF*) under the Ministry of Social Affairs (*Sotsiaalministeerium*). The Fund allocates resources to employment offices to purchase and organise employment training (usually from VET institutions or other licensed bodies). For large education commissions, employment offices arrange public procurement.

Stipends are granted to unemployed persons if they attend a course of at least 80 hours. The EUIF keeps records of all the stipends.

TABLE 28: SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR THE UNEMPLOYED (2010)	
<i>EMPLOYED WITH LABOUR MARKET SUPPORT AND BENEFITS</i>	
REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED JOB SEEKERS IN A YEAR	155 927
RECIPIENTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFIT IN A YEAR	61 006
RECIPIENTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS IN A YEAR	45 401
RECIPIENTS OF INSURANCE BENEFIT UPON LAY-OFF IN A YEAR	10 523

PARTICIPANTS IN WORK RELATED TRAINING	9 706
<i>EXPENDITURES ON LABOUR MARKET SERVICES AND SUPPORT, THOUSAND EUROS</i>	
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS DISBURSED	53 546
UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS DISBURSED	10 169
INSURANCE BENEFITS UPON LAY-OFF DISBURSED	11 772
BENEFITS UPON REDUNDANCIES DISBURSED	10 877
SOCIAL TAX ON BENEFITS (INSURANCE BENEFITS UPON LAY-OFF 33%, BENEFITS UPON REDUNDANCIES 33%, UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS 13%)	14 435
SOCIAL TAX ON REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED (EXCL. RECIPIENTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFIT)	23 710
EXPENDITURE ON LABOUR MARKET TRAINING	3 874

Source: Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund

Active employment measures tailored to the needs of unemployed people and employers have been developed: long-term training courses are available for skills of high demand. Unemployed people can also participate in entrepreneurship training. The system of vouchers for the unemployed is operating since 2009. Its aim is to help the people cope with the uncertain times of the financial crisis and provide more opportunities for flexible retraining. Vouchers ought to offer quick and flexible way for unemployed to use the resources for further training or retrain to find a new job. EUIF will pay up to 2500€ for training (until July 2011, the sum was up to 959€).

In 2009, the opportunity to receive continuous training and retraining as part of the ESF project "Continuous training for working adults", was extended to the unemployed as well.

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¹⁰ RT= Riigi teataja= State Gazette

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<http://www.mkm.ee>

Ministry of Education and Research (*Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium*)
<http://www.hm.ee>

Ministry of Social Affairs (*Sotsiaalministeerium*)
<http://www.sm.ee>

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http://www.andras.ee/default0.asp?site_id=1

Confederation of Estonian Trade Unions (*Eesti Ametiühingute Keskliit*)
<http://www.eakl.ee/>

Enterprise Estonia (*Ettevõtluse Arendamise Sihtasutus*)
<http://www.eas.ee>

Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (*Eesti Kaubandus-Tööstuskoda*)
<http://www.koda.ee/>

Estonian Cooperation Assembly
<http://www.kogu.ee/>
<http://www.elu5x.ee/et/>

Estonian Information Technology Foundation (*Eesti Infotehnoloogia Sihtasutus*)
<http://www.eitsa.ee>

Estonian Employers' Confederation (*Eesti Töandjate Keskliit*)
<http://www.employers.ee>

Estonian Europass Centre (*Europassi Keskus*)
<http://www.europassikeskus.ee>

Estonian e-VET (*Eesti e-Kutsekool*)
<http://www.e-vet.ee/>

Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (*Töötukassa*)
<http://www.tootukassa.ee>

Refernet Estonia (*Kutsehariduse Seirekeskus*)
<http://www.innove.ee/infopank>
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Estonian Non-formal Adult Education Association (*Eesti Vabaharidusliit*)
<http://www.vabaharidus.ee/>

Estonian Qualification Authority (*Kutsekvalifikatsiooni Sihtasutus*)
<http://www.kutsekoda.ee>

Estonian Association for Advancement of Vocational Education (*EKEÜ - Eesti Kutseõppe Edendamise Ühing*)
<http://www.ekey.ee>

EU Structural Funds (*Euroopa Liidu Struktuurifondid*)
<http://www.struktuurifondid.ee/>

Foundation for Lifelong Learning Development Innove (*Elukestva Õppe Arendamise Sihtasustus Innove*)

<http://www.innove.ee>

Leonardo da Vinci Programme in Estonia (*Hariduskoostöö keskus, Kutsehariduse büroo*)

<http://www.hkk.ee/index.php?leht=8>

National Examinations and Qualifications Centre (*Riiklik Eksami- ja Kvalifikatsioonikeskus*)

<http://www.ekk.edu.ee>

National Resource Centre for Guidance (*Karjäärinõustamise Teabekeskus*)

<http://www.innove.ee/teabekeskus>

The Open University Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) of Tallinn University (*Tallinna Ülikooli Avatud Ülikooli Täiendõppekeskus*)

<http://www.tk.tlu.ee/>

"Pathfinder" web portal (*Portaal Rajaleidja*)

<http://www.rajaleidja.ee>

VET Teachers' Union (*EKÜ - Eesti Kutseõpetajate Ühing*)

<http://www.eky.org.ee>

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11.3 LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

EHIS - *Eesti hariduse infosüsteem* = EISE- Estonian Information System for Education

EKEÜ - *Eesti Kutseõppe Edendamise Ühing* - Association for Advancement of Vocational Education

EKKA - *Eesti Kõrghariduse Kvaliteedi Agentuur* - The Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency

EITSA - *Eesti Infotehnoloogia Sihtasutus* - Estonian Information Technology Foundation

RKT - *Riiklik koolitustellimus* - State funded study places scheme

VÕTA - *Varasema õppe ja töökogemuse arvestamine* - Recognition of prior work and learning

CIP - Career Information Points

ERDF - European Regional Development Fund

ESF - European Social Fund

EQF - European Qualifications Framework

ETCS - European Transfer Credit System

EUIF - Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund

EURES - European Employment Services

HE - Higher Education

NCGF - National Career Guidance Forum

NEC - Estonian National Europass Centre

NEQC - National Examinations and Qualifications Centre - *Riiklik Eksami- ja kvalifikatsioonikeskus (REKK)*

NRCG - National Resource Centre for Guidance

QA- Qualifications Authority

YICC - Youth Information Counseling Centre