



Izglītības un zinātnes
ministrija

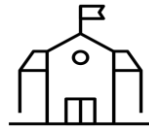
VET reform in Latvia – from policy to practice

**5th PLA meeting Exchanges of Practices in Education for
Climate Targets, EXPECT project. Riga, 4 April, 2022**

VET SNAPSHOT



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Education
institutions **55**

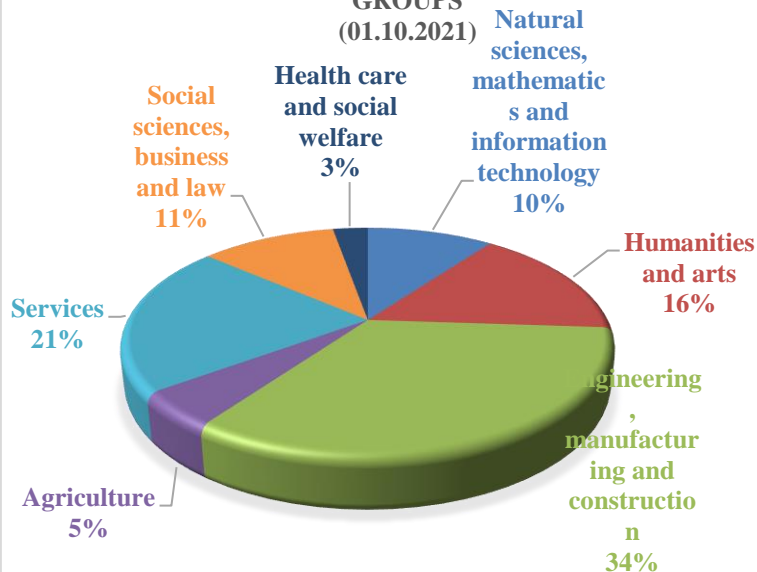
*incl.: MoES – 30, MoC – 10,
Municipalities – 7, Private – 4,
other ministries – 4*



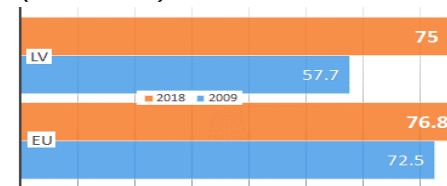
Students
27 990

*incl. in the institutions
subordinated to the MoES
– 85% (23 779)*

VET STUDENTS BY EDUCATION THEMATIC
GROUPS
(01.10.2021)



Employment of recent graduates
(ISCED 3-4)





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Policy context - Guidelines for the Development of Education: Future Skills for the Society of the Future 2021-2027

**Highly qualified, competent
and excellence-oriented
teachers, academic and
scientific personnel**

**Modern, qualitative and
labour market skills demand
oriented education**

**Ensure quality education to all
Latvia's inhabitants, promoting
development and implementation of
their potential throughout their life
and facilitating their ability to change
and to lead constant changes in
society and economy**

**Supporting everyone's
development**

**Sustainable and effective
management of education
system and resources**



PRIORITIES IN VET AND ADULT EDUCATION

VET

Highly qualified, competent and excellence-oriented teachers

A modern, high-quality VET offer focused on the development of **highly valued skills in the labor market**, including:

- strengthening VET Competencies centers capacity,
- creating a cooperation platform for implementation of modern vocational education,
- developing centers of excellence in VET and promoting innovations,
- providing career development support,
- ensuring the quality and cost-effectiveness of the implementation of VET programmes

Horizontal priorities - digitalization of education environment and **green issues**,

Partnerships for the development of VET, including promotion of **international cooperation and cooperation between education and economic sectors**

Adult education

Development of the offer of VET and HE modular programmes for the needs of adults

Implementation of individualized and flexible adult education offer, incl. support for reducing barriers to participation

Development and implementation of support measures for employers to up-skill and reskill employees, to involve employers in provision of adult learning at workplace

Improving the skills recognition system

Creating a socially responsible and sustainable system for financing of adult education (including skills funds)

Development of the quality of adult education

Strengthening the governance of adult education

Raising public and employer awareness of adult learning and motivating participation



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Institutional development, methodological work and career guidance measures

Each VET institution has to develop **Investment and Development Strategy (2021-2027)**. **Green approaches as part of the Strategies.**

