

## Annex 1 - Template and guidelines for National implementation plans

### National Implementation Plan Croatia

#### 1. Brief information on the national context and baseline

Based on the *National Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030 (NDS2030)* that was adopted in 2021, the *National Education System Development Plan for the period 2022 - 2027*, which defines the implementation of the strategic goal and priority areas of public policies for the education sector from the *NDS2030* is in a high stage of completion and is expected to be formally adopted soon and is reflecting the common priorities of the *Recommendation of the Council on Vocational Education and Training (VET) for sustainable competitiveness, social justice, and resilience* and the *Osnabrück Declaration on VET as an enabler of recovery and just transition to digital and green economies*.

*NDS2030 (February 5, 2021)* set out a vision of Croatia in 2030: In 2030, Croatia is a competitive, innovative, and safe country with a recognizable identity and culture, a country with preserved resources, and quality living conditions and equal opportunities for everyone. In the area of education, it emphasizes that Croatia has launched significant reforms in the education system in order to adapt all levels of education to the challenges of today's labour market. Related to VET, the document places focus on the further development of regional centres of competence and states that at the centre of VET reforms will be a stronger link of VET schools with the economy and the labour market, as well as the accessibility of schools to adults (the unemployed and those who are changing career paths). The establishment of a coherent system of recognition of informally acquired knowledge and skills will ensure greater accessibility through the system of lifelong learning. The attractiveness and relevance of VET occupations will be promoted to strengthen the social reputation and interest in VET occupations. Also, special emphasis will be placed on attracting and retaining quality teachers, with special emphasis on those for whom there is a shortage in the education system, which refers to vocational education and training and adult education. 2 priorities are oriented towards VET, namely:

- increasing the quality, efficiency, and relevance of the VET through strengthening and promoting work-based learning, excellence, and flexibility
- further development of regional centres of competence and improvement of the quality of work of VET schools and their connection with the economy and the labour market

The *NDS2030* also emphasises the role of teachers and trainers and states that in accordance with the human resources development policy, the opportunities for the training of teaching staff will be expanded in order to strengthen the relevance of the teaching process and facilitate the adaptation of teaching staff to the high demands placed on them by the reform of the education system.

The Chapter on the Green and digital transition of the Strategy offers further insight into the specific actions, planned with regards to supporting the development of digital skills and jobs for all citizens, the labour force, education sector - including more advanced skills for digital experts.

In the field of adult education, the *NDS2030* emphasizes that it will continue to raise the quality of adult education programs and increase the share of the adult population that participates in lifelong learning processes in order to increase the productivity and quality of the workforce and the ability to adapt to rapid changes. This will also be a key determinant of competitiveness, productivity, and investment attractiveness of the Croatian economy.

*2021 National resilience and recovery plan* states it is necessary to contribute to quality education through reforms and investments that will prepare children and young people for the challenges and jobs of the future, along with quality educational infrastructure. Reform and modernization will continue at all levels of the education system, and ensure the availability, quality, and relevance of higher education while equalizing opportunities for all students. However, under the reform of the education system, it has a goal to increase the share of students enrolled in gymnasiums school programs in order to increase the level of basic literacy from early preschool education to high school, which creates assumptions for better access to higher education. Additional goals focus on increasing the share of adults involved in lifelong learning through concentrated investment in programs relevant to the labour market, as well as increased quality and relevance of VET and study programs through concentrated investment in programs relevant to the labour market.

Vocational education and training (VET) in the Republic of Croatia is defined as a process that leads to the qualification for performing a specific job or profession and enables continued education and lifelong learning. VET is offered at levels 2 to 5 of the Croatian Qualification Framework (CROQF), which corresponds to the same levels of the European Qualification Framework (EQF). Most formal VET programs last three or four years and lead to the acquisition of formal secondary school vocational qualifications at levels 3 and 4 of the EKO. VET programs at postsecondary education, at level 5 of the CROQF, are provided based on the Act on the Croatian Qualifications Framework (2013) and the National Curriculum for Vocational Education and Training (2018) as programs of vocational specialist training at the post-secondary level, but they still have to be introduced into the system.

Although Croatia has one of the largest shares of students at the secondary level of VET in Europe (69% in 2019), while the EU average is 48.4%. In the 2020/2021 school year, specific indicators show that the level of compliance of the education system with the needs of the labour market, there is still a mismatch between skills supply and labour market needs.

