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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING IN EUROPE

# CZECHIA

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SYSTEM DESCRIPTION



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  - 3-year school-based VET programmes leading to EQF level 3, ISCED 353 (střední odborné vzdělání s výučním listem)..
  - 4-year VET (ISCED 354) and lyceum programmes (ISCED 344) leading to EQF level 4, (střední odborné vzdělání s maturitou).
  - Follow-up VET programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (nástavbové studium).
  - Performing arts programmes leading to EQF level 6, ISCED 554 (vyšší odborné vzdělání v konzervatoři). Learners have the option to sit the maturita exams during their studies and acquire qualification at EQF level 4, ISCED 354. In the 8-year dance programmes, learners attend and complete the final 4 years of compulsory education, leading to EQF level 2 (ISCED 244)..
  - Higher VET programmes leading to EQF level 6, ISCED 655 (vyšší odborné vzdělání).
- References.

## CHAPTER 1.

# Summary of main elements and distinctive features of VET

### Summary of main elements

The main body responsible for initial vocational education and training (IVET) is the [Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports](#).

Representatives of employers are involved in curriculum development and participate in creation of occupational and qualification standards.

Vocational education and training (VET) is provided at lower and upper secondary, as well as tertiary level.

IVET is mainly school-based, but work-based learning (WBL) is an integral part of the programme (13-55% of instruction time). WBL may take place at companies' work-sites or in school workshops or facilities.

VET predominantly begins following completion of compulsory education. Lower secondary IVET programmes (European Qualifications Framework, EQF 2) last 2 years and are designed primarily for learners with [special education needs](#). These programmes are completed with a final exam or with a 'VET certificate'.

Upper secondary VET programmes (EQF 3-4) last 3 to 4 years. They include the following options:

- 3-year VET programmes at EQF 3 (completed by a VET examination leading to a VET certificate) enable graduates to enter the labour market directly and perform manual occupations (e.g. bricklayer, hairdresser). Graduates can follow a 2-year follow-up programme (EQF 4) and take a *maturita* examination, which opens an access to higher education;
- 4-year VET programmes (completed with a *maturita* examination, EQF 4) enable graduates to continue learning in higher education or perform mid-level technical, business, service, health and other similar jobs (e.g. construction technician, travel agent);
- 4-year *lyceum* programmes with a high proportion of general subjects (up to 70% of the curricula) prepare their graduates for studies at higher education institutions or entering the labour market;
- programmes offered by conservatories prepare for performance in music, dance, singing and drama activities. Studies are completed with an *absolutorium* (1) (EQF 6), but learners may also take a *maturita* examination (secondary education, EQF 4);
- learners who have already completed upper secondary education have an option to acquire a (second) qualification in another field in the so-called shortened programmes (2). Those with *maturita* (EQF 4) can acquire a VET certificate or another *maturita* certificate in a relevant field; those with a VET certificate (EQF 3) can only acquire another VET certificate in a relevant field. Shortened programmes are suitable also for adults and last 1 to 2 years.

Higher VET programmes offered by tertiary professional schools prepare learners for demanding professional occupations, such as nutritionist. Studies last 3 to 3.5 years and are completed with an *absolutorium* (3) (EQF 6) and a specialist diploma (*diplomovaný specialista, DiS*). The programmes are closely aligned to employer skill needs. Although many graduates enter the labour market, access to other higher education programmes is also an option. Graduates who,

upon completion of their studies, continue in bachelor programmes at universities, may have some of their subjects and exams from higher VET programmes recognised.

The share of EQF 4 VET graduates continuing towards tertiary education was 65.5% in 2022.

Adults can attend VET programmes in the formal school system. While many programmes permit combination with employment, overall adult participation in VET is low.

The wide variety of continuing VET (CVET) programmes provided outside the formal system is not generally regulated. A system of validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes (VNFIL) supports recognising learning outcomes acquired through CVET.

### **Distinctive features**

VET has always represented a fundamental part of the Czech education system. The share of learners in VET programmes at upper secondary level was 69.1% in 2021 (4) .

General subjects are a strong component in all types of VET programmes. Their share varies by programme, from 30% to 70% of the instruction time.

A first choice between general and vocational upper secondary educational pathways comes at age 15. By age 17 to 19, most VET learners have acquired a vocational qualification recognised on the labour market.

Despite recent increase, the share of early leavers from education and training remains relatively low (6.2% in 2022), partly due to a wide choice of education pathways and horizontal permeability (5) .

While demographic developments reduced the number of young learners in IVET, [schools have become more active in providing CVET programmes for all](#). This allows school teachers developing their skills in teaching adults, but also helps increase young and adult learners' awareness of CVET as an integral part of life.

Graduate tracking has been in place for 20 years.

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- [1] *Absolutorium* is a type of graduate examination, consisting of an exam in theoretical vocational subjects and a foreign language, as well as submitting and defending a graduate thesis which also contains elements of the experience gained through the work placement of the learner. It is organised only by tertiary professional schools and conservatories (higher VET) and leads to a specialist's diploma (DiS.).
  - [2] 3-year school-based VET programmes (EQF level 3) and 4-year VET and *lyceum* programmes (EQF level 4) can be offered as shortened programmes, provided that the school director considers that the learner has completed a programme, at the same EQF level, in a relevant field. Shortened programmes do not lead to a higher EQF level.
  - [3] *Absolutorium* is a type of graduate examination, consisting of an exam in theoretical vocational subjects and a foreign language, as well as submitting and defending a graduate thesis which also contains elements of the experience gained through the work placement of the learner. It is organised only by tertiary professional schools and conservatories (higher VET) and leads to a specialist's diploma (DiS.).

## CHAPTER 2.

# Main challenges and policy responses

One of the main challenges in vocational education and training (VET) is to improve the quality and attractiveness of initial VET (IVET) by encouraging work-based learning (WBL) in companies, supporting the school-to-work transition of graduates.

Legislative measures adopted after 2014 supported cooperation between schools and employers through tax incentives, obligatory participation of employers in VET examinations and *absolutorium* or direct involvement of experts from the business world in instruction at schools.

Better matching of skills supply and labour market demand is another challenge. Several projects targeting better skills matching have been introduced but there is still no such system at national level. Linking IVET programmes with relevant qualifications in the [National register of qualifications](#) (NSK) should support responsiveness and flexibility to labour market needs.

A crucial challenge is the ageing of pedagogical staff. Around 47.8% of vocational school workers are over 50 years old (6) .

Despite an increase in average salaries, demanding teaching jobs up to tertiary level are not attractive.

The reform of financing formal education, introduced in January 2020, brought an increased level of centralisation. School funding is no longer based on a per capita approach but on the number of lessons taught.

As a policy response to Covid-19, an amendment to the Education Act, approved in August 2020, introduced obligatory online education in cases of emergency.

The new [Strategy for the education policy of the Czech Republic 2030+ was adopted](#) in autumn 2020.

## CHAPTER 3.

# External factors influencing VET

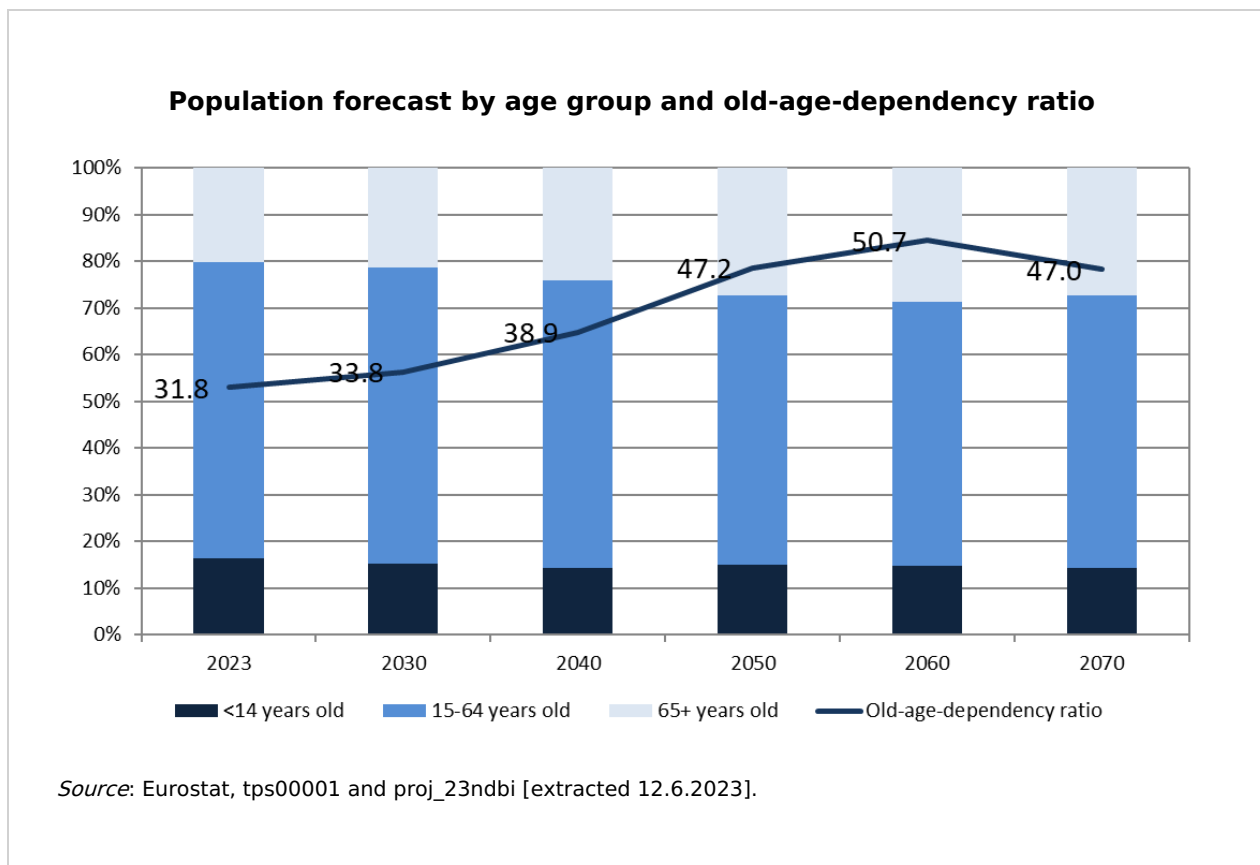
## 3.1 Demographics

Population in 2022: 10 827 529 (7) .

Between 2013 and 2020, the population increased by 1.8% mainly due to the positive net migration, which compensated the negative natural increase of population (8) . In 2022, there was an unprecedented increase in population by 3.0% due to war related immigration from Ukraine (9) .

As in many other EU countries, the population is ageing.

The old-age-dependency ratio is expected to increase from 31.8 in 2023 to 47 in 2070 (10) .



Demographic changes have an impact on VET. Schools (especially basic and secondary) have faced long-term fall in enrolments, despite a slow rise in recent years. The importance of adult education and training is expected to increase considerably. Secondary VET schools are supported by national and regional authorities and the European structural funds to offer high-quality adult education.

Czechia is an ethnically homogenous country. Citizens are mainly Czechs and speak the Czech

language. Traditionally, the largest ethnic minority were Roma, corresponding approximately to 2.4% of the total population (2021) (11) (12) . Most Roma speak Czech as their first language or are bilingual (speak Roma and Czech). In 2022, Ukrainians surpassed Roma as the largest ethnic minority due to the number of war refugees reaching about 3.0% of total population (13) . 28% of them are children who were largely integrated to Czech schools. Measures supporting them to learn the Czech language were launched. There are also other ethnic minorities, including Slovaks (1.5%), Vietnamese and Poles (each under 0.5%) (14) . There were about 10.3% foreigners (incl. Ukrainian refugees) living in the country in 2022 (15) .

Ethnic minorities have the right to be taught in their native language after reaching a predefined number of learners in the given local area. Currently, there is only one secondary (general) school with the Polish language of instruction, while several schools are bilingual.

## 3.2 Economics

In 2020, most companies were micro-sized. The distribution was (16) :

- 96.2% micro-sized (0-9 persons);
- 3.0% small-sized (10-49 persons);
- 0.6% medium-sized (50-249 persons);
- 0.2% large (250 persons or more).

In 2022, the main economic sectors by employment share were (17) :

- manufacturing (e.g. metal products, machinery, automotive, repair and installation): 26.4%
- business and other services: 21.4%
- non-marketed services (18) : 21.5%
- distribution and transport: 17.6%
- construction: 7.9%
- primary sector and utilities: 5.2%

Exports comprise mainly cars, machines, computers and their components, and electronic and optical equipment, chemical substances, leather and rubber products.

