



Modularisation in Hungary

Legislation

The provision of vocational education and training in Hungary is regulated by *Act LXXVI of 1993 on Vocational Education and Training*. Its provisions relate to both IVET and CVET, and irrespective of whether it is provided within or outside the formal school system (i.e., in public/higher education or in adult training). This law defines:

- the training providers of VET;
- the content of the National Qualifications Register (*OKJ*) which – published in ministerial decrees – lists all state recognized vocational qualifications at each available level;
- the administrative structure of VET with the tasks, rights and duties of each concerned ministries, public authorities, agencies and consultative bodies;
- the content of the professional and examination requirements of *OKJ* qualifications and general rules concerning the vocational examination;
- the special regulations concerning the provision of school-based VET (vocational theoretical and practical training, apprenticeships, study breaks and student allowances); and
- the financing of VET.

The operation, administration, and financing of institutions providing VET within public and higher education are regulated by *Act LXXIX of 1993 on Public Education* and *Act CXXXIX of 2005 on Higher Education*, respectively. The provision of adult training programmes outside the formal school system – including the definition of the concept of adult training, its administrative and institutional system, content requirements (accreditation of institutions and programmes, content of adult training contracts, etc.), and state support schemes – is regulated by *Act CI of 2001 on Adult Training*.

The administrative system of vocational education and training in Hungary is rather complex due to several reasons:

- both IVET and CVET can be provided either within or outside the formal school system, but regulations concerning VET offered in adult training differ from those concerning school-based VET;
- VET within the formal education system can be provided both in public and higher education whose administrative structures are different;
- the administrative system of public education is highly decentralized;
- the definition of the outcome requirements of state recognized qualifications listed in the National Qualifications Register (*OKJ, Országos Képzési Jegyzék*) falls under the competence of several ministries.



Although IVET in Hungary is provided mainly within the formal school system, in public or higher education, adults can obtain their first OKJ qualification also in an adult training programme.

VET providers

Upper and post secondary IVET is offered in vocational schools (*szakiskola*) and in secondary vocational schools (*szakközépiskola*), respectively, while higher level VET courses are organised by higher education institutions (colleges, universities), though may also be provided in secondary vocational schools.

There are two types of vocational training schools (*szakképző iskola*), both of which are part of the public education system: vocational schools (*szakiskola*) and secondary vocational schools (*szakközépiskola*). They admit pupils typically upon completion of the 8 grades of primary school (*általános iskola*) at the age of 14; however, in compliance with the new regulations, they can provide only vocational preparatory/pre-vocational programmes in their first two or four general education grades. The vocational qualifications obtainable in these schools are those listed in the National Qualifications Register (*OKJ*). Students of vocational schools enter VET in the 11th grade, at the age of 16, and can obtain ISCED 3C or 2C level OKJ qualifications typically in 2 or 3 years, at the age of 18 or 19. Secondary vocational schools provide VET only to students who have already obtained the maturity certificate (ISCED 3A) – awarded at the maturity examination organized at the end of the 12th grade in this school type and in grammar schools -, or completed the 12th grade. These schools award ISCED 4C level OKJ qualifications in their post-secondary (the 13th and possible higher) VET grades. A new form of IVET, the so-called higher level vocational education and training was introduced in 1998. These non-degree, tertiary level programmes are organized by higher educational institutions, although they may be provided also by secondary vocational schools based on an agreement between the institutions. The precondition of participating in such courses is the maturity certificate, and these typically 4-term-long programmes provide VET to students older than the age of 18 to obtain an ISCED level 5B qualification listed in the OKJ.

VET school maintainers include local and county governments, state agencies, churches, foundations, etc. The maintainer is responsible for the lawful operation of the school and it approves its internal regulations as well as its educational and pedagogical programmes, but otherwise public education institutions enjoy autonomy in professional-pedagogical matters, supervised by the principal.

In higher education, the maintainer (the state, churches, foundations, etc.) supervises the operation and effectiveness of the professional work of colleges/universities, which otherwise enjoy wide-ranging autonomy in both administrative and pedagogical matters.

Adult training providers – including public and higher education institutions and other budgetary or state-supported institutions (e.g. Regional Training Centres of the National Employment Service), training companies, non-profit organizations, the workplace (internal training), chambers, etc. - are free to develop and provide their training programme if registered at the regional labour centre. Their institution and/or training programme has to be



accredited by the Adult Training Accreditation Body only if they want to receive public subsidy.

Although some OKJ vocational qualifications are obtainable only within the formal school system, most are offered also within the framework of adult training available for those who have already completed their compulsory schooling. Such VET courses provided by training enterprises, non-profit organizations as well as by public and higher education institutions or state agencies engaging also in adult training (as defined by the *Act CI of 2001 on Adult Training*) may be classified as IVET in case the participant has not earned a vocational qualification in public or higher education.

Practical training

The Act on Vocational education and training permits two (legal) forms of practical training organized at an enterprise, the form preferred by the law and education policy is apprenticeship training based on a student contract. This can be replaced by alternance training only under certain conditions (e.g. if the training is provided at a workshop or the workplace in a budgetary institution). In such cases the vocational training school contracts an economic organization for cooperation to provide practical training for its students (official name: cooperation agreement). In school year 2006/2007, the majority of full time students (74%) in the VET grades of secondary vocational schools received their practical training (in whole or a part) in a school workshop, 18% participated in alternance training (within the framework of a cooperation agreement), and only 9% in apprenticeship training. Students of vocational schools participated in practical training outside the school much more often, 46% of them in apprenticeship training and 14% in alternance.