The employment rate of persons aged 20 to 34 who recently completed vocational education and training at the level 4.1 (three year programs) in Croatia was 71.8% in 2019, which is an improvement compared to previous years, but however, it is lower than the EU average of 75.9%.

The national context of VET in the Republic of Croatia is characterised by one of the highest shares of students in VET in the European Union, more precisely 69.2% in 2018, while the EU-27 average was 48.4%. In the last few years, policy trends in the Croatian education system have been marked by social scenarios caused by the outbreak of a global pandemic, a series of earthquakes, climate change and demographic challenges, and economic emigration, but also by trends in the labour market, rapid digitization, and technological development. The education system, especially the system of VET and adult education, has the demanding role of predicting the necessary knowledge, skills and competences, and also developing flexible programs and curricula that can adequately and appropriately respond to the challenges of modern life. Recognizing the aforementioned trends, in the past few years, Croatia has initiated significant reforms in the system of VET as well as adult education.

In past decade, the education policy has made considerable efforts to positively respond to challenges, and a whole series of measures aimed to a stronger connection between education and the labour market have been implemented, from changing the orientation of the system from content to learning results/outcomes, developing new processes and introducing new concepts such as occupational standards and qualification standards, the introduction of outcome-oriented curricula, strengthening WBL (piloting dual education), more significant involvement of stakeholders in processes and the implementation of a new curriculum approach based on learning outcomes and on the flexibility of the learning and teaching process and the autonomy of schools. The majority of these interventions have been funded under ESI funds and supported by amendments for VET Act.

The ongoing VET curricular reform has the goal of developing attractive, innovative, relevant VET, that is connected to the labour market and that will enable students to acquire competencies for personal and professional development, continuing education and lifelong learning. Based on the occupational standards and qualification standards 135 curricula are being developed. Numerous employers, businessmen, and craftsmen were involved in the creation of occupational standards, with the aim of high-quality harmonization of the

new curricula with the needs and trends in the labour market. Furthermore, efforts have been made in modernisation of the VET teacher training model and approach.

The reform initiative to establish regional centres of competence in VET has also been launched, but the effect of this measure on the processes of harmonizing the educational offer with the needs of the labour market will be observed only after the full establishment of all functionalities of the centres.

However, despite the measures taken, certain processes in the VET system and the presence of negative demographic trends affect the effectiveness of the measures taken and require additional efforts in addressing the challenges. Between 2001 and 2021, Croatia lost 9.25% of its total population. Demographic challenges especially affect the less developed regions.

Demographic trends have affected the total attendance at secondary school education, and three-year programs IVET were particularly affected, in which the total number of students in the period from 2013 to 2019 decreased by as much as 29.4%. Programs for occupations for crafts (JMO programs), which were the most popular in 2013, with more than 50% of students enrolled in one of the three-year programs of vocational education and training, in the mentioned period the number of students has almost halved. The decline in the number of students enrolled in JMO programs in the mentioned period is 45.34%, while the trend of the decline in the number of students enrolled in the general population of students in secondary education is 19.14%. The significant decline occurred despite a labour shortage in certain occupations that require a three-year education and although it is dominantly associated with negative demographic trends, it can also be attributed to the low attractiveness of three-year vocational programs and reduced student interest in enrolling in these programs, as well as insufficient number of places for work-based learning at the employer.

A positive feature of the Croatian VET system is the possibility of vertical mobility, which is also a challenge for that part of the system, which in the future must better adapt to mobility towards higher education. However, a broader socio-economic approach and consensus is needed in order for a larger number of students to successfully join the labour market after completing four-year vocational programs. Students that want to progress to higher education, they must also pass the state matura exam. In 2020, 83% of four and five-year VET school students registered for the state matriculation exams, 67% passed them, and 61% progresses to higher education.

The process of aligning education with the labour market is further complicated by the lack of relevant research on the future needs of the labour market and the employment outcomes of the recently graduated working cohort, for example a survey to predict skills needs

and graduate tracking, as and limited use of existing data, deepen the gap between the supply and skills demand, and when surveys are conducted (e.g., the Survey on occupational standards), there is a low interest of employers in participating in research.

Prolonged processes related to the establishment of mechanisms and bodies linked with the implementation of the Croatian qualifications framework also contributed to the slow modernization of VET programs. However, this has gained new momentum with the amendments of the CROQF Act in 2021.