## 3.3 Labour market

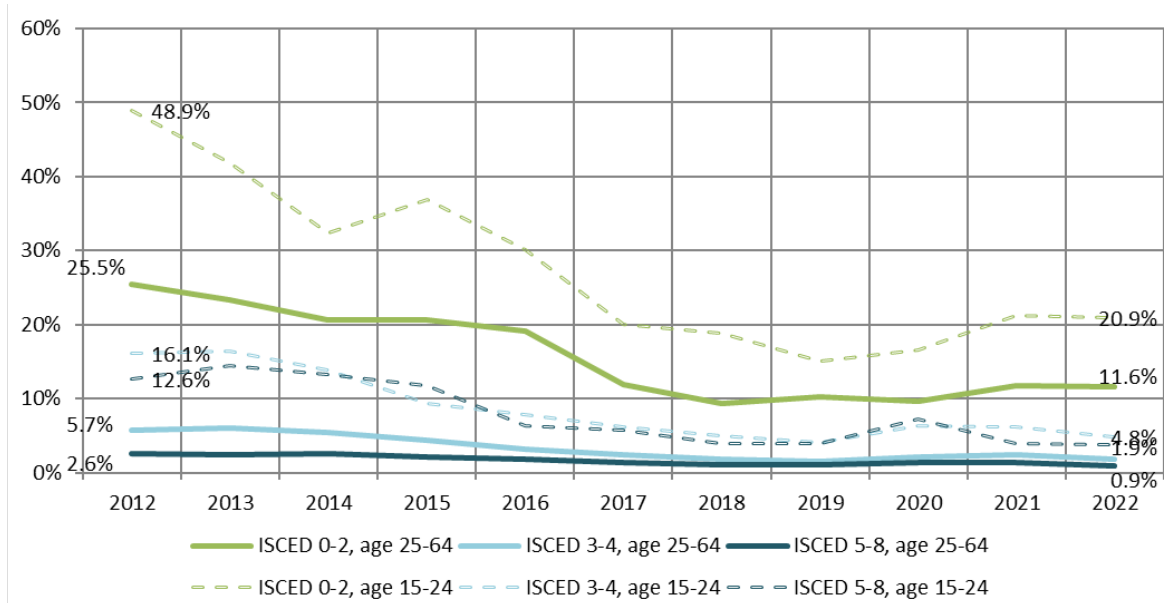
Access to most vocational occupations is not legally regulated; exceptions include mandatory certificates for electricians and welders. However, employers usually require a relevant formal VET qualification. Informal non-mandatory requirements for individual occupations are defined in the National system of occupations (19) .

Entering some occupations is more specifically regulated for the self-employed, while in others (20) a formal qualification is required to become an entrepreneur (e.g. optician). Self-employed (usually craftsmen occupations) require a formal qualification, although it can be partly substituted by proof of work experience.

In 2022, total unemployment (age 25 to 74) was 2.0% (5.4% in EU27); it returned to the pre-pandemic level of 2018, after a slight increase up to 2.5% in 2021 (21) .



### Unemployment rate (aged 15-24 and 25-64) by education attainment level in 2012-22



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series; low reliability for ISCED 5-8, age 15-24.  
 ISCED 0-2 = less than primary, primary and lower secondary education.  
 ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.  
 ISCED 5-8 = tertiary education.  
 Source: Eurostat, lfsa\_urgaed [extracted 22.9.2023].

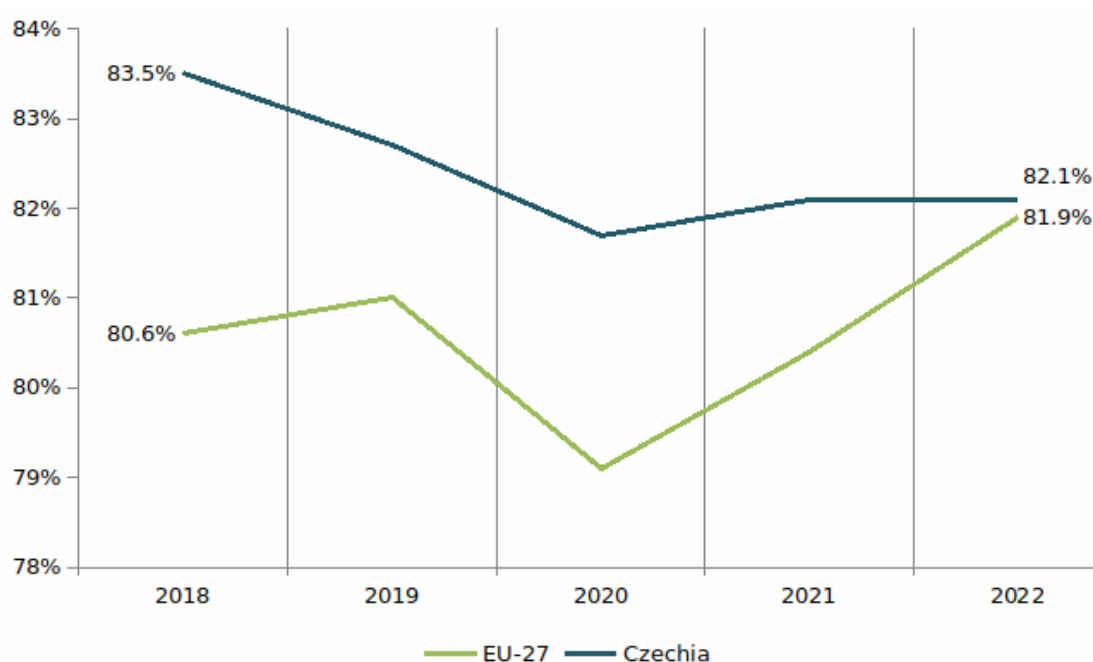
Unemployment is distributed unevenly between those with low- and high-level qualifications. The gap has increased during the economic crisis as unskilled workers, particularly younger people, are more vulnerable to unemployment. The crisis had no effect on the employment rates of those holding tertiary education degrees.

From 2012 to 2018 unemployment was decreasing. Since 2018, the unemployment rate of people with low and medium-level qualifications, including most VET graduates (International standard classification of education ISCED levels 3 and 4) has been stable below the pre-crisis years. In 2020, the unemployment rate of those aged 15-24 increased for all education levels, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Since then, the unemployment rate has been decreasing again, except for people without qualification (ISCED levels 0-2). Overall, in the last decade unemployment has remained among the lowest in the EU, as the labour market downturn so far has been less than expected.

The economy has shown almost full employment in recent years, with skills mismatch one of the most important challenges, hindering further economic growth.

Employment of 20- to 34-year-old VET graduates slightly decreased from 87.7% in 2018 to 86.0% in 2022 (22) . However, it remains above the EU-27 average (79.7%).

### Employment rate of VET graduates (20 to 34 years old, ISCED levels 3 and 4)



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series.  
ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.  
Source: Eurostat, edat\_ifse\_24 [extracted 25.9.2023].

The decrease by 1.4 pp in employment of 20- to 34-year-old VET graduates in 2018-22 is lower than that of all 20 to 34-year-old graduates (3.2 pp) in the same period in Czechia (23) .

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- [10] Old-age-dependency ratio is defined as the ratio between the number of persons aged 65 and more over the number of working-age persons (15-64). The value is expressed per 100 persons of working age (15-64).
- [11] The number is an expert estimation. Many Roma declare Czech nationality in census and there are methodological as well as ethical problems related to determining exact number of ethnic minority members.
- [16] Eurostat table, sbs\_sc\_sca\_r2 [extracted 22.9.2023]; calculations done by NVF.
- [17] Eurostat. Employment by sex, age and economic activity (LFS, table lfsa\_egan2) [extracted 22.9.2023].
- [18] This sector includes public administration and defence, education, and health and social work.
- [19] Open and accessible [database of professions managed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs](#) of the Czech Republic [*Národní soustava povolání*]:.
- [20] Defined in the Trade Licensing Act.
- [21] Eurostat table, une\_rt\_a [extracted 26.9.2023].
- [22] Eurostat table, edat\_ifse\_24 [extracted 26.9.2023].

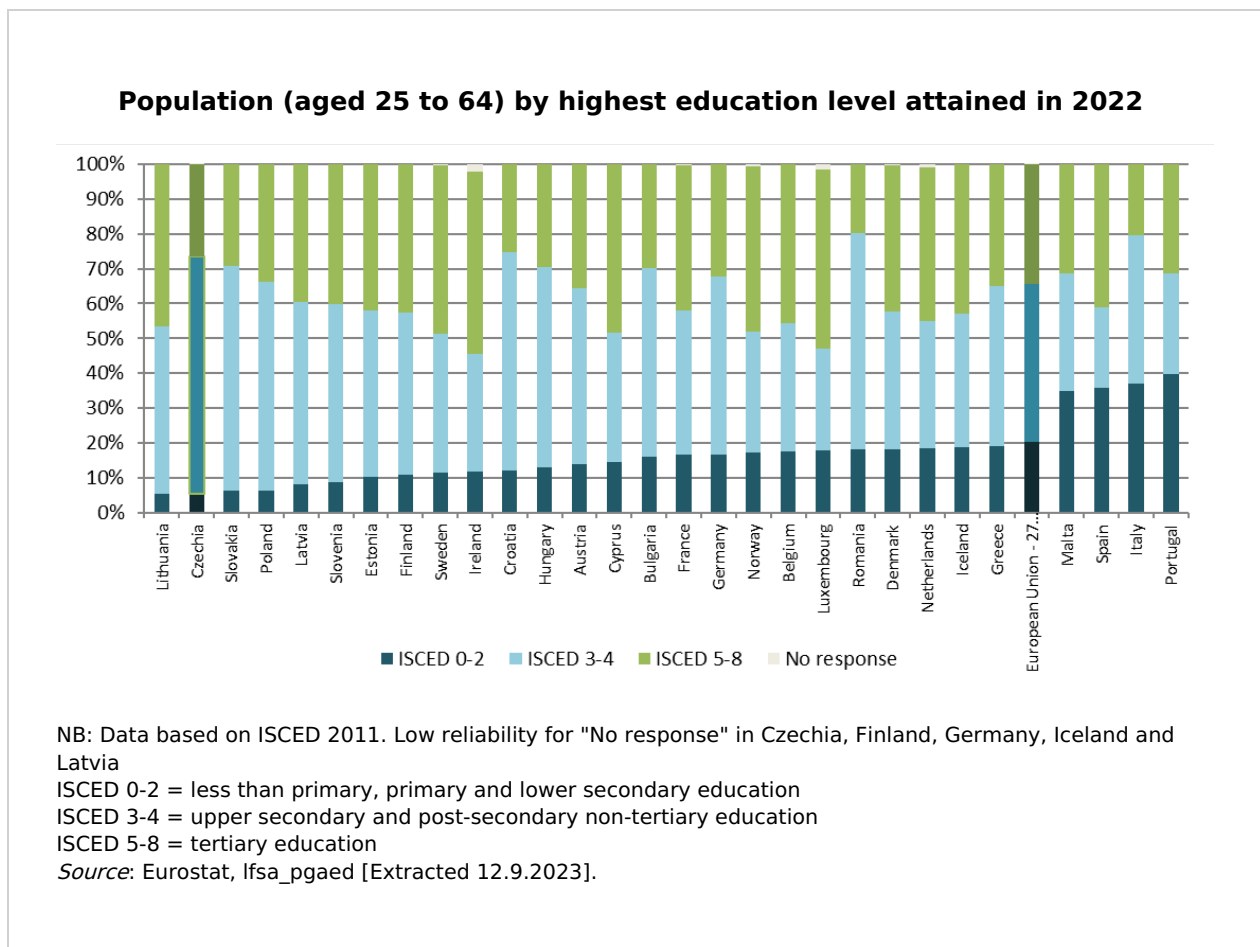
[23] Eurostat table, edat\_lfse\_24 [extracted 17.8.2021].

## CHAPTER 4.

# Education attainment

## 4.1 Share of high, medium and low level qualifications

The highest share of the population aged up to 64 in Czechia (67.9%) has upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education. The share of those with low or without a qualification is the second lowest in the EU (5.6%) following Lithuania.



## 4.3 VET learners by level

In 2021, the share of VET learners at upper secondary level was by 3.3 percentage points lower compared with 2017. The share of VET learners at post-secondary level increased considerably, reaching 27.9%.

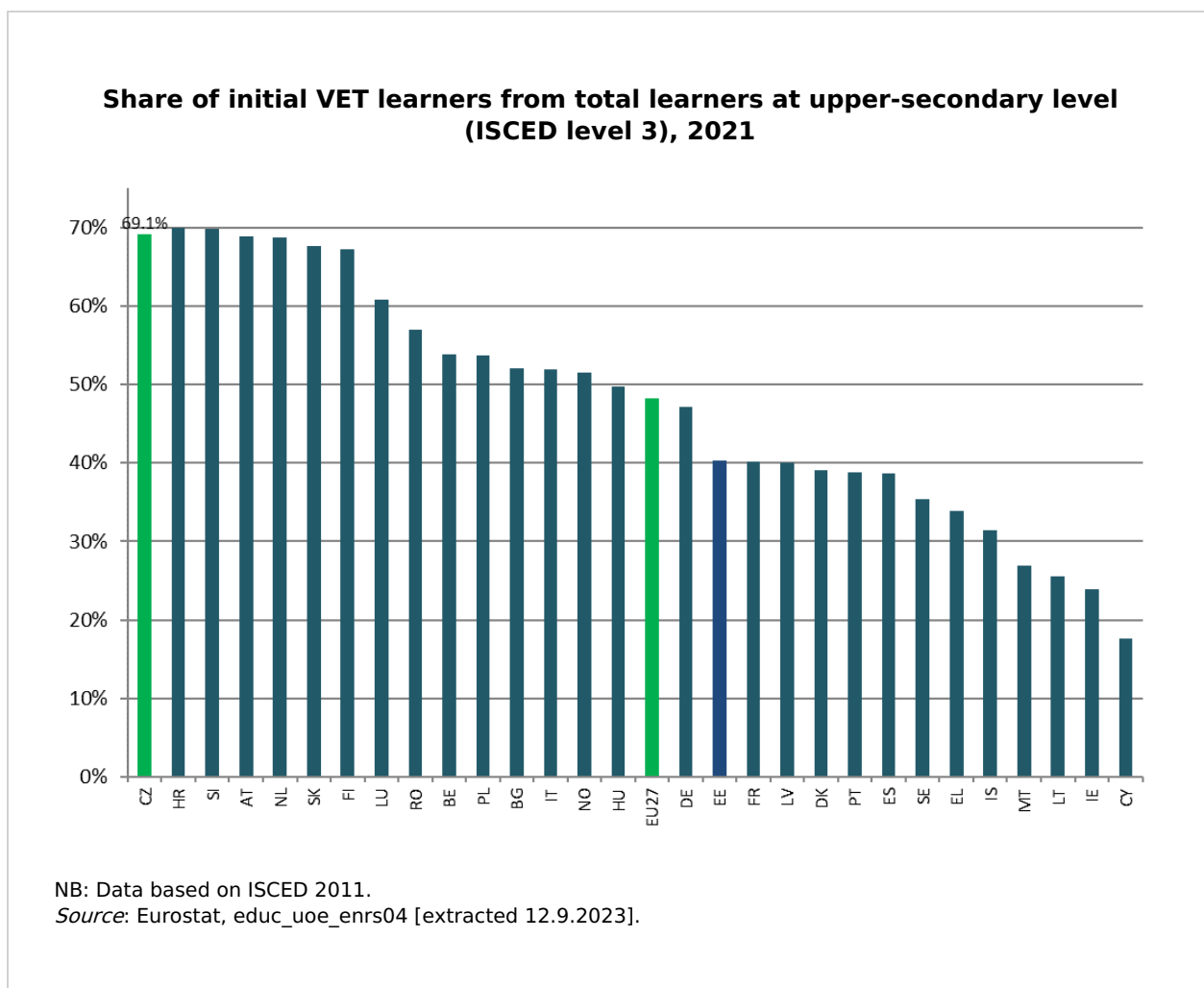
### Share of VET learners by education level

	2017	2021	Change 2017-21
Lower secondary	0.6%	0.5%	-0.1 pp
Upper secondary	72.4%	69.1%	-3.3 pp
Post-secondary	11.3%	27.9%	16.6 pp

NB: Data based on ISCED 2011.

