

CYPRUS

Summary

**Country Report on the Vocational Education and
Training system, REFERNET Cedefop**

and

**Summary report on Vocational Education and
Training (VET) for learners with Special
Educational Needs (SEN)**



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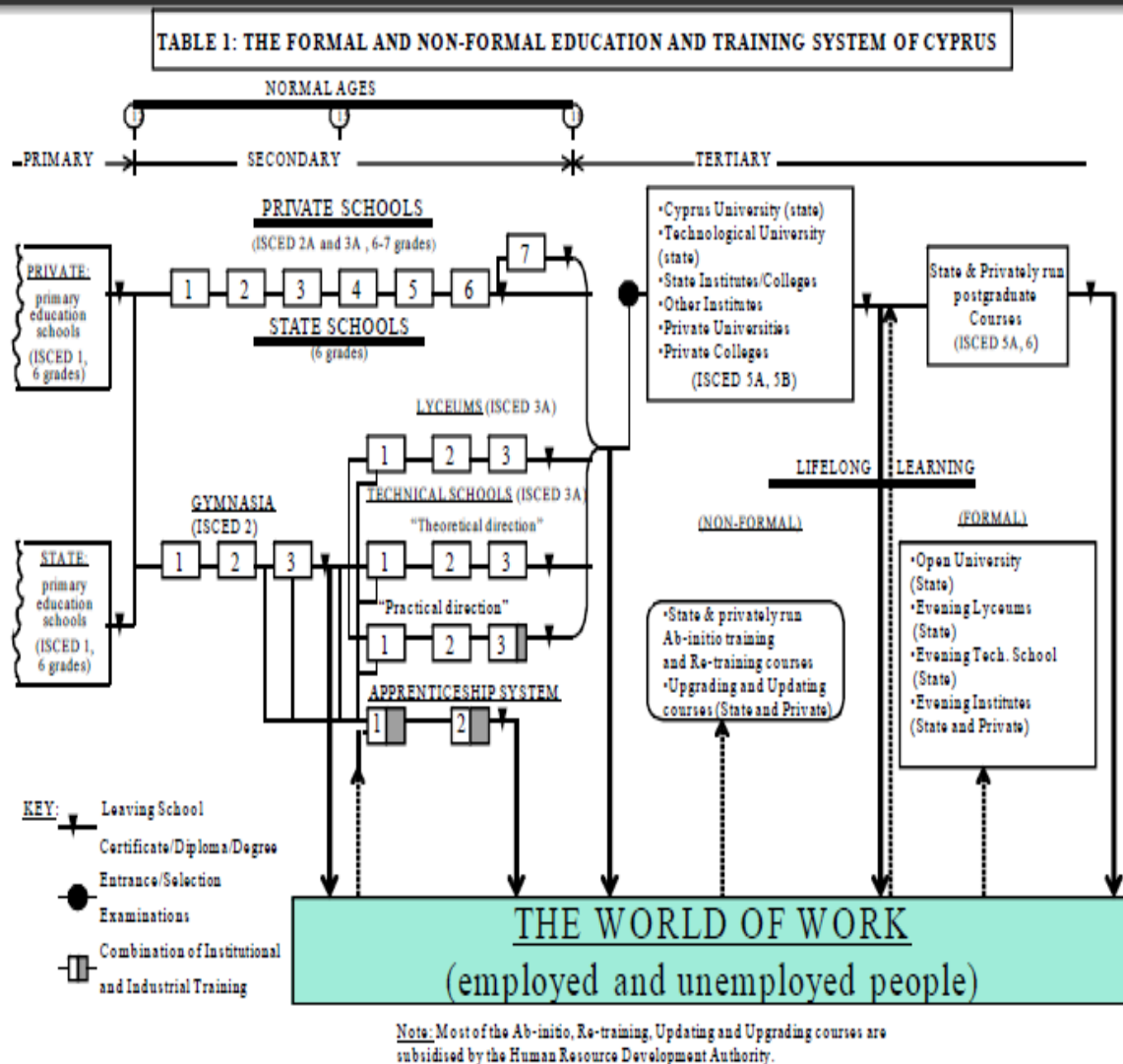
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1 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

1.1 Diagram of the education and training system



Most of the students in primary and secondary education (89,5% in 2007) are studying in public-sector schools (government financed). The rest attend private-sector schools, which are mainly self-funded. There is no provision of VET at the lower secondary level in Cyprus. There are two types of upper secondary schools, the unified lyceum (eniaio lykeio) and technical schools (Technikes Scholes, TS). Technical Schools offer two distinct secondary school programmes free of charge: the Theoretical Direction (Theoritiki Katefthinsi) and the Practical Direction (Praktiki Katefthinsi). General subjects and science, which take up 58% of the total programme. The rest of the time (42%) is allocated to technology and workshops. In the Practical Direction courses, importance is given to technology and workshop skills with a 57,5% time allocation. The remaining 42,5% is devoted to general education subjects.