Vocational education schools should ensure co-ordination of **methodological work in a particular sector** – in collaboration with the sector stakeholders – for an increased labour market compliance of the VET programs in training and skills' development

To ensure a uniform approach, the Ministry of Education and Science has developed **Guidelines for drafting** VET Institutions' Investment and Developing strategies (2021-2027). Among other priority areas **recommended approaches for career guidance are included – in the context of labour market developments.**

Developing Career guidance strategies - key principles for moving towards a career guidance system in the context of lifelong learning - individual learning pathways; providing career counseling, information and career education for young people and adults

In the light of the reforms in VET (including modularization, individualization, process towards recognition of partial qualification), **the importance of VET career guidance is growing**



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Amendments to the VET Law (I)

Result of the 10 years of VET (content) reform

- The **scope** of the law has been **expanded** to cover **all levels of the Latvian qualifications framework**, including professional higher education.
- The **levels of professional qualifications** are equated **to the levels of the Latvian Qualifications Framework**.
- Documents certifying **professional education** and documents certifying **professional qualifications** are set apart – **these are two separate documents**
- The **functions and rights of the Sector Expert Councils (SECs)** have been supplemented and clarified. The coordination of the SECs activities will be financed from the state budget
- The Technicums and Art Education Competence Centers will **have the right to implement LQF 5th level continuing professional development programs**



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Amendments to the VET Law (II)

- The **professional standard** will include **professional qualification requirements**. It will be possible **to combine the requirements of related professional qualifications** in one professional standard. The professional standard also identifies the **parts of the qualification** that are **recognizable in the labor market**
- In addition to the existing state vocational education standards, the **state continuing vocational education standard** and **the state professional development education standard** are also **included**.
- Accredited educational institutions will be able - without additional licensing - **to implement parts of vocational education programs** as continuing vocational education or in-service training programs
- The person **will be admitted** to vocational basic education, vocational education or vocational secondary education programs **through assessing their competencies**
- There is a **transition from accreditation of programs to accreditation of an educational institution**



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WBL – part of VET reform in Latvia

- **Amendments to the VET Law** – representation of VET reform of the past decade – allowing for **a flexible and labour market oriented approach** in VET
- **WBL as a new approach** to VET implementation in Latvia – a challenge within a school-based VET system
- **Piloting of WBL** in Latvia started **in 2013**. **Legal framework** put in place **in 2016**.
- Cabinet of Ministers **Regulation 15.07.2016. No. 484** setting the **general framework** for the implementation of WBL.
- Specific **ESF project (OP 851)** specifically designed and implemented to **promote the WBL** approach and **support the involved stakeholders**
- **Regulation** on the role of **Sector Expert Councils (SECs)** 15.07.2016.



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Capacity building measures: Sectoral Expert Councils

Sectoral Expert Councils (SEC) is a bridge between the sectors and VET. SEC mission is to propose solutions for human resources development in their respective sectors and to ensure that VET provision meets labour market requirements.

SEC as a tripartite body consist of representatives of sectoral non-governmental organizations, including employers, employees and sectoral professional non-governmental organizations, as well as public bodies, including state institutions, local governments and universities. Other industry experts may be included.

Main tasks:

- provides proposals regarding the future workforce required for the sectors
- participates in the planning of VET programmes
- participates in the establishment of the sectoral qualification structure
- evaluates professional standards and requirements
- participates in the licensing and accreditation of VET institutions and programmes

The Employers Confederation of Latvia and **Agricultural Organization Cooperation Council** coordinates the work of SEC.

It is necessary to strengthen the capacity of all SEC structures in order to ensure high quality implementation of these tasks. **OECD Skills strategy recommendation for Latvia on SEC includes:**

- Strengthen the role of SEC with the support from industry to validate and provide high quality information on sectoral skill needs and trends
- Develop a co-funding instrument to fund Sector Expert Councils for the medium term
- Build the capacity of SECs to engage in updating and designing curricula in tertiary education



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Work-based learning – a VET priority

The Regulations determines:

- WBL is the form of the VET programme implementation
- 25% of VET programme implemented at the enterprise (excluding qualification practice)
- individual learning plan for students
- employment contract or Scholarship agreement between enterprise and student
- the requirements for the WBL in-company trainers (e.g. pedagogical competence)
- Sectoral Expert Councils' responsibilities – promotion of WBL, information dissemination, advice and recommendation on implementation