Source: Eurostat, educ\_uoe\_enrs01, educ\_uoe\_enrs04 and educ\_uoe\_enrs07 [extracted 12.9.2023].

Although slightly down, the share of VET learners at upper secondary level is the third highest (69.1%) among the EU-27.



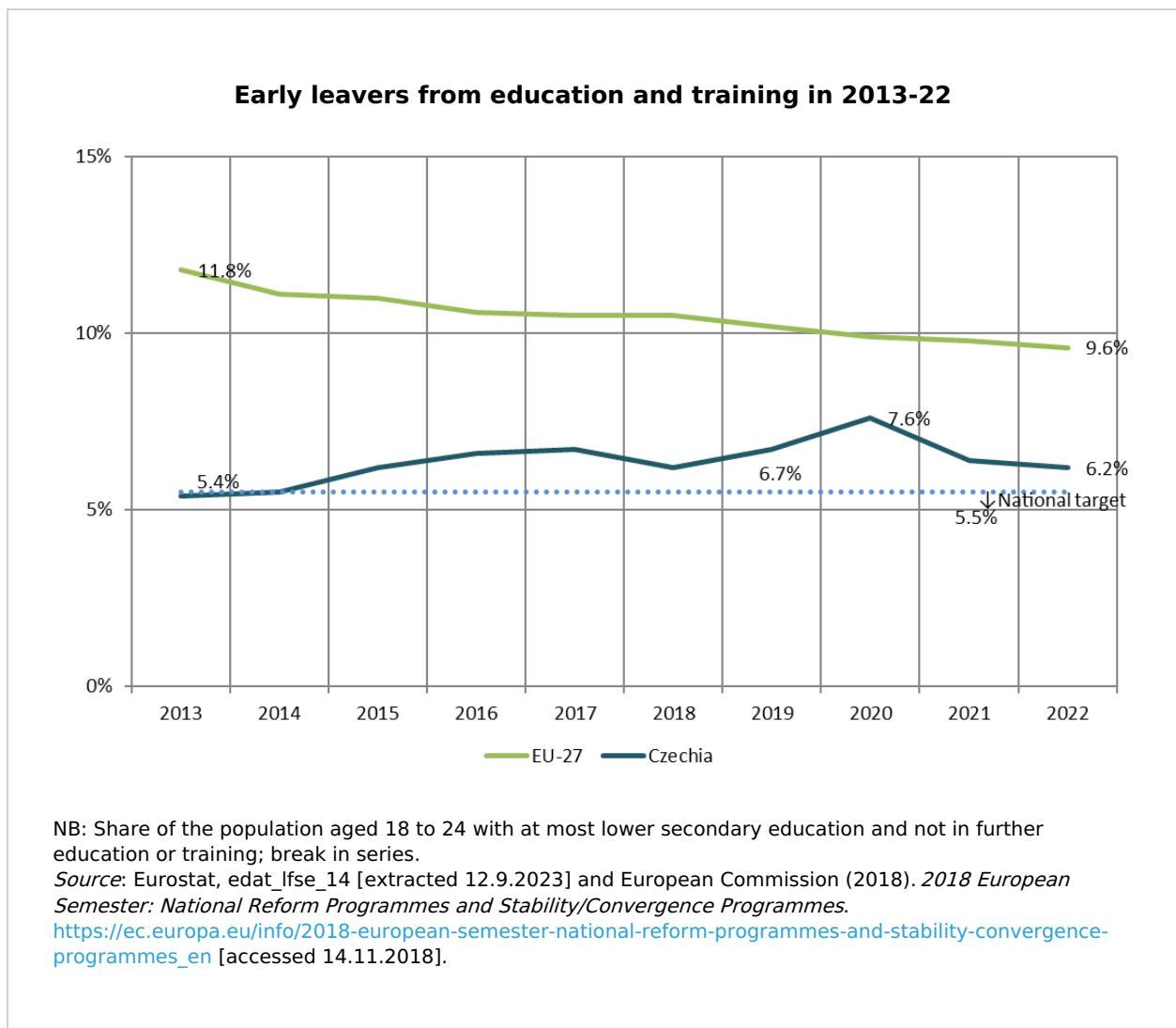
## 4.4 Female share

Traditionally, there are more males in VET (55%). Males prefer industrial fields (such as mechanical engineering, electrotechnics), construction and ICT, while females opt more often for healthcare, pedagogy, business and arts programmes.

## 4.5 Early leavers from education and training

The share of early leavers from education and training has increased from 5.4% in 2013 to 6.2%

in 2022, partly due to the introduction of the State *maturita* exam system, in 2011. The new exam system has proved more demanding than the previous school-based one. The common part of the *maturita* exam (24) is now the same for both general and VET schools. The share of early leavers is above the national target for 2020 (5.5%) and below the EU-27 average of 9.6% in 2022.

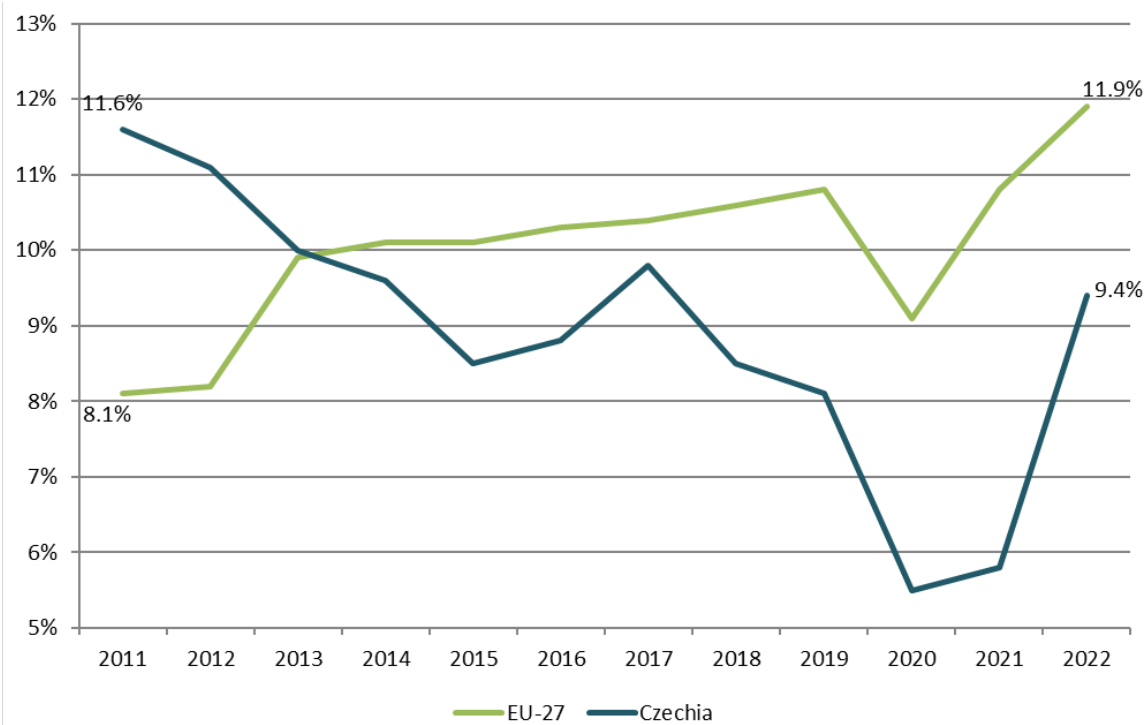


Dropout rate is not monitored centrally.

## 4.6 Participation in lifelong learning

Between 2011 and 2020, there was a decreasing trend of participation in lifelong learning in Czechia. In 2011-12. The share of adult learning was 11.6% because of anti-crisis subsidised CVET programmes for companies. Since 2021, the participation increased again (9.4%), but it hasn't yet reached the EU-27 level of 11.9%.

### Participation in lifelong learning in 2011-22



NB: Share of adult population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training.  
Source: Eurostat, trng\_lfse\_01 [extracted 26.9.2023].

## 4.7 VET learners by age

### Secondary education learners by age group in 2012/13 - 2022/23

	19 and younger		20-24 year-olds		25 and older	
	12/13	22/23	12/13	22/23	12/13	22/23
Upper secondary VET with vocational certificate (ISCED 353)	87,6%	90,0%	10,3%	7,5%	2,1%	2,5%
Upper secondary general and VET with matura exam (ISCED 344, 354)	93,2%	96,6%	4,7%	2,4%	2,1%	1,0%
Follow-up programmes and shortened programmes (ISCED 354, 353)	27,2%	34,1%	29,6%	30,7%	43,2%	35,3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>86,9%</b>	<b>92,2%</b>	<b>7,9%</b>	<b>4,9%</b>	<b>5,2%</b>	<b>2,9%</b>
Total learners in all forms and types of schools including lower secondary general education (gymnasium programmes) and practical schools (ISCED 244, 253)	87,9%	92,6%	7,3%	4,6%	4,8%	2,8%

NB: Secondary education VET learners are included.

Source: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (2023). *Statistická ročenka školství - Výkonové ukazatele 2012/2013 a 2022/2023* [Statistical Yearbook on Education - Performance indicators 2012/2013 and 2022/2023]. <https://statis.msmt.cz/rocenka/rocenka.asp> [accessed 25.9.2023], calculations done by NPI ČR.

The share of adults (25+) in initial vocational education and training (IVET) is the highest in 2-year follow-up programmes and in 1- to 2-year shortened programmes (25) .

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- [24] The common part of the *maturita* exam is defined by the State, including two obligatory subjects: Czech and foreign language or maths and in certain cases two extra subjects. Schools are responsible for the profile part of the exam (2 to 4 subjects), which is also a compulsory part of the *maturita* exam. In the profile part of the exam, VET learners should be examined in at least 2 VET subjects.
- [25] 3-year school-based VET programmes (EQF level 3) and 4-year VET and *lyceum* programmes (EQF level 4) can be offered as shortened programmes, provided that the school director considers that the learner has completed a programme, at the same EQF level, in a relevant field. Shortened programmes do not lead to a higher EQF level.



## CHAPTER 5.

# VET within education and training system

The education and training system comprises:

- pre-school education;
- primary and lower secondary education (ISCED level 1 and 2);
- upper secondary education (ISCED level 3);
- tertiary education (ISCED levels 5, 6, 7 and 8).

Pre-school education is provided for children from 2 to 6 years mostly in public (founders are municipalities) or private (e.g. company) kindergartens (*materšská škola*). The last year of pre-school education is mandatory, but not included in compulsory education.

Compulsory education lasts 9 years, including 5 years of primary and 4 years of lower secondary education. Learners can attend a 9-year programme at a basic school (from 6 to 15 years of age). Alternatively, they can enrol in *gymnázia* at the age of 10 or 12; these offer programmes that last 8 or 6 years, integrating lower secondary (compulsory) and upper secondary general education.

At the age of 15, learners completing compulsory education can choose between general education (4-year *gymnázium* programme) and IVET programmes. At upper secondary level, IVET includes 3-year study programmes leading to a VET certificate and 4-year study programmes leading to a *maturita* examination.

IVET is not a 'dead end' path. Almost all graduates can choose an appropriate path to proceed to higher levels. Higher education, at EQF level 6, includes tertiary professional schools (*vyšší odborné školy - VOŠ*), offering higher VET programmes, which lead to a specialist's diploma (*diplovaný specialista, DiS*) and higher education institutions (*vysoké školy - VS*) leading to bachelor degrees.

A less common study path is provided by conservatoires, which provide education in the arts (music, dance or drama) at lower secondary, upper secondary and higher VET level.