The Apprenticeship System (Systima Mathiteias, SM) is a two-year initial vocational education and training programme providing practical and theoretical training to young people who have not successfully completed their lower-secondary compulsory education and wish to be trained and employed in technical occupations. Students must be at least fourteen to be accepted and no more than 18 at the time of graduation. Specific training



for students with special needs: The Centre for the Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled (Kentro Epaggelmatikis Apokatastasis Anapiron, KEAA).

1.2 Definitions

Terminology regarding education and training are not legally defined in Cyprus and in most cases they are not even clearly identified.

Apprenticeship System (Systema Mathiteias), the Apprenticeship Law of 1966 (No 13/66) provides the framework for the operation of the Apprenticeship System.

The law refers to the training of persons over 14 years old while working and stipulates that the **Apprenticeship Board** (Symvoulío Mathiteias) is responsible for supervising the operation of the Apprenticeship System.

Vocational and Technical Education (epaggelmatiki kai techniki ekpaidefsi) it is only clearly recognized in the upper secondary level, as it is delivered in the Technical Schools (Technikes Scholes).

1.3 Objectives and priorities of the national policy development areas of VET

Actions for achieving the objectives of the LLL Strategy: lifelong guidance and counselling services, the development of National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the promotion of actions outlined in the Education Reform (Ekpaideftiki Metarithmisi), which have specific impact on VET such as creating new VET pathways and facilitating horizontal and vertical movement in education. A public dialogue was held with the involvement of social partners and VET stakeholders and a number of working groups have prepared suggestions on concrete measures to be implemented. The Council of Ministers has approved the formation of committees that deal with various issues relevant to the Educational System.

Working on upgrade the Apprenticeship System (Systema Mathiteias, SM) and the establishment of the New Modern Apprenticeship is being promoted, in order to increase attractiveness of the system.

1.4 Institutional and legislative framework for IVET

Actions on the provision of IVET are legitimised by decisions of the Council of Ministers (Ypourgiko Symvoulío) and/or Acts passed by the House of Representatives (Vouli ton Antiprosopon). There are no collective agreements for IVET.

UPPER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The set of laws, which cover pre-primary, primary, secondary general and secondary technical and vocational institutions, are Nos 5/71, 56/83, 123/85 and 154 (I)/99.

APPRENTICESHIP

The Apprenticeship Law of 1966 (No 13/66) governs the operation of the Apprenticeship System (Systema Mathitias, SM). The Council of Ministers with decision 62.037 in May 2005, assigned the responsibility for the System to the Cyprus Productivity Centre, CPC (Kentro Paragogikotitas Kyprou, KEPA).

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Human Resource Development Law of 1999 (No 125 (I)/99) replaced the Law of 1974 for the Industrial Training Authority, which was renamed to Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (Archi Anaptyxis Anthropolon Dynamikou, AnAD).

Actors responsible for governing IVET and implementing policy: Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP), Ministry of Labour and Social



Insurance, MLSI (Ypourgeio Ergasias kai Koinonikon Asfaliseon, YEKA), the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA (Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD) and public institutions of tertiary education. The Social partners participate in consultative committees (Consultative Committee of Technical and Vocational Education, ad hoc committees for curriculum development).

1.5 Types of teacher and trainer occupations in VET

TEACHERS/ TRAINERS	TYPE OF OCCUPATION	PLACE OF WORK
TEACHERS (must hold appropriate diploma in their subject area or a degree relevant to the subject they will teach)	Teachers in Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education (STVE)	Public Vocational and Technical Secondary Schools Apprenticeship System
	Teachers in Public Institutions of Tertiary Education	Public Institutions of Tertiary Education
	Teachers in Private Colleges	Private Colleges
TRAINERS		
(must hold either a diploma from a tertiary institution or a degree relevant to the subject they will teach.	Trainers in Public Training Institutions	Cyprus Productivity Centre
(requirements set at individual basis)	Trainers in Private Training Institutions	Private Training Institutions & Enterprises
	Trainers in Enterprises	Enterprises

1.6 Systems and mechanisms for the anticipation of skill needs

Cyprus is at the forefront of countries providing forecasts for skills needs with a long experience in this field. Employment forecasts in economic sectors and occupations are provided at a detailed level of analysis, including both expansion and replacement demand. The main formal mechanism in place for the assessment of skill needs is operated by the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA, (Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD). The Ministry of Finance, MoF (Ypourgeio Oikonomikon, YO) provides projections for the growth of the economy, which include forecasts for different sectors. The Ministry of Education and Culture, MoEC (Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP) is responsible for the identification of educational and special skill needs.