Challenges are also present in the field of professional capacities of personnel in the system. Despite the fact that in the area of the system of continuous professional development in vocational education and training, important developments have been achieved, and the Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education (AVETAE) has developed and introduced a new modular model of professional training for teachers of vocational subjects, as well as the fact that an online portal has been developed for support of the professional development of teachers of vocational subjects (edu.asoo.hr), and MINGOR created the program to acquire basic knowledge for students' in-company mentors, the technical and pedagogical competences of teachers, trainers and mentors still need further support to be better aligned with the fast changing requirements and practices on the labour market. There are serious deficiencies in the system of evaluating and strengthening teacher competencies and motivation, in the teacher promotion system, as well as in the support provided to in-company mentors. A more prominent problem is becoming lack of interest for teaching profession and this will require significant measures.

In the area of introducing quality assurance mechanisms and procedures in VET, considerable progress has been made in recent years (adjustment of the legal framework, introduction of the e-Quality system with continuous support to vocational schools in the implementation of self-evaluation and the organization of targeted professional training), but the system still lacks a coherent quality assurance system, which will encompass existing practices (e.g., self-evaluation process) as well as introduction of new ones (i.e. external evaluation process, quality indicators, etc.) and achieving complementarity with other QA processes (e.g., accreditation, supervision, state matriculation exams and national exams). The new tools for quality assurance in VET institutions are being developed, such as graduate tracking on the provider level developed by AVETAE. Three pilot cycles have been implemented (2018 – three schools, 2020 – 7 and 2022 18 schools) and is linked with the EQAVET indicators 5&6.

The main goals of the new Adult Education Act are related to quality and relevant education programs based on qualification standards from the Croatian Qualification Framework and external evaluation of the quality of adult education institutions. A system of evaluating informally and informally acquired knowledge and skills is being introduced, which will enable adults to acquire qualifications for the

labour market or continue their education. All changes in adult education are aimed at creating opportunities for quality lifelong learning in order to increase the number of adults who participate in education and thus contribute to their progress on a professional and personal level. The process of development of an adult education quality assurance system through the creation of models of self-evaluation and external evaluation of adult education institutions for the purpose of improving adult education has started.

Despite significant percentage of secondary education students being in VET, the image and perception of VET in the society is still low. Some measures have been put in place to address this. New model of student skills competitions, linked with the WorldSkills and EuroSkills approach have been introduced by AVETAE. Since 2019 three national skills competitions were held during which increased efforts were made to promote VET, achieve cooperation with social partners and employers and to attract potential future VET students among the primary schools' population.

Despite the significant drop in the number of students enrolled in JMO programs in the mentioned period, thanks to the promotional activities of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MINGOR) and the Croatian Chamber of Crafts (HOK), as well as incentives provided by MINGOR through public invitations, the number of students enrolled in programs JMO has seen a slight increase in recent years. Also, the Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education (AVETAE) conducted a media campaign promoting VET as a desirable career choice under the title "Vocational skills are all around us" with the aim of promoting and raising the visibility of vocational education.

The Republic of Croatia has a lower share of low-skilled population compared to the EU average (14.9% versus 21.8%). but also a lower share of the population with a high level of education (25.4% versus 32.2%). In 2019, 60.5% of the population of the Republic of Croatia between the ages of 25 and 64 completed high school education.

Issue of digitalisation is addresses by a large scale project *E-schools* that was launched in 2018 and has the objective to develop and set up ICT infrastructure and develop educational software for Croatia's public primary and secondary schools, to improve teaching, learning, and administration. The aim is to equip teachers and students' children with the IT skills that will equip them to better compete in the global 21<sup>st</sup>-century global marketplace and contribute to Croatia's economic development.

Regarding the quantitative objectives set in the Recommendation current data for Croatia are:

The share of employed VET graduates in Croatia in 2021 was 69,9% which is deteriorated compared to 73,7% in 2020 and is lower than the EU average of 76,4%

The data for Croatia show that only 39,7% of graduates' had exposure to work-based learning during their VET in 2021, which is significantly lower compared to the EU average of 60,7%.

Data on mobility of VET students, in last two years have been significantly marked by obstacles due to global pandemic. In years prior to pandemic and data for 2021 show that 3,4% of VET students participated in a learning mobility abroad.