Upper secondary schools can offer general and vocational education, providing diverse study opportunities under 'one roof'. Tertiary professional schools are often integrated with secondary schools. IVET schools are mainly public, providing programmes for free, while private and church schools may collect tuition fees.

Secondary schools may provide education for learners with special educational needs, depending on the type of disability. Such IVET programmes (ISCED 253) are aimed at learners over 15 years old with severe learning difficulties.

Apprenticeships (or 'dual system') are not yet mainstreamed. IVET is mainly school-based, including mandatory practical work-based training and work placements, which usually take place in companies or alternatively in school workshops/facilities. The [Strategy 2030+](#) (26) fosters the implementation of dual system elements adapted to the national context using various forms of voluntary cooperation between schools and companies. In 2020-22, [pilot projects implementing specific elements of the dual system](#) were carried out in four out of the 14 regions of the country.

Formal education from nursery to tertiary professional VET is governed by the [Education Act](#). IVET is provided within the formal education system. It leads to qualifications at EQF levels 2, 3, 4 and 6. Higher education institutions constitute a self-governed system regulated by the [Higher Education Act](#).

National curricula (framework educational programmes) are centrally processed documents issued and approved by the [education ministry](#). They define the conditions under which programmes in each field are carried out, binding educational requirements for specific levels and fields of education, forms of education (face-to-face, distance or blended learning), content and a minimum range of lessons for each programme.

CVET can be provided:

- within formal education (adults can study at programmes with no age or other formal restrictions);
- in the framework of active labour market policies (so-called retraining);
- in companies (either obligatory training set by the law or not-regulated training based on company policy);
- based on individual demand (there is a wide free market of training providers).

CVET is partly regulated by the Act on the verification and recognition of further education results (the [Act on validation of non-formal and informal learning](#), VNFIL). In August 2023, there were 217 complete vocational qualifications (27) in the National register of qualifications (Národní soustava kvalifikací, NSK). The register enabled access to an IVET qualification without attending an IVET (formal) study programme at school.

Alongside the most popular full-time study, schools offer other forms suitable, especially, for employed adults (e.g. through distance learning); shorter (mostly weekend) presence in school is combined with consultations and various methods of distance learning, such as self-study, e-learning etc. These courses usually last one extra year in comparison to full-time programmes. Only 7.1% (28) of all VET learners attend other (not full-time) forms of study.

The Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs offers a programme to promote participation in adult education and digital competences in the country. The 2023-25 programme financed under the [National Recovery and Resilience Plan](#), aims to address the growing demand for skills relevant to the [digital transition](#) and Industry 4.0. It will serve as a pilot project for the forthcoming introduction of individual learning accounts (ILAs).

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[27] A complete vocational qualification ([úplná profesní kvalifikace](#)) is defined as a professional competence to perform all the tasks within an occupation (e.g. pastry chef, hairdresser, plumber, economist, engineering technician, etc.). It can be acquired either by completing an IVET programme or by the recognition of prior learning.

[28] Data taken from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports [*Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy - MŠMT*] (2023). [Statistická ročenka školství - výkonové ukazatele školního roku 2022/2023](#) [*Statistical Yearbook on Education 2022/23 - performance indicators of the 2022/2023 school year*]. [accessed 30.9.2023]. NPI's ČR calculation includes all upper and lower secondary and tertiary professional, follow-up and shortened programmes (i.e. all VET types).

## CHAPTER 6.

# Apprenticeship

There is no apprenticeship system (or 'dual system') in the country. IVET is mostly school based. However, mandatory practical work-based training and work placement are integrated into IVET curricula. Dual system elements have been piloted on selected partnerships of schools and companies in four out of 14 regions of the country.

# CHAPTER 7.

## VET governance

At the national level, the main body holding executive powers regarding IVET and CVET is the [education ministry](#). The key responsibilities of the ministry include the development of the national education strategy and priorities; development of curriculum policy, and care for the quality of education for and in accordance with the objectives and content of education; and coordination of education public administration and funding.

The education ministry holds the main responsibility for administration and establishing the rules for higher education (HE) institutions, though these have broad academic autonomy.

The [labour ministry](#) is responsible for retraining under the auspices of the public employment services. The Ministry of Health is responsible for the training of health staff; the Ministry of the Interior is responsible for the accreditation of public administration staff training courses.

At the regional level, self-governing bodies - the regional assembly and regional council (*zastupiteľstvo kraje, rada kraje*) - are directly responsible for establishing public VET schools at upper secondary and tertiary professional level. Regions administer approximately 68.7% of upper secondary VET schools and approximately 64% (29) of tertiary professional schools. The regional assembly has decision-making and consulting powers on the number, structure, provision, quality and funding of schools. The regional council (composed of nine to 11 members) is elected by the assembly and holds executive powers, forming expert advisory commissions in various fields, including education. The regional body of State administration (*krajský úrad*) is responsible for drafting a regional long-term plan for the development of education and a report on education in the region. It also allocates [resources from the State budget to schools](#), covering pedagogical staff wages and direct education costs.

All schools (including VET) have a relatively high level of autonomy. School directors hold significant powers. They are responsible for:

- the preparation and implementation of school curricula based on approved national curricula;
- the quality of pedagogical work and human resources policy;
- education management and efficient use of financial resources.

School councils are established at schools as a consultative body. The councils include representatives of the school founding body, pedagogical staff, parents and sometimes learners.

Social partners can influence VET at national and regional levels, particularly through cooperation on the preparation of curricula. Participation of their representatives in the final exam committees of 3-year school-based VET programmes (ISCED 353) and in the *absolutorium* (30) committees of higher VET programmes (ISCED 655) is mandatory and is embedded in the Education Act. They also cooperate on the standardised assignments for final examinations (ISCED 353), and profile (vocational) parts of *maturita* examinations (ISCED 354), while their participation in the *maturita* examination committee is not mandatory, but highly appreciated. Increasing the role of employers and their participation in VET is one of the current national priorities.

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[30] *Absolutorium* is a final examination at tertiary professional schools consisting of the theory of vocational subjects, a foreign language, a graduate thesis and its defence. Upon successful passing of the *absolutorium*, the graduate attains a tertiary professional

qualification and the title of a specialist with a diploma (*diplovaný specialista*, DiS).

## CHAPTER 8.

# VET financing mechanisms

There are three different systems of regular public funding of VET:

- the first is regulated by the Education Act and finances the upper secondary and higher VET programmes;
- the second finances higher education institutions and is regulated by the higher education act;
- the third covers the training offered by the public employment services and is governed by the Employment Act.

Besides public funding, individual employers provide funding for VET schools on a voluntary basis (e.g. via sponsorships, investments in facilities, equipment purchases etc.)

### Upper secondary and tertiary professional education

The responsibility for funding schools at primary, secondary and tertiary professional levels is shared between the [education ministry](#) and those responsible for establishing schools, i.e. regional authorities or in some cases, private entities, churches and ministries.

Total general government expenditure on education, 2021 (% of GDP)

	<b>Pre-primary and primary education</b>	<b>Secondary education</b>	<b>Tertiary education</b>
% of GDP	1.3	2.3	0.7

*Source:* Eurostat (2023). Government expenditure on education: Expenditure on 'education'. [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Government\\_expenditure\\_on\\_education#Expenditure\\_on\\_.27education.27](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Government_expenditure_on_education#Expenditure_on_.27education.27) [extracted 30.9.2023].

The education ministry provides most of the education budget, covering direct costs, except for investments. School founders cover operational and investment costs. Funding from the public budget (for direct and operational costs) depends on the school type and educational field.

Since 2020, a more centralised approach to regional education funding has been implemented, concerning all public schools up to upper secondary level. A part of the existing national and regional normative amounts has been replaced by a scheme of normative amounts defined centrally by the education ministry. The schools' funding is no longer based on the number of learners (per capita approach); it is based on the financing of the real volume of teaching (the number of lessons taught). Financial resources are allocated according to the real amount of teacher salaries. This opens the option of dividing classes into smaller groups to improve the quality of teaching. The per-capita principle remains applied in tertiary professional schools (VOŠ), but the amount is set centrally by the ministry.

Schools may also receive resources from the education ministry budget via individual calls. The content and the aim of these calls are announced by the ministry for each fiscal year.

The budget of the education ministry also provides financial resources to private schools and schools set up by registered churches or religious societies, which are included in the register of schools. The subsidy is set as a percentage of the per-capita funding of a comparable programme in public education.

Private secondary VET schools and public tertiary professional schools (VOŠ) are also funded

through tuition fees. The maximum limit of tuition fees for public VOŠ is set by legislation and differs depending on the field of study. Generally, fees are low, ranging from the equivalent of EUR 97 to 195 per year. The level of tuition fees for private schools is not regulated.

### **Higher education institutions (VŠ)**

Each public VŠ is entitled to a contribution from the State budget. The level of the contribution depends on the number of learners, type of accredited study and lifelong learning programmes, and on the basis of several quality indicators (research results, professional structure of academic staff, foreign learners, financial resources owned, unemployment rate of graduates, the extent of learner mobility).

Public VŠ programmes are generally free for learners. Fees (31) are collected for extending the standard length of studies by more than 1 year (minimum set by legislation is equivalent of EUR 280 per semester; VŠ set the fees differently for different study fields and in reality, they are mostly over EUR 800 and exceptionally might be as high as EUR 2 000). Fees may be also collected for admission proceedings (maximum EUR 30) or for studying in a foreign language (no limit set). The rector may exempt socially disadvantaged learners from paying the fees.

Private VŠ must assure financial resources for the implementation of the activities by their own means, for example by collecting tuition fees.

### **Retraining in the framework of active labour market policies**

Retraining in the framework of active labour market policies (ALMP) is funded from the budget of the [labour ministry](#). The financial resources are transferred to the Labour Office (ÚP) which then distributes them further to its regional branches. The ÚP branches cover the course fees for the participants but may also contribute to other retraining-related costs.

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[29] Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (2023). [Statistická ročenka školství - výkonové ukazatele školního roku 2022/2023](#) [Statistical yearbook of education - performance indicators of the 2022/2023 school year]. [accessed 30.9.2023]. NPI's ČR calculation.

[31] The education ministry sets the limits for each year.

## CHAPTER 9.

# Teachers and trainers

## 9.1 VET teacher types

In upper secondary VET, there are:

- general subject teachers;
- vocational theoretical subject teachers;
- vocational training teachers (in EQF level 2 and 3 programmes leading to a vocational certificate);
- teachers of practicum (only in EQF level 4 VET programmes leading to a *maturita* examination).

[Qualification and competence requirements for all teaching professionals](#), their working hours, continuing professional development (CPD) and career scheme are regulated by the Act on pedagogical staff and relating regulations.

In addition to the achieved formal qualification (32) in the respective field, upper secondary VET teachers (teachers of general subjects, of vocational theoretical subjects, of vocational training and of practicum) need to also acquire a pedagogical qualification. If the pedagogical qualification is not part of their master programme, teachers have to acquire it through a bachelor degree in pedagogical sciences or a lifelong learning (LLL) programme provided by LLL centres of universities with pedagogical faculties or facilities for further education of teaching staff. There are two types of LLL programmes:

- 250-hour programmes (three semesters), including training in reflective teaching practices (approximately one third of the programme);
- 120-hour programmes (two semesters), including a short practicum; these can be also offered by education entities or entities offering teacher CPD, while they are designated primarily (33) for teachers of vocational theoretical subjects, practicum and vocational training (34) .

Some teachers complete the required qualification in pedagogy as part of their CPD.

Trainers, nationally referred to as practical training instructors, are exclusively employees of the company; the Act on pedagogical staff does not recognise them as pedagogues; therefore, they do not need to have pedagogical training. Cooperating VET schools often provide them with the necessary competences (through organised courses), so they may also pass the professional qualification within the [National register of qualifications](#) (NSK).

A major challenge for the education system is the high average age of upper secondary school teachers (49.4 years of age).

At the beginning of 2020, despite repeated salary increases, teacher salaries were still below the EU and OECD average and the average salary of tertiary-educated employees in Czechia. The attractiveness of teaching jobs, including those at the tertiary level, is very low as the teaching profession is considered undervalued and there are limited opportunities for career development.

However, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Since 2015, legislation amendments made it possible for school directors to employ practitioners/field professionals from the world of business, non-profit organisations and public administration for part-time teaching (20 hours/week) without having the required pedagogical qualification. According to the amendment



to the Act on pedagogical staff (in effect since September 2023) practitioners must prove 5 years of practical experience relevant to the field of education and nature of the subjects taught. The school director may recognise as having fulfilled the prerequisite for the professional qualification of vocational training teacher, vocational theoretical subject teacher or practicum teacher for a maximum period of 3 years from the date on which he or she began to carry out this teaching activity. The amendment also enables for new qualification route for vocational training teachers who have to prove pedagogical competence. It allows graduates of secondary VET programmes with *Maturita* or VET certificate to acquire a vocational training instructor qualification (certificate) listed in the National Register of Qualifications. This certificate is now equal to completing an accredited bachelor's degree programme in the field of pedagogical sciences or completing a LLL programme organised by a higher education institution; or completing supplementary pedagogical studies.

## 9.2 Continuing professional development of teachers/trainers

All teachers are obliged to participate in CPD. Each school director is responsible for the development and implementation of a CPD plan in coherence with the strategic needs of the school, as well as the needs and interests of individual teachers. Teachers also have the right to educational leave of up to 12 days per academic year. CPD may take the form of courses or internship in a company, which is very popular and desirable (in 2021 - most recent data - 42% of secondary and tertiary professional schools organised internships in companies).