Curricula

Since 1998 only vocational preparatory/pre-vocational training can be provided to students younger than the age of 16. General subjects in the general education grades of both types of vocational training schools are taught in compliance with the requirements of the National Core Curriculum (*NAT*), the recommendations of framework curricula, and the school's local pedagogical programme based on these. Schools must develop the curricula of vocational preparatory/pre-vocational training in accordance with the central programmes of OKJ qualifications and the requirements of the maturity examination (in secondary vocational schools), assisted by the guidelines of framework curricula developed for each of the 21 occupational groups. Such preparatory programmes include:

- career orientation and practical training in the 9th, and “vocational grounding theoretical and practical training” in the chosen occupational group in 10th grade (in at most 40% of the mandatory teaching hours) of vocational schools, where the provision of such training is mandatory since 2006, and
- vocational orientation from the 9th, and “grounding training in an occupational group” from the 11th grade of secondary vocational schools.

The framework curricula for vocational schools recommend 74 teaching hours of career orientation and 222 hours of vocational grounding theoretical and practical training per school year in the 9th grade (total teaching hours: 1017.5), and 296-370 hours of the grounding



training per school year in the 10th grade (total teaching hours: 1017.5). In secondary vocational schools they recommend 185 teaching hours per school year of grounding training in an occupational group in the 9th-10th grades (total teaching hours: 1017.5), 296 in the 11th grade (total: 1110) and 256 in the 12th grade (total: 960)

The curricula of VET grades, called vocational programmes, are also developed by the schools based on the *professional and examination requirements* of the awarded OKJ qualification and the guidelines of the *central curricula* of its vocational subjects, both types of documents published by the minister of the relevant field. *Modules* may be inserted into the vocational program.

The outcome requirements of a qualification of the National Qualifications Register (*Országos Képzési Jegyzék, OKJ*) are defined by the minister of the relevant field. Anticipation of skills needs and the initiation of changes in the OKJ are also realized primarily at this level. Although the social partners are involved in these processes through various national and regional level consultative boards, the existing forecasting and planning mechanisms of VET are considered insufficient. Apart from regular short-term prognoses on labour shortage and surplus based on employers' surveys by the labour centres of the National Employment Service (*ÁFSZ*), medium and longer term forecasts and researches based on a more qualitative or combined approach have been conducted only occasionally.

Development

The recent comprehensive renewal of the OKJ and outcome requirements within the framework of HRD OP Measure 3.2.1. aimed to update the structure and content of VET. It was based on an extensive analysis of Hungarian employment structure and job profiles, including surveying expected future developments in each vocation, implemented with the participation of practitioners and experts.

Current legislation assigns the task of "continuous monitoring of the development of VET structure" to a consultative body (OKJ committee) to be set up by the example of the 30-member Consulting Board involved in the OKJ development project, as a replacement of the sectoral so-called OKJ occupational group committees (see section 0302). Also through this and other consultative bodies, representatives of the economy and the social partners are encouraged to report changing labour market needs by initiating the modification of the OKJ and the outcome requirements and to review proposed changes.

The process of creating/modifying/deleting an OKJ vocational qualification can be initiated by the minister of the relevant field or by anyone making a proposal to the minister that includes the proposed professional and examination requirements (*SZVK*) and the supportive opinion of the relevant chamber of economy, professional, employer and employee associations, labour centres, etc. concerning the economic and labour market demand for the given qualification. The minister sends the proposal to the National Institute of Vocational and Adult Education (*Nemzeti Szakképzési és Felnőttképzési Intézet*) and the OKJ committee, and makes a decision based on their opinion (except for higher level vocational qualifications whose SZVKs can be developed jointly by a higher education institution and the relevant



economic/professional chamber). If accepted, the proposal is sent to the minister responsible for VET and adult training who makes a final decision based on the opinion of the National Vocational and Adult Training Council (*NSzFT*), in agreement with the minister responsible for education and the minister of the relevant sector.

Current curricula development regarding OKJ qualifications is defined by the introduction of a modular, competence-based qualification structure developed within the framework of Human Resources Development Operational Programme (HRD OP) Measure 3.2.1 (see section 0201). The new OKJ and outcome requirements are based on job profile analyses conducted by 1-1 job experts (experienced practitioners of the given vocation) from small, medium and multinational enterprises. The competence profiles of each occupation, specifying not only the professional knowledge and skills, but also the method (thinking, problem-solving and work style), social (communication, cooperation and conflict-resolution) and personal (flexibility, creativity, independence, capabilities and characteristics) competences required to perform the various tasks involved in the given occupation/job, were developed by practitioners with training experiences. The new centrally defined framework curricula developed with the participation of teachers/trainers and the local VET curricula based on these will thus consist of curriculum modules (*tananyagegység*) corresponding to the professional requirements modules defined in the SZVKs and will focus on the development of competences.

Furthermore, current curricula development aims also to develop more open training programmes, and the integration of 'openness' elements (centrality of learning, a complex learning environment, wide range of user-oriented programmes, modern teaching technology, external professional practices) contributes to the realization of individual learning pathways.