## 2. Challenges and general objectives of the plan

Although in the past few years Croatia has initiated a number of previously mentioned significant reforms in VET, primarily aimed at strengthening the connection between the education system and the labour market as well as raising the reputation of VET in the general public and popularization of professional occupations, trends in vocational education and training, as well as negative demographic trends, dictate the need for additional increased efforts to address detected problems and challenges.

**Challenge 1: Attractiveness of VET** - while VET represents major of secondary education in Croatia it is facing challenges. Among the more significant challenges, it is necessary to point out the reduced interest of students in enrolling in three-year VET programs and the major sufficiency of four-year vocational occupations, which indicates an insufficient connection between VET and trends in the labour market. Although there is a shortage of workforce in certain professions that require a three-year education, there is a significant drop in the enrolment of students in programs in the same professions

This challenge is linked with the Recommendation priority, VET is agile in adapting to labour market changes and Osnabruck Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive, and flexible VET and measures related to reinforcement of work-based learning and apprenticeships. It is addressed by national strategic documents related to raising the attractiveness of VET, and WBL, as well as increasing the quality and relevance of VET and study programs.

**Challenge 2: Relevance of VET** - As already mentioned, most of the launched reforms and activities in VET are aimed at aligning programs with the labour market. Aggravating circumstances in this process are outdated programs that are more than 20 years old, and a lack of regular research on the future needs of the labour market and the employment outcomes of persons who have recently completed VET

programs. Furthermore, the regional distribution of the program offer is not optimal. The same or similar programs are carried out in schools in the same regional area, and significant optimization of the program offer does not occur because it requires a change in personnel capacities at the institution level and would lead to significant organizational redundancies. There are large differences in the quality of the offer of adult education programs and in the availability of training/advancement programs in certain sectors, and the involvement of employers in predicting skills needs and their development and evaluation is low

This challenge is linked with the Recommendation priority, Vocational education and training is agile in adapting to labour market changes; Vocational education and training is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for the digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand and Osnabruck Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET and measures related to the development of national graduate tracking and adaptation and update of VET programs, curricula, and guidelines in a timely and effective manner. It is addressed by national strategic documents related to curricular reform, which addresses also key competence and WBL, as well as increased quality and relevance of VET and study programs. The plan is also to introduce VET programmes at EQF level 5. Curricula reform in IVET will take into account green and digital skills, and in CVET as a part of the development and introduction of micro-credentials work is being done on the definition of labour-market-relevant skills for the green and digital transition.

**Challenge 3: Teachers and trainers:** Challenges are also recognized in the professional training system for VET teachers. Although a modular approach to the professional development system of VET teachers has been established in the last few years, the technical and pedagogical competences of teachers are still not aligned with the current requirements and practices in the labour market. There are serious deficiencies in the system of evaluating and strengthening teacher competencies and motivation, in the teacher promotion system, as well as in the support provided to mentors in companies who accept students for WBL. The existing Croatian VET system is also criticized for the rigidity in the organization of teacher's work, which at the same time significantly reduces the possibility of greater flexibility in the work of vocational schools and makes it difficult to involve experts from the world of work in teaching processes (e.g. Hybrid Model) in VET schools. Furthermore, insufficient is the participation of andragogic workers in professional development with an emphasis on the specificity of adult learning and insufficient availability of relevant content and materials for their professional development.

This challenge is linked with the Recommendation priority VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for the digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand and Osnabruck Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET and measures related to definition and support opportunities aimed at teaching and training staff. It is addressed by national strategic documents related to raising the quality of VET, and WBL, as well as supporting CPD of teachers and trainers.



**Challenge 4: Coherent QA System** - Although special attention is paid to ensuring the quality of VET, the system still lacks a unique VET quality assurance system that should include a self-evaluation process and an external evaluation process, as well as complementarity with other evaluation processes (accreditation, supervision, State Matura exams,...).

This challenge is linked with the Recommendation priority Vocational education and training is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance and is supported by national measures related to the establishment of a coherent system of VET QA, both in IVET and CVET.

**Challenge 5: Adult Education relevance and participation** - Croatia records one of the lowest rates of participation in adult education programs in the EU, especially among the low-skilled, elderly, rural, and long-term unemployed population. Compared to the EU average of 9.2% in 2020, 3.2% of adults in Croatia participated in some form of formal and informal education. The low level of participation in lifelong learning affects the obsolescence of skills, which affects the low level of participation in the labour market and the low level of productivity.