Teachers can choose a career path to pursue specialised school activities (e.g. school prevention specialist (35) , education counsellor) or lead to a leadership position.

Over recent years, teacher CPD has been among national key priorities. In October 2020, the [Strategy for education policy of the Czech Republic until 2030](#) (36) (Strategy 2030+) was approved. It stipulates support for pedagogical staff, which seeks to create a teacher competence profile, modernising the pre-service training of teachers, reform the concept of in-service teacher education, increasing the attractiveness of the profession, while attracting new high-quality teachers, supporting novice (beginner teachers) and experienced teachers - mentors (including the creation of a comprehensive induction system) and strengthening the role of school director as a leader in the education process. As of January 2024 (37) , in coherence with the approved amendment of the Act on pedagogical staff, inexperienced teachers shall be assigned an adaptation period of an appropriate length and assigned an induction teacher. The position of the accompanying teacher performing specific activities in relation to teaching practice of students has been embedded in the amendment.

For more information visit Cedefop project page on [Teachers' and Trainers' professional development](#) and our interactive toolkits for VET practitioners: [Cedefop VET toolkit for tackling early leaving](#) and [Cedefop VET toolkit for empowering NEETs](#). You may also read [Cedefop/ReferNet country reports on Teachers and Trainers in a Changing World](#) and [Cedefop comparative analysis](#).

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[32] The Act No 563/2004 Coll. on pedagogical staff stipulates what type of study programmes and certificates are required for individual categories of teachers (master degree, absolutorium, maturita certificate or VET certificate).

[33] They are also available for teachers of artistic vocational subjects at elementary artistic schools, secondary schools and conservatoires, as well as teachers at language schools authorised to organise State language examinations.

[34] Usually people who are specialists from companies wanting to become full-time teachers opt for these programmes.

- [35] A teacher with special education/courses who is able to prevent and, if necessary, also effectively solve problematic behaviour or situations that may appear in class or school (drugs, cyber bullying, etc.)

## CHAPTER 10.

# Shaping VET qualifications

## 10.1 Anticipating skill needs

A coherent system for forecasting skill needs is currently being developed. In 2017, the KOMPAS project was launched by the labour ministry, that established a forecasting system of labour market skill needs, interlinking national and regional approaches. The National training fund (*Národní vzdělávací fond, NVF*), the Research institute of labour and social affairs (*Výzkumný ústav práce a sociálních věcí, VÚPSV*) and newly established regional platforms have been key partners of the labour ministry within this project. After the project ended in 2022, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs oversees administering and updating the forecasts.

The system collects the available statistical data as well as qualitative information on future regional and national developments, important changes and technology trends. A system of statistical forecasting models (national and regional) was developed. The outcomes are expected to inform VET providers and counsellors, public employment services (responsible for retraining), regional authorities (responsible for IVET), employers, ministries, and the general public. They are published on a [website](#) specifically developed for this purpose.

In addition, the National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic (*Národní pedagogický Institut ČR, NPI ČR*) has developed an [information system about graduates in the labour market \(ISA+\)](#), including [short information about future labour market prospects within economic sectors until 2025](#).

Various initiatives in skill needs anticipation had been developed, especially at the research level. However, they were not interrelated, and their results did not serve as a regular source of information. Projects were contracted mostly by the [labour ministry](#), the [education ministry](#) or social partners.

See also Cedefop's [skills forecast](#) and [European Skills Index](#).

## 10.2 Designing qualifications

In the past decade, important steps have been taken regarding defining and updating qualifications and the 281 national VET curricula to respond better to labour market needs. Key parts of the system have been developed, mostly through individual projects.

### **National register of qualifications**

The [National register of qualifications](#) (*Národní soustava kvalifikací, NSK*) was introduced in 2007 (38) . It describes qualifications in the form of standards for the so-called:

- vocational qualifications (39) ;
- complete vocational qualifications (40) .

These have been gradually developed. In August 2023, there were 1 451 standards of vocational qualifications and 217 standards of complete vocational qualifications publicly accessible in the register. All approved standards and related information are published in the [NSK information system](#) in Czech and English.

Labour market requirements described in the qualification standards have been considered

during the creation and will be also considered during the revision of the national VET curricula.

### **Curriculum development (up to the upper secondary level)**

Within the formal school system, curricula up to the upper secondary level are developed at two levels. At national level, national curricula (*Rámcové vzdělávací programy, RVP*) are developed under the responsibility of the education ministry, with the minimum requirements for State-regulated education programmes. There are 281 national VET curricula, one for each individual field of education (VET programme). They are focused mainly on learning outcomes and key competences. At local level, upper secondary schools design their own school education programmes or school curricula (*školní vzdělávací programy*), based on national curricula. The objective is to allow for a more flexible shaping of graduate profiles in line with regional needs, latest developments in the relevant field and the interests and capacities of learners.

The updated national curricula for upper secondary VET were launched by the education ministry in September 2020. These updates refer to the vocational component of education, linking them to the National register of qualifications (NSK). National curricula now include economic concepts in line with the updated financial literacy standards, approved by the Ministry of Finance.

### **Study programmes at tertiary level**

Tertiary professional schools (vyšší odborné školy, VOŠ) and higher education institutions (VŠ) (vysoké školy) develop the content of their study programmes.

Higher VET programmes offered by tertiary professional schools, complying with the recommendation issued by the accreditation commission for tertiary professional education (AK VOV), are approved by the education ministry. The commission is set up by the Government.

For higher education institutions (VŠ) the National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education (an independent body established by a 2016 law) decides on accreditation of degree programmes, the habilitation procedure, the procedure for appointment of professors, and the accreditation of a higher education institution. It also carries out audits and external evaluations of higher education institutions. The new Bureau holds significantly more autonomy and does not need to submit decisions to the education ministry. If a VŠ is deemed to have an advanced and reliable internal evaluation system, the Bureau can award it an institutional accreditation lasting 10 years. The VŠ then does not have to have each of its study programmes accredited externally and performs only internal accreditation. The aim of the institutional accreditation is to enable quality VŠs to react autonomously and flexibly on the changing labour market needs.

### **CVET programmes**

CVET programmes provided outside of the formal school system usually respond directly to labour market needs. When developing the programmes, existing national registers may be consulted, e.g. the [National system of occupations](#) or the [National register of qualifications](#). Since 2009, the providers of retraining programmes (accredited within the active labour market policy) must link the content of these courses to the National register of qualifications. This allows successful participants to get a nationally recognised certificate.

### **Actors involved in designing qualifications**

25 so-called field groups were established, consisting of experts from education, labour market and occupations. The field groups have been working for more than 20 years with the support of the education ministry to foster the creation of the national VET curricula, with objectives and contents in line with labour market needs. In 2023, field groups were transformed into 5 wider field platforms (technical, economic, nature science, artistic and human-oriented). These platforms gather experts representing ministries, school associations, schools, employers and employers' associations.

Sector councils (*sektorové rady, SR*) have been operating since 2006 (during the last decade nationally), primarily in the process of defining occupation and qualification standards and also in

assuring qualification requirements of individual sectors in IVET and CVET. They bring together representatives of key stakeholders, especially employers. 28 sector councils consisting of 350 representatives of employers, educators and ministries worked on labour market skill needs analysis and the development of qualification and assessment standards of vocational qualifications in relation to occupations defined in the [national system of occupations](#). The activities of sector councils have become limited in recent years as their funding, through European Social Fund (ESF) projects, was terminated. Currently, the level of their engagement in qualifications development varies.

The National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic (NPI ČR) oversees the coordination and methodological accuracy of the curricula developed for upper secondary education. The NPI ČR submits the proposals of the developed qualification standards to authorising bodies for feedback (there are 16 authorising bodies, usually ministries). The final approval of standards is the responsibility of the education ministry.

In 2016, the education ministry initiated an agreement between the key employer representatives (Czech Chamber of Commerce, Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic, Czech Agrarian Chamber and Union of Employers' Associations of the Czech Republic), allocating responsibilities for specific IVET areas. These stakeholders have divided responsibilities among themselves for [particular fields of education](#). For example, the Union of Employers' Associations of the Czech Republic is responsible for qualifications in the textile and clothing sector.

More information on [national qualifications frameworks](#) and the qualifications types can be found in the [NQF online tool](#).

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- [38] The Act No [179/2006 Coll.](#), on the Verification and Recognition of Further Education Results: [accessed 10.11.2021].
- [39] A vocational qualification (*profesní kvalifikace*) is defined as an ability of a person to perform a task or a set of tasks within an occupation. It corresponds to certain activities (e.g. furniture assembly, installation of lifts, manufacture of upholstered seats, sports massage, flower arrangement, cold dishes catering, production of ice cream, etc.) but does not cover the whole occupation.
- [40] A complete vocational qualification (*úplná profesní kvalifikace*) is defined as a professional competence to perform all the tasks within an occupation (e.g. pastry chef, hairdresser, plumber, economist, engineering technician, etc.). It can be acquired either by completing an IVET programme or by the recognition of prior learning.

# CHAPTER 11.

## Quality assurance

### Quality assurance mechanisms of secondary and tertiary professional schools

Evaluation of schools and quality assurance are carried out by means of

- external evaluation;
- self-evaluation.

In addition, for each newly established school to be included in the official register, it is evaluated by the [education ministry](#).

#### External evaluation

The Czech school inspectorate (*Česká školní inspekce, ČŠI*) is an independent national evaluation authority. It identifies and evaluates provision and outcomes of education, their compliance with school-based curricula and links to the national curricula. The evaluation of the education processes conducted by the ČŠI and the feedback provided is of a more practical nature than in the past. In 2015, the ČŠI defined and introduced a guide on how to perform quality assurance at schools (41). This includes modified criteria grouped in six basic areas and methodology for inspections at all school types and levels. This model ensures the use of the criteria not only for the work of ČŠI but also for self-evaluation of schools or evaluation of schools by their founders.

Every school year, a set of specific indicators for schools is published.

The National pedagogical institute of the Czech Republic (NPI ČR) was appointed by the education ministry to the role of national reference point for quality assurance in VET (NRP EQAVET-CZ). Activities of the European quality assurance reference framework (EQAVET) are performed in cooperation with the ČŠI.

#### School self-evaluation

The Education Act defines that outcomes of self-evaluation (self-evaluation report) of schools shall be the basis for the development of an annual report on the school's activities, which is a publicly accessible document. VET schools at secondary and tertiary level are obliged to develop such annual reports. Since 2011, schools were granted more autonomy in terms of self-evaluation. The obligation of schools to respect the structure (criteria) of the self-evaluation report, as well as the frequency and dates of its submission, has been cancelled. The self-evaluation report is no longer required as a mandatory school documentation for observations by the ČŠI. However, most schools prepare the self-evaluation report as an internal document of the school. The [methodological portal](#), prepared by the ČŠI, is a helpful tool for schools, providing a set of best methodological practices and tools for self-evaluation, including examples of inspiring practice.

### Quality assurance mechanisms of higher education institutions

The quality assurance of higher education institutions takes the form of an accreditation process. The institutions must submit their educational programmes for evaluation to the accreditation commission set up by the government; based on successful assessment, the accreditation is awarded or renewed.

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[41] The School Quality model and related criteria for evaluation were designed and

developed within the ESF project The National System for the Inspection Evaluation of the Educational System in the Czech Republic (NIQES), implemented 2011-15.

## CHAPTER 12.

# Validation of prior learning

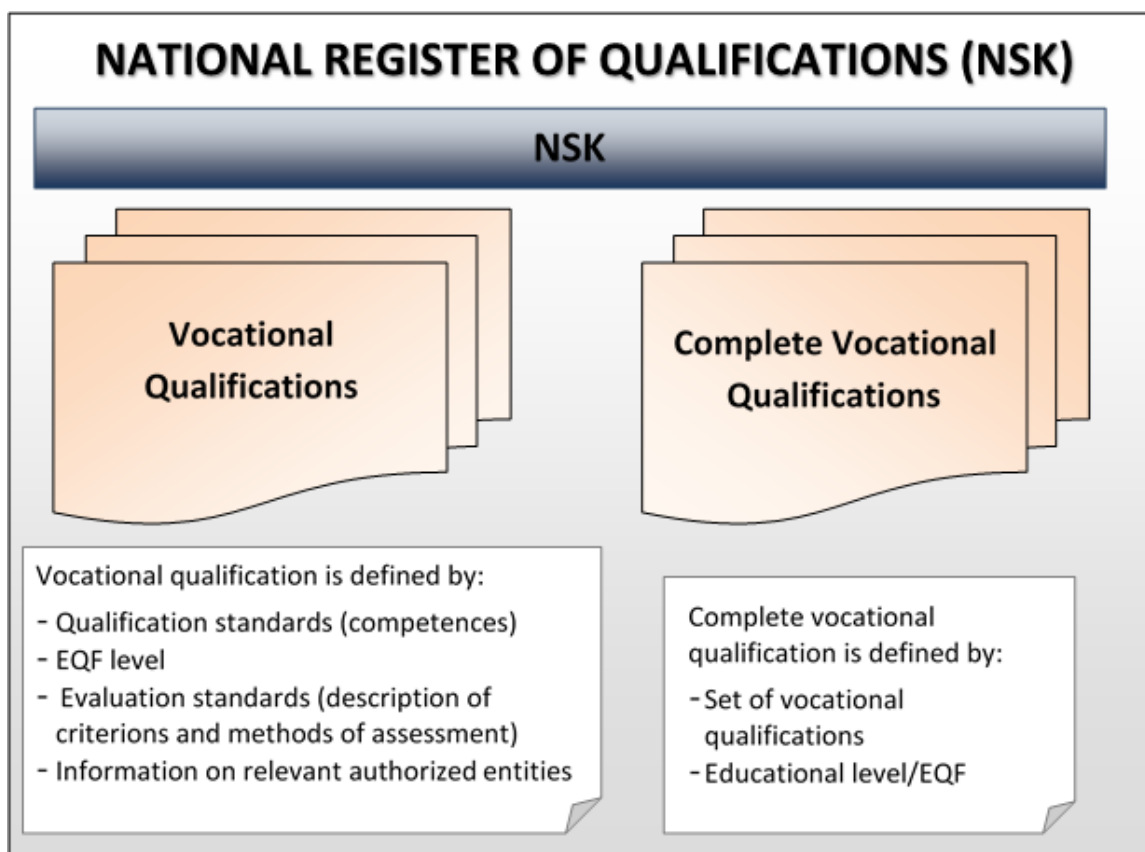
Since 2006, a system of recognition and validation of learning outcomes has been developing. The legislative framework was created by the Act on verification and recognition of further education results (42) . Any person who has gained certain skills and knowledge in some vocational field may, after meeting the relevant requirements, acquire a nationally valid certificate of qualification that is generally recognised by employers. Distinction is made between vocational and complete vocational qualifications.