8.5.1. Specific Objective “To increase number of qualified VET student’s through participation in work-based learning and practices in enterprise”

The aim: to increase number of qualified VET students – **4 150** VET students will be involved in the WBL and **15 125** VET students – in practical trainings and training practices by 2023 August. **Financing:** 15.6 million EUR - alia ESF 13.3 EUR and state budget 2.3 EUR. Responsible for the implementation: Employers' Confederation of Latvia. 31 August 2021 **2 721 unique students** were involved in WBL. Provided support within the Project:

Fixed costs 1) accident insurance, personal protective equipment - according to the developed simplified cost methodology; 2) civil insurance, vaccination costs, health inspection- according to actual costs.

So far 421 VET programs (qualifications) have been adjusted to WBL. 37 educational institutions and 2853 companies are participating in WBL.



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Ensuring employers' involvement in VET curricula development and implementation

Coordination/ institutional mechanisms

- Employment Council – inter-ministerial level (2 key ministries)
- National Tripartite Council for Co-operation in VET and Employment
- Sectoral Expert Councils (12) – tripartite at sector level
- Conventions of VET institutions - advisory bodies at local and regional level

System and procedures

- Sector Qualifications Framework (SQF) for 15 sectors
- The occupation standard (OS) based on competence (learning outcomes) approach
- Modular VET programmes for more than 240 professional qualifications (EQF 2-4)

Methodological approaches

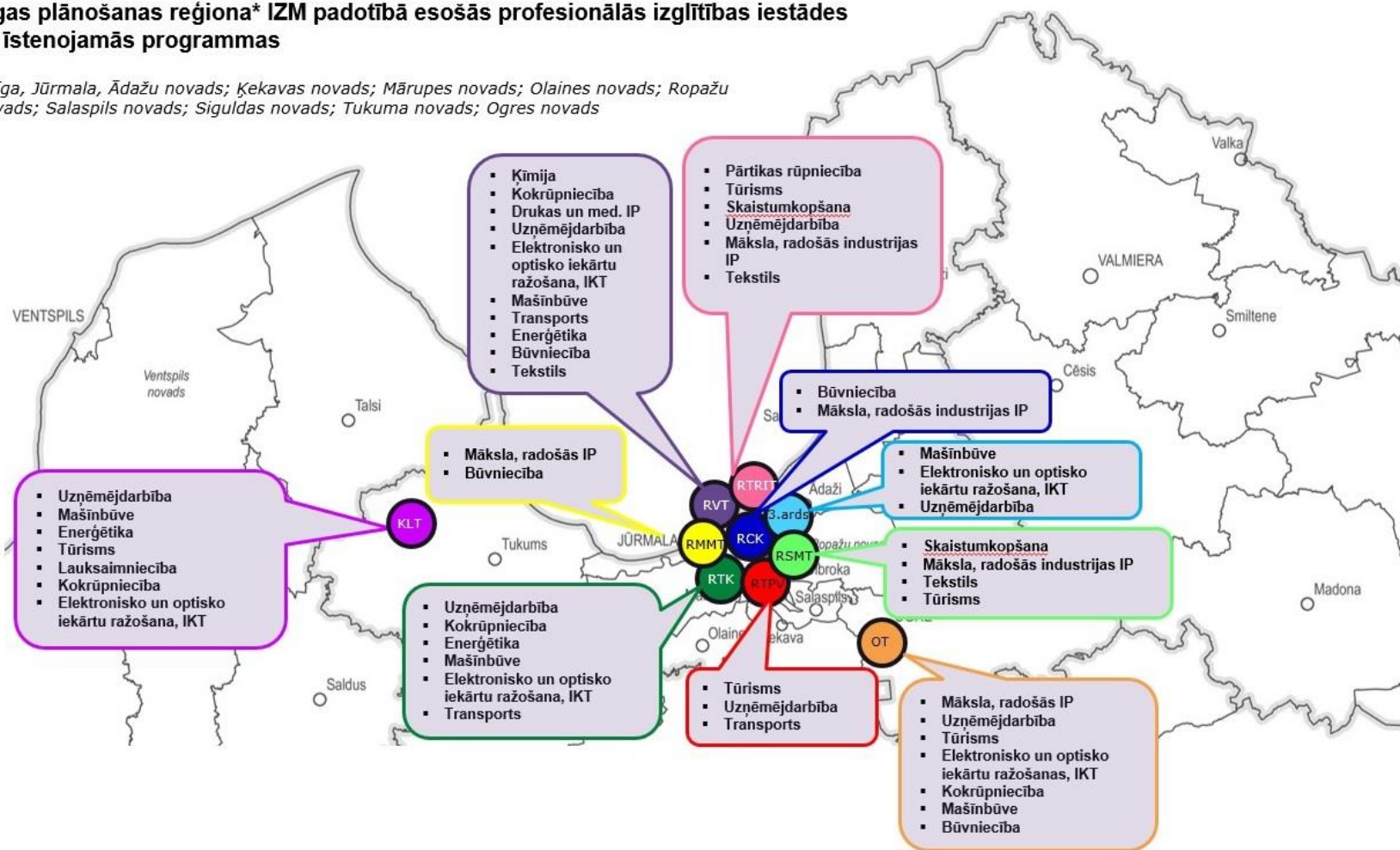
VET institutions being **assigned responsibility for co-ordination of methodological approaches at national level** for VET program compliance with the labour market developments – in close collaboration with sectors of economy