1.7 Practices to match VET provision with skill needs

The research studies conducted by the Human Resource Development Authority, HRDA, (Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD), upon completion are distributed to a wide audience of prominent stakeholders (Government officials, employees' and employers' organisations, education and training providers, consultancy firms, organisations involved in human resource planning, counselling officers and other interested organisations and persons) and disseminate in public lectures to parent and students.

1.8 Guidance and counselling for learning, career and employment in IVET

The Counselling and Career Education Services, CCES (Ypiresia Symvouleftikis kai Epaggelmatikis Agogis, YSEA) of the MoEC offers to the students of public secondary



general and technical/vocational schools specialised assistance in developing personal awareness as regards to their interests, needs, abilities, and skills for making suitable decisions about their personal life, education and career. Educational and Vocational Guidance is provided throughout the student's attendance in upper secondary education both through the career education course and through personal and group counselling. The services are provided by qualified guidance counsellors, who have undergone specialised post-graduate education in Counselling and or Career Education / Guidance. The counsellors are placed in schools and at the central offices of the MoEC.

1.9 Funding for initial vocational education and training

IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL (SCHOOL-BASED AND ALTERNANCE)

The total public expenditure for Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, STVE (Techniki kai Epaggelmatiki Ekpaidefsi, TEE) was estimated to be €55,1m in 2008 (Statistical Service of Cyprus). The total expenditure of both secondary technical and vocational public was estimated to be 4,4% of the total public expenditure on education in 2008.

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Attendance at technical schools is free of charge provided by the Ministry of Education and

Culture, MoEC (Ypourgeio Paideias kai Politismou, YPP), while the Human Resource Development Authority HRDA (Archi Anaptyxis Anthropinou Dynamikou, AnAD) compensates employers for wages paid to apprentices who attend classes in technical schools. Under this scheme, subsidies were paid to companies employing 156 apprentices in 2008. According to the HRDA, expenditure amounted to the sum of €210.466. Training allowances are calculated on the basis of collective agreements by occupation.

POST-SECONDARY (NON-TERTIARY LEVEL)

There are three types of initial training schemes that are financed by the HRDA, and mainly targeted at upper secondary education graduates. During 2008, training programmes were implemented for Construction Workers, Plumbers, Welders, Cabinet Makers/Carpenters, Builder Electricians and Sheet Metal Workers.

1.10 References

Oxinos, George, Mourouzides, Yiannis and Korelli, Yianna (2009): VET in Europe. Country Report Cyprus. Report within the Framework of ReferNet Cyprus.



2 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

2.1 Population

No information available

2.2 Organisation and Provision of VET programmes

2.2.1 IVET system options for SEN learners: lower and upper secondary levels, apprenticeship training and other youth programmes.

Cyprus has a five pre-vocational training programmes, three of which fall within the competence of the Ministry of education. The fourth is run by the Ministry of Labour.

Technical school/special units

Apprenticeship scheme

High school special units

Pre-vocational education programmes in special school

Pre-vocational training and rehabilitation programme provided by the social integration department of the Ministry of Labour (following completion of public or special school education)

2.2.2 Different types of educational/VET settings

The Vocational Education system in Cyprus provides pre-vocational training to all students, both with and without SEN.

The majority of students with learning difficulties are integrated into regular classes and they receive support in different lessons basically Modern Greek and Mathematics. Students with severe learning difficulties are integrated into units in technical schools and attend special pre-vocational programmes such as cooking, waiting tables, jewellery-making and hairdressing. Classes are held in specially equipped classrooms and the students either work with other mainstream students (inclusion) or separately from them (supporting lessons).

Students participating in the Apprenticeship Scheme do not receive any kind of support.

Students spend 2 days in regular classrooms and 3 days working in industry.

High schools do not offer the pre-professional education available to other students to the students in special units. In order to obtain prevocational skills, students spend two days a week in work places including a supermarket, a nursery, a bookstore etc. The remaining 3 days are divided between special units and regular classes. Students who attend high school units and Technical Schools do not receive a standard diploma. Instead they receive Attendance Certificate as required by law, but not format in an official Ministry of Education.