A vocational qualification (*profesní kvalifikace*) is defined as an ability of a person to perform a task or a set of tasks within an occupation. It corresponds to certain activities (e.g. furniture assembly, installation of lifts, manufacture of upholstered seats, sports massage, flower arrangement, cold dishes catering, production of ice cream, etc.) but does not cover the whole occupation. As of August 2023, 1 451 qualification standards were approved and included in the National register of qualifications.

A complete vocational qualification (*úplná profesní kvalifikace*) is defined as a professional competence to perform all the tasks within an occupation (e.g. pastry chef, hairdresser, plumber, economist, engineering technician, etc.). It can be acquired either by completing an IVET programme or by the recognition of prior learning.



## National Register of Qualifications



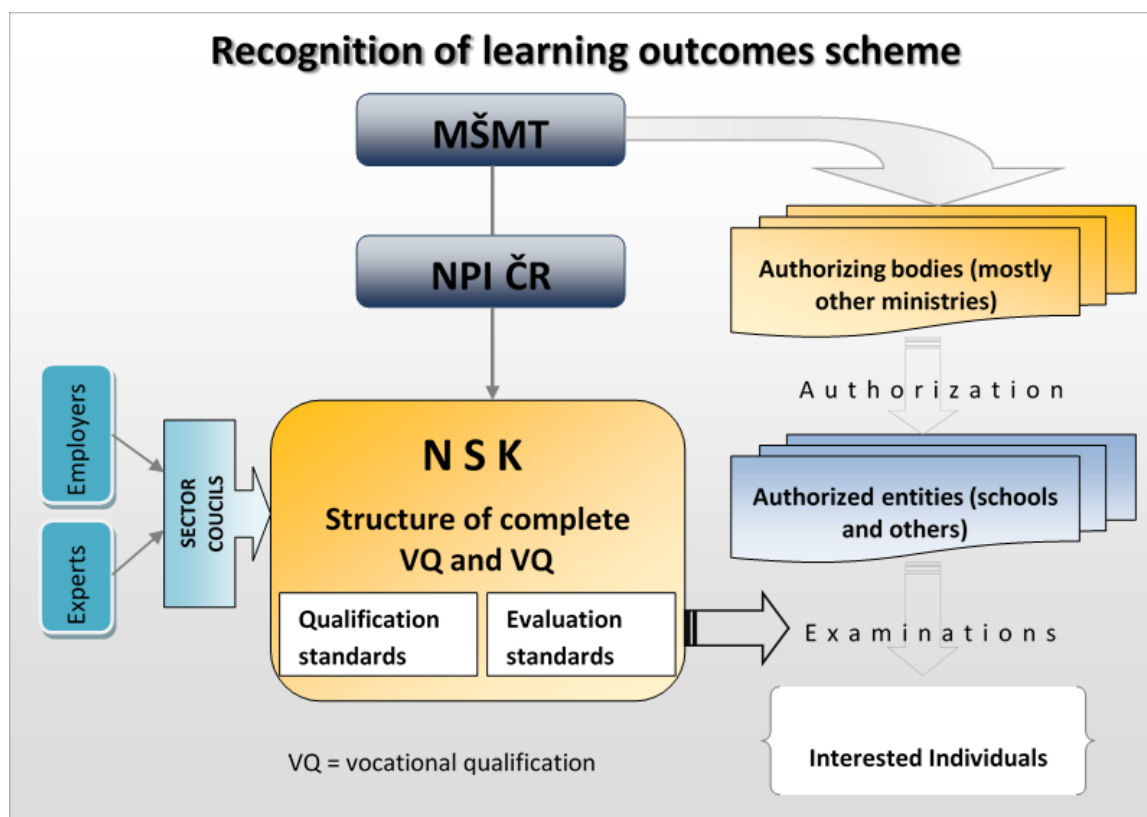
Source: National training fund (NVF).

To obtain a vocational qualification, the applicant needs to demonstrate all competences listed in the qualification standard of the National register of qualifications. Verification is carried out by means of an examination implemented by the so-called authorised entities (mostly adult education providers and VET schools) (43). Exam fees can be deducted from participants' taxable income. An individual over the age of 18 who has completed at least the obligatory basic education can register for the exam. Upon passing, the individual receives a nationally recognised certificate of a vocational qualification. This process was launched in 2009; by August 2023, over 325 315 exams have been held.

Acquiring complete vocational qualifications (currently 182 complete qualifications are available), which are equivalent to those acquired within the formal school system, is a more demanding process. If a person wants to obtain a qualification level identical to one awarded within formal IVET, she/he must pass the same examination (certified by the *maturita* or vocational certificate). It is a rare but possible way of acquiring a complete qualification. Through the NSK, 136 of the existing 281 national curricula (fields of education) can be achieved.

Policy initiatives aiming to promote recognition and validation of prior learning, enhance awareness and increase the number of applicants are being implemented. A significant step towards connecting the Czech qualifications and the European qualifications framework (EQF) was the approval of the national referencing report by the Czech Government in July 2011. As a direct consequence, all qualification standards for vocational qualifications submitted for approval to the education ministry are both in Czech and English.

## Processes of recognition and validation of learning outcomes



Source: National Training Fund (NVF).

For more information about arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning please visit [Cedefop's European database](#).

[42] The Act No [179/2006 Coll.](#), on the Verification and Recognition of Further Education Results: [accessed 10.11.2021].

[43] Authorised persons are licenced by the so-called awarding bodies, which are organisations of State administration relevant to the given field (ministries or the Czech National Bank). In 2016 there were 1216 authorised persons.

## CHAPTER 13.

# Incentives for learners

There is no comprehensive system of financial incentives promoting participation in VET. Nevertheless, there are several mechanisms through which limited financial support can be obtained, under certain conditions, by VET learners.

### **Scholarships**

Most regions provide scholarships or other benefits for learners of the less popular secondary education programmes, for which there is high demand in the regional labour market. The goal is to attract and/or motivate learners to complete the programme. Regular school attendance, excellent learning results and good behaviour are the usual prerequisites for receiving a scholarship. Scholarship programmes may differ slightly among regions. Each learner can obtain approximately EUR 1 000 for a 3-year study programme (the monthly amount particularly reflects the grade of study). Some fields have recorded an increase in interest; however, in others, learner interest continues to decline.

### **Tax deduction**

CVET learners can deduct the costs for exams in line with the Act on verification and recognition of further education results from their tax base.

## CHAPTER 14.

# Incentives for enterprises to boost their participation in VET provision

### **Tax incentives**

Tax incentives for employers participating in IVET programmes were introduced at the end of 2014. Direct and indirect funding of secondary and tertiary vocational education by employers is deemed a tax-deductible expense. More specifically:

- a deductible amount of approximately EUR 7 (200 CZK) per hour of practical training or internship provided to a learner in the tax-payer's premises;
- 50% or 110% of the costs of assets acquired and at least partially used for the purposes of vocational training are tax deductible;
- corporate scholarships are tax deductible (to the limit of 5 000 CZK (EUR 192) for upper secondary VET and tertiary professional level learners 10 000 CZK (EUR 384) for HE learners.

The main objective of the measure is to subsidise employer costs and motivate new companies to commence cooperation with schools. There are certain conditions to be fulfilled: the tax-payer - an individual or a legal person - has to conclude with the school an agreement on the contents and scope of practical training and on whose premises the practical training or a part of accredited study programme is implemented, provided that they are authorised to perform activities related to a given field of study or study programme. The other condition is that the individual or legal person must not be reporting financial loss. They also have to prove the attendance of learners (class books or attendance sheets).

For CVET, costs for employee training are deemed part of overall business costs for taxation purposes.

The 2009 amendment to the Education Act increased the possibility for upper secondary VET schools to finance instructors from companies. Schools may use part of their funds for labour costs to pay company employees leading the practical training. This measure enables schools to carry out practical training in company premises, function as contractual partners more easily, and quality assure practical training more effectively.

### **Public grants for training of employees**

Employers can apply for public grants to support employee training when meeting specific conditions. There are several State programmes financed by the State budget or EU funds:

- active employment policy schemes, where companies can apply for contribution for (re)training their employees;
- employers in manufacturing industry and selected innovative fields can receive, as an investment incentive, support for training their employees;
- companies can receive funding for carrying out projects that include training, provided they meet the criteria set by the EU jointly funded operational programmes; for example, in the period 2015-20, the POVEZ II programme (Support to vocational education of employees),

administered by the regional branches of the labour office, offered subsidies to companies and entrepreneurs for the training of employees.

## CHAPTER 15.

# Guidance and counselling

There are two main guidance and counselling systems. [Guidance and counselling](#) for initial education learners are under the responsibility of the education ministry. Guidance and counselling for adults within labour market policies are under the responsibility of the labour ministry. In 2010, the National Guidance Forum, the advisory body of the education and labour ministries in lifelong career guidance, was established.

The education ministry regulates career counselling services provided at schools. These services are available to all learners in lower secondary programmes (ISCED 244) when they make their first choice.

The National pedagogical institute of the Czech Republic (NPI ČR) is an important actor at the national level, as it focuses on research, methodology and dissemination of information related to career counselling, and supports the teaching of subjects dealing with labour market issues. The NPI ČR developed specific training focused on counselling services and the development and introduction of new methods of diagnostics in the area. The NPI ČR also supports the development of an integrated information system (ISA) and the related [website](#) which gathers information about the employment of school leavers and is a useful source of information for career decisions of learners, counsellors and adults. The ISA system continues to operate and has been evaluated as very beneficial by the OECD.

Three qualifications ([employment career counsellor](#), [career counsellor for educational and professional career](#) and career counsellor for endangered, risk and disadvantaged groups) for the occupation 'career counsellor' have been included in the National register of qualifications, NSK.

At the regional/local level, there are approximately 80 pedagogical-psychological guidance centres and around 120 centres for special pedagogy (for children with health, mental and combined disabilities and communication disorders). Career services provided are derived from a pedagogical-psychological diagnosis of the learner's capacities, personal qualities, interests and other personal characteristics.

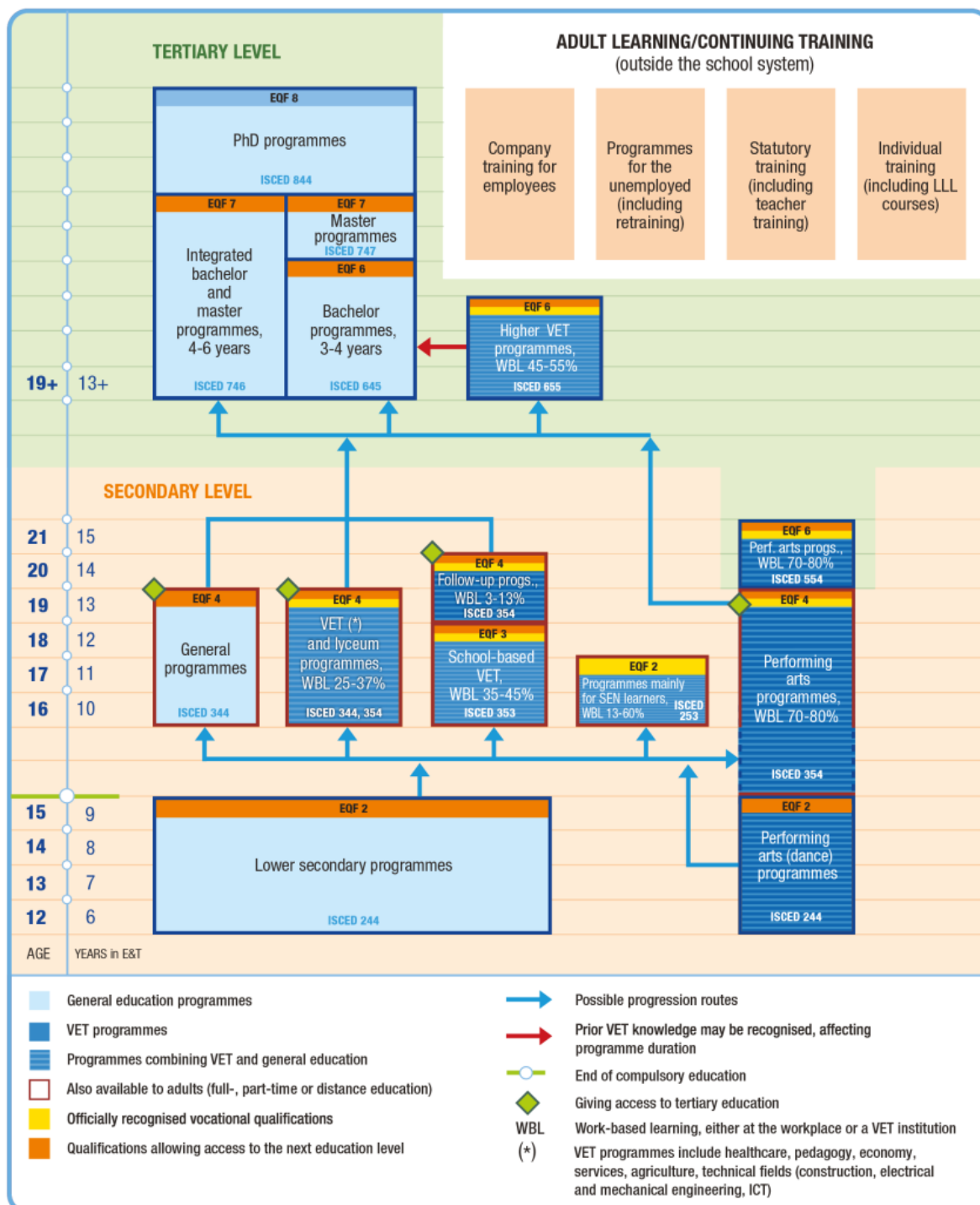
All basic and secondary schools are obliged by law to establish the position of education counsellor: often the counsellors are recruited from teachers in the school and therefore their professional capacity is limited due to the teaching duties. They address the issues related to education and professional orientation of learners. Each school also employs a school methodologist specialised in the prevention of socio-pathological disorders, and there may also be a school psychologist and a special pedagogue.