Revised legal framework

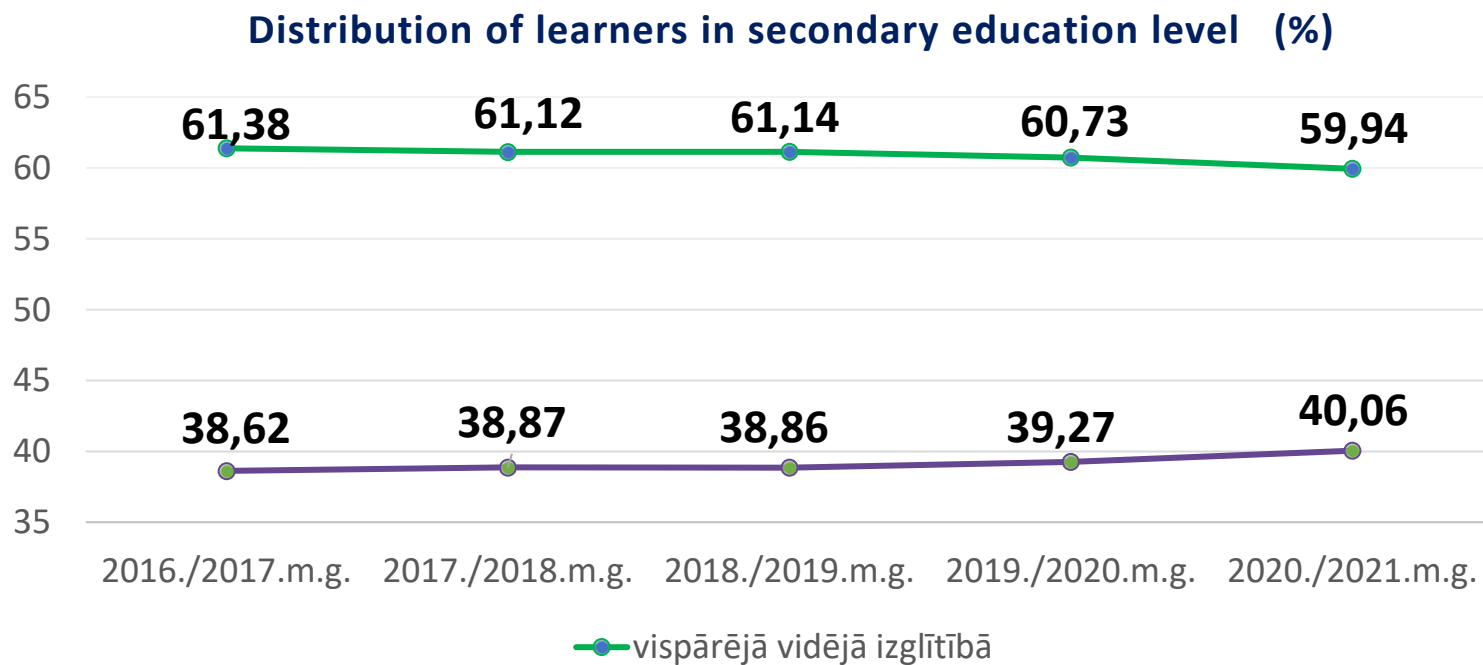
Draft Amendments to the VET Law in the Parliament (3rd reading) – proposing new approaches for improved VET compliance with the labour market developments in the lifelong learning perspective