The pre-vocational training programmes include special schools.

1. Pre-vocational training at school (recycling paper and aluminium, gardening, ironing, knitting, cleaning, car-washing, working in the nursery, reception or photocopy centre);
2. Pre-vocational training off the school site (workplaces including supermarkets, cafes, nurseries, grocers, reception services, etc.);
3. Training in sheltered workshops for adults with disabilities;



4. Partial integration in vocational education at the Technical School (cookery), with students in general education.

2.2.3 The curricula of VET programmes, the assessment procedures, types of qualifications and assessment criteria (e.g. flexibility on curricula composition and individual adaptations, diplomas, etc.)

All students who are in special pre-vocational education programmes have been evaluated by the Committee on Special Education (GAEC), which establishes the framework and content of an individual education programme. The Technical and Secondary Education teachers assess students' progress using a quarterly assessment form. Daily observations are made on behaviour and progress and, through multidisciplinary meetings with parents, counsellors, teachers, psychologists and other professionals, new targets for the student are discussed and decided upon. The curriculum followed in high school units is not an official one set down by the Ministry of Education, but is instead based on topics chosen by teachers (in particular the teacher responsible for the Unit, in collaboration with the connecting operator liaison officer). The topics chosen vary according to the needs of the student and are primarily aimed at developing their personality, professional skills and ability to integrate as active members of society.

Students who attend high school units and technical school units do not receive the regular certificate but instead receive a certificate of attendance, as required by the Act on Special Education. This is not yet an official Ministry of Education certificate.

Technical schools that cater for students with learning difficulties follow the Ministry of Education curriculum, which mirrors that followed by other students and includes some hours of support and use of facilities determined by the GAEC. Students receive the regular diploma.

The Nicosia Special School has designed, developed and implemented an individualised pre-vocational training programme based on a specialised curriculum with general and specific objectives, requirements and criteria for participation. Evaluation takes place on a weekly, monthly and annual basis. For their participation in these programmes and depending on the evaluation conducted by the students, they are paid an amount which is regarded as a symbolic and educational benefit. They were also given a similar degree to those received by other students from the school.

2.3 VET programmes and employment

2.3.1 Strategies and practices used to match the local labour market needs with the skills acquired by learners in the course of the VET programmes

Students with special needs who study at technical schools and reach the final grade (grade III) work one day a week in industry.

High school units operate a special programme in which students spend 2 days a week in workplaces with an assistant teacher. The sites are selected (through collaboration between the Ministry of Education officer, director and responsible teacher) after an evaluation of the skills and wishes of children and market research (into what works, which employers accept people with disabilities, etc.)

The strategies implemented in special schools include exploring the market, matching the capabilities and needs of each student with a particular job, including them in a group or individual training regimen and planning the weekly programme with regular variations in both the work involved and the teaching staff accompanying the students.



2.4 Data (relating to learners with SEN aged between 14 and 25 years old and enrolled in VET programmes in the academic year 2010/2011 and relating to their transition to employment)

2.4.1 Data on the number of learners with SEN aged between 14 and 25 years old who are enrolled in VET programmes, at national and/or local level

Learners with special needs in pre-vocational education programmes in 2010-2011 at the local level

Technical schools with learning difficulties in regular classroom 377

Technical schools in Special Units 55

High schools with learning difficulties in regular classroom 1832 (all high schools in cy)

High school in units 195

Special school 23

Apprenticeship system NO

Total: 2482

2.4.2 Data on how many of these learners are enrolled in mainstream VET programmes, how many are enrolled in special units within mainstream VET settings and how many are enrolled in special VET programmes

Method: Learners with learning difficulties = 337

Learners = 41 units

Secondary Education (only in the units with pre-vocational education) = 195

Apprenticeship System NO

2.4.3 Data on the number and percentage of learners with SEN aged between 14 and 25 who are enrolled in VET programmes, in comparison with the number and percentage of the general youth population of the same age enrolled in VET programmes, at national and/or local level

School year 2010-2011 / local level

Technical Schools

Learners with disabilities = 0

Learners with special needs = 377

Learners in special units = 55

High Schools

There are programmes for children without disabilities

Learners in special units = 195

Special school

Learners in pre-vocational education off the school site = 23

Learners in pre-vocational training at school = 27

Apprenticeship system NO

2.4.4 Brief definition and explanation of "drop out". Data concerning the drop out rate of learners with SEN aged between 14 and 25 who are enrolled in VET programmes, in



comparison with the drop out rate of the general youth population, at national and/or local level.