Since the school year 2010/11, the curricula for upper secondary schools have included the subject Introduction to the world of work. Lower secondary education has introduced the subject Career path selection, where a significant focus is placed on the support of career management skills of learners. In addition, learners may attend educational fairs, open door days at schools, and job brokering events.

Please also see:

- [guidance and outreach national reports](#);
- [Cedefop's labour market intelligence toolkit](#);
- [Cedefop's inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices](#).

# Vocational education and training system chart



NB: ISCED-P 2011.

Source: Cedefop, & National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic. (2023). Vocational education and training in Europe – Czechia: system description. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2024). Vocational education and training in Europe: VET in Europe database – detailed VET system descriptions [Database]. [www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/czechia-u3](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/czechia-u3)

# VET Programme Types

EQF 2

Programmes mainly

for SEN learners,

WBL 13-60%

ISCED 253

**Initial VET programmes mainly for SEN learners leading to EQF level 2, ISCED 253. They include 2-year programmes with lower requirements leading to a VET certificate (dvouleté obory s výučním listem s nižšími nároky na žáky) or to a final examination (without a VET certificate), and 1- to 2-year practical programmes (Praktická škola jednoletá, Praktická škola dvouletá)**

<b>EQF level</b>	2	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	253
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	10	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	11
<b>Usual entry age</b>	16 or older	<b>Usual completion age</b>	17-18 or older
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	2 (up to)		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	✗	<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	✓
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>	✓	<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	✓
			It can be studied as CVET, but it is rare.
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>	✓	<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	✓

**ECVET or other credits** The credit system is not used in secondary education.

**Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)** School-based learning offered only in full-time form.

**Main providers** Upper secondary schools.



<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	13-60% but especially in practical schools; these are simple practical activities simulating the performance of professional tasks.
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	<p>School-based learning with practical training in school workshops or in sheltered workshops ((44) ), usually not in companies.</p> <p>This programme enables learners to complete and broaden their general education and acquire the basic work skills, habits and attitudes needed in everyday and future working life. It provides the fundamentals of vocational education and manual skills leading to performance of easy practical activities in the areas of services and production.</p>
<b>Main target groups</b>	Learners with mental disabilities of various severities, or other disadvantaged learners who attended 9 years of compulsory school and have had learning difficulties.
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	There are no minimum entry requirements, except for an interview.
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>At the end of practical programmes learners take a final examination.</p> <p>In some of the 2-year programmes, learners obtain a VET certificate (<i>v ýuční list</i>) after passing a final examination.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	Learners receive a certificate proving that they have passed the final examination or VET certificate ( <i>v ýuční list</i> ) depending on the type of programme.
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	Depending on personal capabilities and individual abilities, graduates may perform appropriate easy auxiliary works in public catering, health care, social care and services, manufacturing businesses, or in sheltered workplaces.
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	Graduates can enter the labour market. No progression is possible.
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	Information not available
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	✗
<b>General education subjects</b>	✓
<b>Key competences</b>	✓
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>	✓

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**Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners** 1.2% in 2022/23 ((45) )

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- [44] A sheltered workshop is an employer's work unit in which at least 60% of employees are persons with disabilities.
- [45] Data taken from *the [Statistická ročenka školství - výkonové ukazatele školního roku 2022/2023](#) [Statistical yearbook of education - performance indicators of the 2022/2023 school year]* of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports: [accessed 28.9.2023], calculations done by NPI ČR.

EQF 3

School-based VET,

WBL 35-45%

ISCED 353

### 3-year school-based VET programmes leading to EQF level 3, ISCED 353 (střední odborné vzdělání s výučním listem).

<b>EQF level</b>	3	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	353
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	10	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	12
<b>Usual entry age</b>	16	<b>Usual completion age</b>	18
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	3 It can also be 1 or 2 years. Those who have already obtained a qualification at ISCED 353, can opt for the so-called shortened courses.		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	✗	<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	✓
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>	✓ (for the majority of learners)	<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	✓
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>	✓ It is free of charge in public schools; private schools may have tuition fees.	<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	✓

**ECVET or other credits** The credit system is not used in secondary education.

**Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)** Usually, this is an IVET programme. It mainly includes school-based learning combined with practical training, taking place in a real work environment (in-company training) or at school training facilities such as kitchens, workshops, or laboratories.

When it is offered as a CVET programme (in rare cases), shorter (mostly in weekends) presence in school is combined with consultations and various methods of distance learning, such as self-study, e-learning etc.

**Main providers** Secondary vocational schools (*střední odborné učiliště* - SOU)

<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	35-45%
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	WBL takes place in the form of practical training, which is a mandatory part of the study programme. Usually, practical training is held in a company. However, depending on the availability of appropriate companies at the local or regional level, it can also take place at specially designed school training facilities, such as workshops or laboratories.
<b>Main target groups</b>	Programmes are available for young people and (less often) adults.
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	There are no minimum entry requirements; the principal condition for admission is completed basic education. However, if there are too many applicants, the director may take into account their previous study results.
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>To complete this programme, learners need to pass a final examination.</p> <p>The standardised final examination has been embedded in the legislation since 2014/15. There is uniform content for each study programme and assignments are developed and regularly updated jointly by vocational school teachers and experts with practical experience. The exam consists of a theoretical vocational and a practical part, which may take place in companies. Participation of an expert from business at the final examination is obligatory.</p> <p>Learners sit exams at the end of the final year of the study. If the learner fails, he or she has the possibility of two other attempts within a period of 5 years.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	After passing the final examination, graduates obtain a VET certificate ( <i>v ýuční listě</i> ). It is a national recognised formal certificate that proves formal level and field of qualification. It is often required by employers for performing relevant jobs.
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	Bricklayer, hairdresser, gardener, baker.
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>Graduates may enter the labour market or enrol in a 2-year follow-up programme (ISCED 354) to pass the <i>maturita</i> examination and continue to higher education.</p> <p>Graduates or learners also have the option to acquire a (second) qualification (VET certificate) in a relevant field in shortened programmes. Shortened programmes are practically oriented, last 1 to 2 years and are suitable for adults.</p>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	In 2022/23, about 24% of graduates of 3-year school-based VET programmes full-time form of study entered a follow-up course ( (46) ) to obtain a <i>maturita</i> certificate. The rest of them entered the labour market.

<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	✓	Learners that obtain, through validation of prior learning, a <a href="#">professional certificate of a complete qualification</a> ( 47 ) within the National register of qualifications, can acquire a VET certificate equal to the one offered through formal education. To do so, they should pass, as an additional exam, the final examination taking place in formal education. If the entity offering the validation procedure is not a school with formal study programmes, the applicant has to pass the additional exam in a school.
<b>General education subjects</b>	✓	30-35% of the programme
<b>Key competences</b>	✓	
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>	✓	
<b>Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners</b>		26.7% in 2022/23 ( 48 )

- [46] NPI ČR (2021). [Vývoj vzdělanostní a oborové struktury žáků a studentů ve středním a vyšším odborném vzdělávání v ČR a v krajích ČR a postavení mladých lidí na trhu práce ve srovnání se stavem v Evropské unii 2022/23](#) [*Development of education and field structure of pupils and students in upper secondary and tertiary professional education in the CR and situation of young people at the labour market in comparison with the EU 2022/23*]. [accessed 22.9.2023].
- [47] A complete vocational qualification is a professional competence to perform all the tasks within an occupation (e.g. pastry chef, hairdresser, plumber, economist, engineering technician, etc.). It can be acquired either by completing an IVET programme or by the recognition of prior learning.
- [48] Data taken from *the [Statistická ročenka školství - výkonové ukazatele školního roku 2022/2023](#)* [*Statistical yearbook of education - performance indicators of the 2022/2023 school year*] of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports: [accessed 28.9.2023], calculations done by NPI ČR.

EQF 4
VET and <i>lyceum</i> programmes
WBL 25-37%
ISCED 354 344

### 4-year VET (ISCED 354) and lyceum programmes (ISCED 344) leading to EQF level 4, (střední odborné vzdělání s maturitou)

<b>EQF level</b>	4	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	354 (VET programmes) 344 ( <i>lyceum</i> programmes)
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	10	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	13
<b>Usual entry age</b>	16	<b>Usual completion age</b>	19
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	4		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	✗	<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	✓
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>	✓	<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	✓
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>	✓	<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	✓

They are offered free of charge in public schools; private schools may have tuition fees.

**ECVET or other credits** The credit system is not used in secondary education.

**Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)** Usually, these are IVET programmes. They mainly include school-based learning complemented with practical training at school and/or in companies and other institutions.

When they are offered as CVET programmes (in rare cases), shorter (mostly weekend) presence in school is combined with consultations and various methods of distance learning, such as self-study, e-learning.

**Main providers** Secondary VET schools (*střední odborná škola - SOŠ*)

<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	25-37%
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	<p>WBL, is nationally referred to as practical education, which includes practicum and practical training. All 4-year VET and <i>lyceum</i> programmes include practicum, taking place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at schools, usually in laboratories, workshops and school facilities, such as kitchens, hotels;</li> <li>• in companies or institutions for a minimum of 4 weeks (in some programmes it can last 6 to 8 weeks, while in agriculture programmes even 12 weeks, while in lyceum programmes are 3 weeks);</li> </ul> <p>Practical training is included only in 3-year VET programmes enabling learners to acquire both the vocational certificate (after the third year) and the <i>maturita</i> certificate (after the fourth year).</p>
<b>Main target groups</b>	Programmes are available for young people and adults.
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	<p>These programmes are open to applicants who have completed compulsory education ( (49) ) and meet the admission criteria.</p> <p>Since 2017, standardised admission tests in Czech language, literature and mathematics have been introduced. The results of the standardised admission tests form 60% of the overall candidate assessment score. The rest is based on the learner's score against admission criteria set by the director of each school.</p>
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>To complete these programmes, learners need to pass a <i>maturita</i> examination. It comprises common and profile parts. Common (State) exam includes Czech language and a foreign language or mathematics as obligatory subjects and maximum two other optional subjects. The education ministry is responsible for the preparation of the common part of the <i>maturita</i> examination. The profile part is designed and evaluated by each school; in VET programmes it includes at least two compulsory examinations (the number is defined in national curricula for each field of study); one of these exams is in the form of a practical examination or as a graduation thesis.</p> <p>The exams take place at the end of the final year of the study. Learners that fail, can attempt to pass these exams twice more within a period of 5 years.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>The <i>maturita</i> certificate is a national, formally recognised, prestigious certificate that proves EQF level and field of qualification. It is often required by employers for performing relevant jobs and it opens up a path to higher education.</p> <p>Since 2021, learners attending 4-year VET programmes leading to a <i>maturita</i> exam (ISCED 354), can sit an exam leading to a VET certificate (ISCED 353) after the third year of study. This measure aims to prevent early leaving from education and enable those who fail in the <i>maturita</i> exam not to leave school without any certificate ( (50) ).</p>

<p><b>Examples of qualifications</b></p>	<p>4-year programmes lead to qualifications such as civil engineering technician, travel agent, chemical technician, veterinary technician, social worker.</p> <p>There are different types of <i>lyceum</i> programmes such as technical, pedagogical, economic, medical (health care) and natural science, usually leading to mid-level occupations such as web designer and laboratory assistants.</p>
<p><b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b></p>	<p>Graduates of 4-year VET programmes can enter the labour market or continue their studies in tertiary education. They can also enter the so-called shortened 1- or 2-year programmes ((51) ) and acquire a second qualification with VET or <i>maturita</i> certificate in a different field.</p> <p><i>Lyceum</i> programmes specifically aim to prepare their graduates for continuing in relevant higher education programmes, but they can also enter the labour market.</p>
<p><b>Destination of graduates</b></p>	<p>62% of graduates of 4-year VET programmes continue after passing the <i>maturita</i> exam in tertiary education, of which 55% are at higher education institutions and 10% at tertiary professional schools ((52) ). Around 38% of 4-year VET programme graduates enter the labour market directly.</p> <p>74% of <i>lyceum</i> programme graduates continue in higher education and 8% in tertiary professional education (VOŠ) ((53) ). 20% of <i>lyceum</i> graduates enter the labour market ((54) ).</p>
<p><b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b></p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Learners who obtain, through validation of prior learning, a professional certificate of a complete qualification ((55) ) within the National register of qualifications, can acquire a VET certificate equal to that offered through formal education. To do so, they should pass, as an additional exam, the final examination taking place in formal education. If the entity offering the validation procedure is not a school with formal study programmes, the applicant has to pass the additional exam in a school.</p>
<p><b>General education subjects</b></p>	<p>✓</p> <p>On average 45% for the VET programmes and 70% for <i>lyceum</i> programmes.</p>
<p><b>Key competences</b></p>	<p>✓</p>
<p><b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b></p>	<p>✓</p>
<p><b>Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners</b></p>	<p>61.2% in 2022/23 ((56) )</p>

[49] Compulsory education is defined as 9 years of school attendance, regardless of grade.