Rīgas plānošanas reģiona* IZM padotībā esošās profesionālās izglītības iestādes un īstenojamās programmas

*Rīga, Jūrmala, Ādažu novads; Ķekavas novads; Mārupes novads; Olaines novads; Ropažu novads; Salaspils novads; Siguldas novads; Tukuma novads; Ogres novads



The ration of learners in general education and vocational education and training



Avots: CS, MoES (official statistics)



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International and Baltic collaboration in VET and WBL – past, present and future

Policy context

Policy
context

**Berlin memorandum of
2012 on co-operation
in VET in Europe**

**European Alliance for
Apprenticeships**

**Baltic Alliance for
Apprenticeships 2015**

**European Education
Area**



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Retrospection – first joint Baltic WBL developments



Visual identity Guidelines



01

Baltic co-operation in education has been on the **policy agenda for more than two decades**, implemented in various formats - tri-lateral ministry co-operation with annual meetings, the Baltic Assembly and other

02

Over the past decade a special emphasis on Baltic co-operation in VET within the **Baltic Alliance for Apprenticeships** – established in **2015** within the **Latvian Presidency of the EU Council**

03

Breakthrough with the support of two ministerial level EU Erasmus+ program supported projects:

- ✓ On WBL conceptual developments **WBL-Balt (2014 – 2017)**
- ✓ On training of trainers for work-based learning - **TTT4WBL** – policy experimentation project (**2017 – 2020**)

04

Alongside with the **achieved results** in the **TTT4WBL project** there has been a **spin-off effect for multiple further developments** in the **Baltic level**, as well in **broader European level and beyond**



Visual identity Guidelines



Baltic Alliance for Apprenticeships as a platform for joint Baltic WBL developments

Slaidi ar attēliem

Baltic developments towards European Education Area and Osnabrück priorities

- ✓ **New Baltic and EU project consortia formed for further joint competence developments** (spin-off effect) - testing approaches for joint **curricula and qualifications** in **wooden industry and logistics**
- ✓ **Piloting WBL modular approach for selected sectors for EQF 5 qualifications**
- ✓ Broader implications for **transnational policy developments** as **best practice transfer and dissemination in EU and beyond** – for increased **European competitiveness**

Osnabrück priority: European Education and Training Area and International VET





Testing New Approaches to Training VET and Workplace Tutors for Work Based Learning (TTT4WBL), <https://ttt4wbl-project.eu/>

Practical results:

- ✓ **More than 800 WBL teachers and tutors trained in LV, LT and EE according to the same modular program and TANDEM TRAINING methodology**
- ✓ **The training program based on the agreed Baltic COMPETENCE PROFILE for WBL tutors**

By agreement of the three Baltic (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) Ministries of Education and Science
- ✓ **The common Baltic approaches on WBL – a pre-condition for improved transnational exchange, mobilities, joint program development and other European VET priorities**



COMPETENCE PROFILE OF THE WORKPLACE TUTOR



	Guidance, instruction and assessment in WBL	Planning, organization and coordination of WBL	Cooperation and communication for WBL	IT / digital competence	Professional, sectoral competence
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of basic principles of vocational pedagogy and inclusive education Knowledge of mentoring and coaching techniques, learning facilitation and assessment methods Basics of psychology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of legislation requirements, school documents and company inner rules regarding WBL Knowledge of standards, training programmes, assessment criteria, training plans and how to utilise and apply them in WBL Knowledge of responsibilities of involved parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of communication methods, communication styles and channels Knowledge of motivational and developmental feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of General Data Protection Regulation Ability to find and critically select information using IT tools Ability to use IT and social media tools for communication with trainee and VET school Ability to create and handle WBL documents in electronic and online format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of qualification requirements Knowledge of sectoral developments and innovations Awareness of company's development plans
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to adapt training to trainee's personality, learning style and individual needs Ability to select and apply various instruction methods and prepare learning aids Ability to motivate and engage trainees Ability to apply formative and summative assessment and to stimulate trainees' self-assessment and self-reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to prepare and follow individualised learning plan Ability to make arrangements for learning: organize workplace, equipment, involve other employees Ability to handle documentation Ability to assess quality of WBL and make necessary adjustment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to negotiate and maintain effective communication with school/teacher/company management/ other employees throughout the WBL process Ability to handle problematic situations in WBL Ability to listen actively, provide positive feedback, encourage trainees in different situations 		
Attitudes (type of personality)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social responsibility Positive attitude Open mindedness to new ideas Tolerance and acceptance of diversity of individuals and their needs Self-orientation towards problem solving Life-long learning – continuous personal and professional development 				