There is no data.

2.4.5 Data on the transition rate of learners with SEN from VET to employment in comparison with the transition rate of the general youth population from VET to employment at national and/or local level

We do not know the number of students who graduate from formal education so we cannot provide figures.

2.5 Legislation and policy

2.5.1 Brief description of existing legislation

The law on special education and training 113 (I) of 1999 provides the definition of special education and training 2 (1). The law states that special education and training requires the provision of necessary assistance to the student with special needs to facilitate their overall development in all areas, particularly the psychological, social and educational. Special education and training covers all grades, as well as pre-vocational education and training in schools wherever possible. It includes teaching everyday skills such as personal care and hygiene, movement, language development and communication and emotional development, as well as generally ensuring the provision of all tools and assistance necessary with a view to employment and independent living.

2.5.2 Main objectives and priorities of the national/regional policy relating to VET for learners with SEN and the transition from VET to employment

Students are educated on the basis of the law on special education and training up to the age of 21. At this point the Ministry of Labour takes over with a very new programme (first run in 2011), which was designed and implemented by the Department of social integration. The aim of this programme is to educate and provide for students in professional terms.

The Department of Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, in accordance with the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, aims to create an Agency for Vocational Training and Rehabilitation. This was encouraged by the Council of Ministers on 18/02/2009 and will come about through the merger of the Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation and the Centre for the Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons. Specifically, the new Agency will plan for training and employment programmes, provide the same such programmes and fund or subsidise programmes that will be implemented by others. It will also monitor and coordinate the voluntary organisations working in the field, set standards and certify the training and employment of people with disabilities. Finally, it will cooperate with the Department for Work in providing placements in the private sector and provide sheltered employment for people with disabilities who cannot be included in training programmes on the open labour market.

Additionally, in order to find productive employment for those people with disabilities who may not have the potential to be employed on the open labour market, TkEAA aims to promote employment and sheltered employment, not only in the format that they exist today, but in more sophisticated forms, such as the creation of social enterprises.

2.5.3 Roles and responsibilities within the institutional framework

The cooperation is based at present on the personal initiatives of individuals involved in the programmes, the Ministry of Labour or the Ministry of Education.



2.5.4 *The actors involved in improving standards and evaluating the VET programmes on offer for learners with SEN, relating to the job market*

All the actors involved conduct evaluations of the programmes and provide suggestions for improving them.

2.6. VET teachers, trainers and other professionals

2.6.1 *Information on the VET staff (teachers, trainers, career counsellors, transition officers, etc.)*

A) the qualifications required

B) initial training

C) in-service training possibilities

Teachers involved in vocational education have only **standard degrees**, and no additional training in special needs education. Basically, however, the personality traits required of teachers responsible for the education of these students, particularly of those in the special units, is acceptance, respect for students' individual personalities, patience and creativity. The counsellors involved in pre-vocational training programmes are **teachers with degrees in any specialty**, plus postgraduate training in counselling and guidance. The Ministry of Education furthers teacher education through seminars on issues related to special education. Staff involved in vocational education at the special school in Nicosia have specialised in special education (as special educators/psychologists). **A member of staff acts as coordinator for the programmes run outside the school site.** Staff is also offered opportunities for internal training at the school on issues relating to pre-professional training.

2.6.2 *Information on the careers/employment guidance and counselling services offered to learners with SEN who are enrolled in VET programmes*

The mentors involved in employment programmes run by the Ministry of Labor's social integration department have recognised middle school baccalaureates, **as well as communication skills, coaching experience, a conscientious approach to people with disabilities and a very good knowledge of the labour market.** They provide job skills analysis, job descriptions, education work, help with negotiation skills and motivation at work. They search the open labour market for employers and find suitable jobs for people with disabilities.

The **labour leaders** are responsible for

- finding suitable jobs according to the interests, skills and abilities of people with disabilities;
- providing guidance to people with disabilities;
- negotiating with employers to ensure appropriate working conditions for people with disabilities;
- creating a favourable working environment in cooperation with the employer and other staff;
- providing guidance / support / training in space-time according to the personal needs of individuals and the requirements of specific jobs;
- supporting / counselling parents and families on issues and concerns regarding the employment, transport and security of learners to and from their workplace.



The department of social integration prepares a training programme for mentors in collaboration with the Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation.

2.7 Funding

The educational programmes implemented in schools and technical secondary education are subsidised by the Ministry of Education's budget. The Employment Support Programmes are run by voluntary organisations of disabled people and subsidised by the TKEAA, under the Ministry of Labour.