- [50] The Government Regulation [No 211/2010 Coll.](#) introduced the so-called complementary fields of education. The new model allows learners to sit a final examination upon the conclusion of their third year of studies and obtain a VET certificate, and subsequently take the *maturita* exam at the end of the fourth year. The regulation specified 28 complementary fields of education.
- [51] Those who have at least a VET certificate, have the option to acquire a (second) qualification in a relevant field by attending the so-called shortened programmes. The level of their qualification remains unchanged. Graduates of 4-year VET programmes with a *maturita* (EQF 4, ISCED 354) can acquire a VET certificate or another *maturita* certificate in a related field; learners with a VET certificate (EQF 3, ISCED 353) can only acquire another VET certificate in a relevant field of education (e.g. in construction sector - bricklayer/plumber).
- [52] If learners are accepted both to a higher VET and a higher education programme, they are counted in both categories.
- [53] If learners are accepted both to a higher VET and a higher education programme, they are counted in both categories.
- [54] Vojtěch, J.; Kleňha, D. (2018). [Přechod absolventů středních škol do terciárního vzdělávání - 2017/18](#) [*Transition of secondary school graduates to tertiary education - 2017/18*]. Prague: NÚV. [accessed 28.9.2023].
- [55] A complete vocational qualification is a professional competence to perform all the tasks within an occupation (e.g. pastry chef, hairdresser, plumber, economist, engineering technician, etc.). It can be acquired either by completing an IVET programme or by the recognition of prior learning.
- [56] Data taken from the [Statistická ročenka školství - Výkonové ukazatele 2010/2011 a 2020/2021](#) [*Statistical Yearbook on Education - Performance indicators 2010/2011 and 2020/2021*] of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports: [accessed 18.8.2021], calculations done by NPI ČR.

EQF 4

Follow-up programmes,

WBL 3-13%

ISCED 354

## Follow-up VET programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (nástavbové studium)

<b>EQF level</b>	4	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	354
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	13	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	14
<b>Usual entry age</b>	18-19 and older	<b>Usual completion age</b>	20-21 or older
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	2		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	✗	<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	✓
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>	✓	<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	✓
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>	✓	<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	✓

**ECVET or other credits** The credit system is not used in secondary education.

**Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)** Usually, these are IVET programmes. They include school-based learning complemented with practical training at school and/or in companies and other institutions.





When they are offered as CVET programmes (in rare cases), shorter presence in school is combined with consultations and various methods of distance learning, such as self-study, e-learning.

**Main providers** Secondary VET schools (*střední odborné školy -SOŠ*)

**Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies** 3-13%

**Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)** Practicum or practical training in school and in companies or institutions (minimum 2 weeks per programme)

**Main target groups** Mostly young people, but also adults who want to complement their education by obtaining a *maturita* certificate.

<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	<p>These programmes target graduates of 3-year school-based VET programmes (EQF 3), who meet the admission criteria.</p> <p>Since 2017, standardised admission tests in Czech language, literature and mathematics have been introduced. The results of the standardised admission tests form 60% of the overall candidate assessment score. The rest is based on the learner's score against admission criteria set by the director of each school.</p>
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>To complete a follow-up programme, learners need to pass a <i>maturita</i> examination. It comprises common and profile parts. Common exam includes Czech language and a foreign language as obligatory subjects and at least two other optional subjects. The education ministry is responsible for the preparation of the common part of the <i>maturita</i> examination. The profile part is designed by each school; in VET programmes it includes at least two vocational subjects.</p> <p>The exams take place at the end of the final year of the study. Learners who fail can attempt to pass these exams twice more within a period of 5 years.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>The <i>maturita</i> certificate is a national, formally recognised prestigious certificate that proves formal level and field of qualification. It is often required by employers for performing relevant jobs and it opens a path to higher education.</p>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	<p>Civil engineering technician, travel agent.</p>
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>Graduates can enter the labour market or continue their studies at higher education.</p>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	<p>24% of graduates continue in tertiary education, but their failure rate is high (60%) ((57) ).</p>
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	<p></p> <p>Learners who obtain, through validation of prior learning, a <a href="#">professional certificate of a complete qualification</a> ((58) ) within the National register of qualifications, can acquire a VET certificate equal to that offered through formal education. To do so, they should pass, as an additional exam, the final examination taking place in formal education. If the entity offering the validation procedure is not a school with formal study programmes, the applicant has to pass the additional exam in a school.</p>
<b>General education subjects</b>	
<b>Key competences</b>	
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>	

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**Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners** 4.1% in 2022/23 ((59) )

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- [57] NPI ČR (2021). [\*Vývoj vzdělanostní a oborové struktury žáků a studentů ve středním a vyšším odborném vzdělávání v ČR a v krajích ČR a postavení mladých lidí na trhu práce ve srovnání se stavem v Evropské unii 2022/23\*](#) [*Development of education and field structure of pupils and students in upper secondary and tertiary professional education in the CR and situation of young people at the labour market in comparison with the EU 2022/23*]. [accessed 22.9.2023].
- [58] A complete vocational qualification is a professional competence to perform all the tasks within an occupation (e.g. pastry chef, hairdresser, plumber, economist, engineering technician, etc.). It can be acquired either by completing an IVET programme or by the recognition of prior learning.
- [59] Data taken from *the [Statistická ročenka školství - výkonové ukazatele školního roku 2022/2023](#)* [*Statistical yearbook of education - performance indicators of the 2022/2023 school year*] of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports: [accessed 28.9.2023], calculations done by NPI ČR.

EQF 4, 6



Performing arts





programmes

WBL 70-80%

ISCED 244, 354, 554

**Performing arts programmes leading to EQF level 6, ISCED 554 (vyšší odborné vzdělání v konzervatoři). Learners have the option to sit the maturita exams during their studies and acquire qualification at EQF level 4, ISCED 354. In the 8-year dance programmes, learners attend and complete the final 4 years of compulsory education, leading to EQF level 2 (ISCED 244).**

<b>EQF level</b>	4, 6	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	244 (only for dance programmes), 354 and 554 (for music and drama programmes)
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	6 (dance programmes) 10 (music and drama programmes)	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	13 (dance programmes) 15 (music and drama programmes)
<b>Usual entry age</b>	12 (dance programmes) 16 (music and drama programmes)	<b>Usual completion age</b>	19 (dance programmes) 21 (music and drama programmes)
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	6 (music and drama programmes) 8 (dance programmes)		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	 (the 8-year dance programmes are designed for those who complete the fifth year of basic school; thus, in the first 4 years of the conservatoire, learners attend and complete compulsory schooling).  N (music and drama programmes)	<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	

Is it initial VET? 	Is it continuing VET? 
Is it offered free of charge? 	Is it available for adults? 

<b>ECVET or other credits</b>	There is no credit system used.
<b>Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)</b>	<p>IVET (most learners): school-based learning complemented with practical training of art performance; the eight-year dance programme is offered only as IVET programme.</p> <p>CVET (not frequent): mostly other forms of learning where shorter presence in school is combined with consultations and various methods of distance learning, such as self-study, e-learning etc.)</p> <p>In music programmes, all learning forms are possible; in drama only full-time and combined form of study are possible</p>
<b>Main providers</b>	Conservatoires (specific type of secondary school)
<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	70-80% WBL, including at least 2 weeks of art practice and 30 lessons of pedagogical practice.
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	Practicum at conservatoires, basic art schools ((60) ) or other facilities.
<b>Main target groups</b>	Programmes are available for young people especially talented in an art field, but also to adults.
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	For conservatoire programmes, a talent exam is always a main prerequisite. Applicants must pass stringent entrance examinations, often held in several elimination rounds, show talent for the selected subject, overall musical talent as well as physical and psychological dispositions for their selected subject. Applicants also have to pass an entrance exam as some of these study programmes also lead to <i>maturita</i> examination after 4 years. Completion of particular grades in the basic schools is also among entrance requirements.

<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>Learners have the option to take the <i>maturita</i> exams during their studies and acquire qualification at EQF level 4, ISCED 354. <i>Maturita</i> consists of the common, State part and the profiling/vocational part. The director of conservatoire decides about compulsory and non - compulsory subjects for the profiling/vocational part.</p> <p>To complete these programmes, learners need to pass a final examination called <i>absolutorium</i> (tertiary level, EQF level 6). It includes theoretical vocational subjects, foreign language, graduate thesis and an art performance. It also includes exams in Czech language if the learner has not opted for <i>maturita</i> exam during studies.</p> <p>The exams are taken at the end of the final year of the study. If the learner fails, he or she has a possibility of 2 other attempts within a period of 5 years.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p><i>Maturita</i> certificate (optional). It is a national, formally recognised, prestigious certificate that proves formal level and field of qualification.</p> <p><i>Absolutorium</i> certificate is a national, formally recognised, certificate of higher VET.</p>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	Art performer (e.g. actor, musician, singer) but due to a pedagogical qualification acquired, they may also work as teachers of arts e.g. at the basic art school or at other types of schools.
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	Graduates can continue to the labour market. Those who passed an optional <i>maturita</i> examination can progress to higher education studies.
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	Information not available
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	✗
<b>General education subjects</b>	✓
<b>Key competences</b>	✓
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>	✓
<b>Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners</b>	1.1% in 2022/23 ((61) )

[60] Basic art schools provide basics of education only in art disciplines; they do not lead to the attainment of an education level. Basic art schools offer the option to conservatoire learners to gain a pedagogical practicum, which is obligatory for them.

- [61] Data taken from *the [Statistická ročenka školství - výkonové ukazatele školního roku 2022/2023](#) [Statistical yearbook of education - performance indicators of the 2022/2023 school year]* of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports: [accessed 28.9.2023], calculations done by NPI ČR.



EQF 6
Higher VET programmes
WBL 45-55%
ISCED 655

## Higher VET programmes leading to EQF level 6, ISCED 655 (vyšší odborné vzdělání)

<b>EQF level</b>	6	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	655
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	Not applicable	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	Not applicable
<b>Usual entry age</b>	19 and older	<b>Usual completion age</b>	21 and older
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	3 to 3.5		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	✗	<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	✓
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>	✓	<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	✓
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>	✗	<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	✓
	Regardless of whether the school is public or private		
<b>ECVET or other credits</b>	At the tertiary level, the ECTS system is used by tertiary professional schools. For the final <i>absolutorium</i> exam, typically 180 credits are necessary.		
<b>Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IVET (most learners): School-based learning complemented with practical training at school and/or practical training at companies and institutions.</li> <li>• CVET (not frequent): mostly other forms of learning where shorter presence in school is combined with consultations and various methods of distance study, such as self-study, e-learning etc.).</li> </ul>		
<b>Main providers</b>	Tertiary professional schools ( <i>vyšší odborné školy, VOŠ</i> )		
<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	45-55%		

<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical training in school or school facilities</li> <li>• At least 3 months of work placement in companies</li> </ul>
<b>Main target groups</b>	Adults, aged 19 or older
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	Applicants must have completed their upper secondary education with the <i>maturita</i> . The school director may decide whether an entrance examination should be part of admission proceedings, and should decide on its content; it may, depending on the study programme, consist of the talent exam and presentation of own work.
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	The studies are completed by the <i>absolutorium</i> , a vocational examination consisting of the theory of vocational subjects, a foreign language, a graduate thesis and its defence.
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	Upon successful passing of the <i>absolutorium</i> , the graduate attains a tertiary professional qualification and the title of a specialist with a diploma ( <i>diplomovaný specialista</i> , DiS).
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	Nutritionist, dental assistant, graphic designer, etc.
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	Graduates from higher VET programmes may enrol in tertiary academic education programmes under the same conditions as <i>maturita</i> certificate holders. Some forms of prior learning (subjects) may be recognised by the higher education institution.
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	Information not available
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	✗
<b>General education subjects</b>	✓ The programmes comprise approximately 45-55% of vocational theoretical and general subjects (e.g. foreign language).
<b>Key competences</b>	✓
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>	✓
<b>Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners</b>	5.7% in 2022/23( (62) )

[62] Data taken from the [Statistická ročenka školství - výkonové ukazatele školního roku 2022/2023](#) [Statistical yearbook of education - performance indicators of the 2022/2023 school year] of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports: [accessed 28.9.2023], calculations done by NPI ČR.

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