Erasmus+ project "Testing New Approaches to Training VET and Workplace Tutors for Work Based Learning" - TTT4WBL, project No. 582951-EPP-1-2016-2-LV-EPPKA3-PI-POLICY



The spin-off effect at European level and beyond – way to broader sustainability... (1)

**Baltic best
practice exchange
and
dissemination**

Joint Baltic developments promoted to the Berlin memorandum network in a peer-learning activity in 2019 in Riga (Germany, Portugal, Greece, Italy)

Collaboration with the German – Baltic Chamber of Commerce (AHK)

European Commission, CEDEFOP and Refernet networks – several peer-learning and dissemination activities for EU and accession countries and other stakeholders

ETF networks – a project on promoting Latvian and Baltic WBL approaches to Kazakhstan, Albania, Moldova, Northern Macedonia, Armenia, Belarus

Eastern partnership countries – policy meetings on VET and WBL developments and transfer of best practice

Central Asia platform countries - policy meetings on VET and WBL developments and transfer of best practice



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The spin-off effect at European level and beyond – way to broader sustainability... (2)



Ongoing and completed Baltic projects:

- ✓ «Individual Approach and Individual Learning Plan in WBL: Training for WBL Tutors” (ILP4WBL), <http://qualityplacements.eu/open-education-resources-for-ilp/> (Latvia, Lithuania, Finland)
- ✓ “Skills for the Baltic Wood industry – European Quality in Vocational Education and Training”, <https://www.skilled-up.eu/> - co-ordinated by the German – Baltic Chamber of Commerce (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Germany)
- ✓ Industry 4.0 CHALLENGE: Empowering Metalworkers for Smart Factories of the Future (Baltic associations of metalworks, VET institutions – working with smart technologies, joint upgraded standards, assessment tools), <https://www.masoc.lv/en/projects/industry-40-challenge-empowering-metalworkers-for-smart-factories-of-the-future-4change>
- ✓ FinLat-Logic - Aligning work-based learning curricula in VET programmes of logistics through cross-border WBL in Latvia and Finland, <https://www.visc.gov.lv/lv/projekts/projekts-finlat-logic> - ongoing
- ✓ 3LoE-3LoE - Three-level Centers of Professional Excellence: Qualification, Entrepreneurship and Innovation in the Green Economy, Nr: 620870-EPP-1-2020-1-DE-EPPKA3-VET-COVE; (partners from LV, LT, PL, DD, AT, IT, ES) <https://3-loe.eu> - ongoing
- ✓ Dig4VET: Digital Tools for Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Validation in VET and WBL, (partners from LV, LT, FI, PT and CZ) <https://qualityplacements.eu/wbl-projects/about-dig4vet/> - ongoing

Further networks to be explored:

- ✓ **Skillman**: transnational platform for centres of vocational excellence for emerging skills, <https://skillman.eu/>
- ✓ **EVTA**: European Vocational Training Association, <https://www.evta.eu/>
- ✓ **And more**



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Proposals for further collaboration

Strengthening the capacity of Sectoral Expert Councils – for improved methodological approaches in identifying sectoral labour market needs and collaboration with enterprises and education providers for coordinated activities in labour force provision, especially by work-based learning

Approaches for incentivising the employers for their involvement in work-based learning

Career education and practical measures for individual approaches for planning and supporting the career path of learners

Capacity building measures for VET institutions. Excellence and innovation in relation to VET institutions' growth and development, especially in the context of overall regional (sustainable) development – linked with sectorial excellence and best practice from enterprises and other VET providers regionally, nationally and internationally



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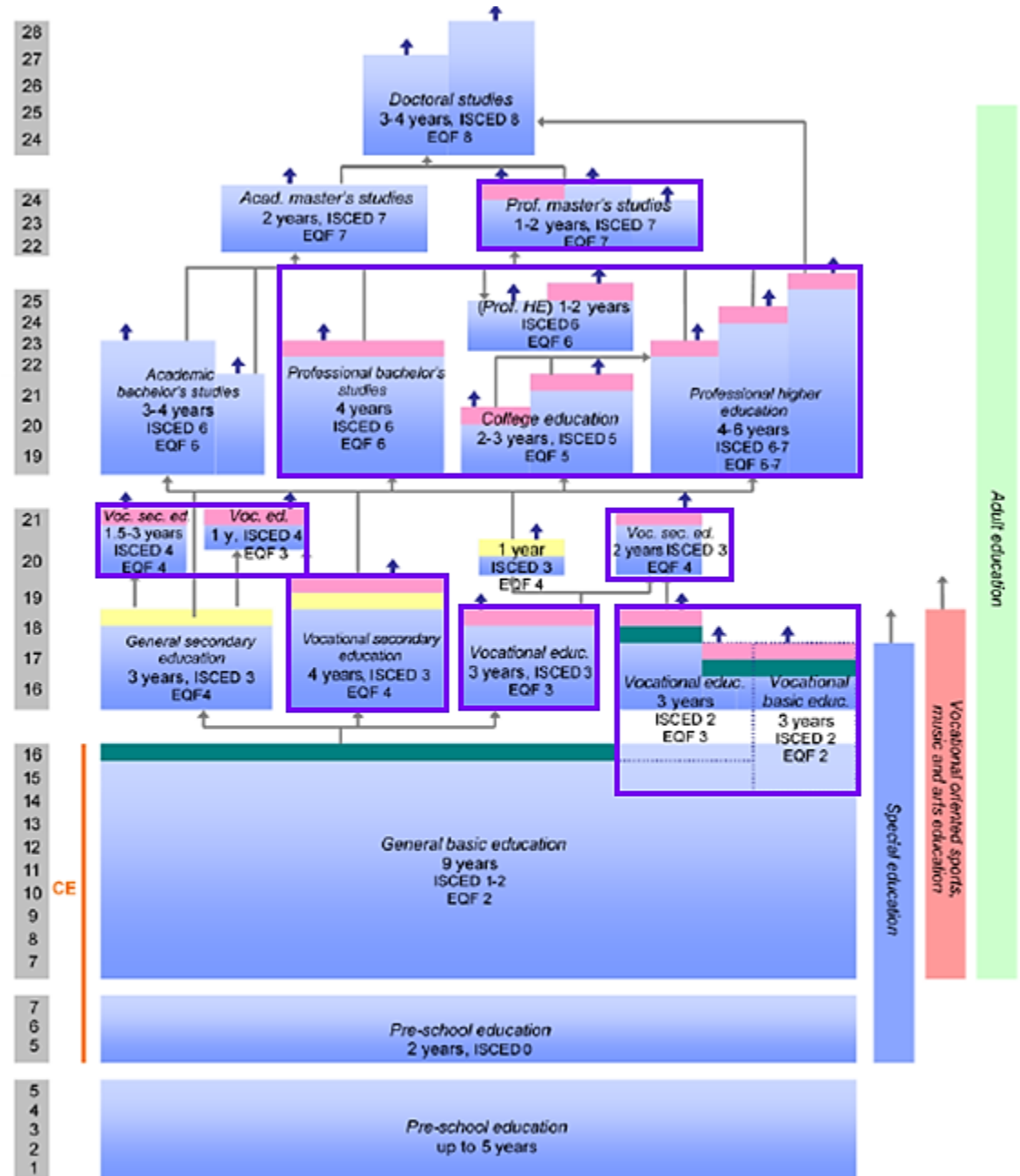
Ilze Buligina, e-mail address; ilze.buligina@izm.gov.lv



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VET in formal education system of Latvia

- At all levels of formal education
- Comparable at EU level (EQF)
- With defined learning outcomes
- Relevant to the labor market needs
- Modernized
- Flexible
- With a good permeability
- Open to adult learners



Vocational education

Primary school leaving exams
 Maturita exams
 Professional qualification exam

CE Compulsory education ↑ Next education level ↑ Labour market