In order to achieve the quantitative objectives set by the Recommendation we foresee following:

The ongoing VET curricular reform proposed a new modular approach to curricular planning and implementation. It fulfils the principles, values, and goals defined by the National Curriculum for Vocational Education (2018), wherein the foreground are more significant connections between the world of work and VET through the application of suitable forms of work-based learning and is reflected in the application of modular structuring and organization of the curriculum, and then the learning and teaching process. All of the new VET curricula are expected to have an increased volume of WBL.

Regarding increasing the employment of VET graduates a number of measures will be implemented. Incentives (scholarships) will be launched and aimed to encourage enrolment in qualifications that are in demand in the labour market. New VET curricula are developed with active involvement of the employers and ensure attainment of knowledge, skills and competences that will ensure VET graduates are competitive on the labour market. Introduction of micro-credentials as well as validation of non-formal and informal learning will contribute to employment rates.

Large majority of support for learning mobility abroad for VET students in Croatia are Erasmus + projects. National agency will increase efforts in promoting learning mobility among VET schools, in line with the allocated Erasmus + budget.

<p><b>3. Detailed description of main measures and/or their packages <sup>(1)</sup></b></p> <p>One table to be developed for each measure that forms the core of the plan</p>
<p><b>Title</b></p> <p>Strengthening the relevance of VET</p>
<p><b>Rationale/background, challenges addressed</b></p> <p>Rapid changes and innovations in the economy require continued implementation of the VET curricular reform. In accordance with the national strategic documents, the new curriculum documents will introduce positive changes, both for the labour market needs and for the individual needs of students in order to acquire specific professional knowledge and skills (sectoral skills) and the acquisition of transversal and key competencies necessary for continuing education, personal development and active engagement in society. Efforts will be placed on supporting newly introduced modular, learning outcome-based VET curricula, through targeted measures aimed at VET providers and teachers and trainers.</p> <p>It is necessary to invest in a rational and sustainable infrastructure of VET schools. Furthermore, it is necessary to continue with the successful model of encouraging greater autonomy of VET schools for the development of innovations through a bottom-up approach in areas where needs have been identified at the local/regional level, which in previous periods has proven to be a very effective measure for encouraging partnerships at the local level as well as harmonization with the local labour market needs and rapid introduction of innovations (technologies, methods, approaches) into the educational process.</p> <p>Furthermore, the regional centres of competence, as multifunctional institutions, will provide formal VET with a special emphasis on work-based learning, increasing practice through close cooperation with employers and will also implement various training programs, professional development programs and other activities that contribute to the improvement the quality of VET and its adaptation to the needs of the economy and the labour market.</p> <p>Given that the work-based learning process is an integral and inseparable part of VET, it is necessary to continue with activities to increase its representation and successful implementation. In addition to curriculum changes, it is necessary to create conditions for</p>

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<sup>1</sup> A package (of measures) is a coherent set of measures that address a particular challenge, one or several priorities and principles of the VET recommendation and/or objectives of the Osnabrück Declaration.

<p>cooperation and partnership between the economy and competent institutions at the state, regional and local level and ensure adequate support and conditions for carrying out the work process in accordance with the specifics of the sector/subsector, defined qualification standards and VET curricula.</p>
<p><b>Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- continuation of the implementation of the curricular reform in VET aimed at the introduction of new curriculum documents aimed at developing skills for a sustainable and circular economy</li> <li>- support for VET schools in openness and focus on the acquisition of competences for successful inclusion in the labour market and lifelong learning</li> <li>- provide targeted support to already established regional centres of competence (RCC) in VET</li> <li>- support for strengthening work-based learning in order to connect VET with the economy and the labour market</li> <li>- raising the quality level of programs in adult education by applying the Croatian qualifications framework</li> </ul>
<p><b>Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline</b></p>
<p><u>Development and support for introduction of new modular and outcome-oriented curricula documents and adult education programs</u>  The Methodology for the development of sectoral curricula, VET curricula and the VET provider curricula serves as a basis for development of a large-scale curricula reform that will introduce new, modular, outcome-oriented curricula documents that respond to the labour market needs. A number of activities will be aimed at provision of support to VET providers (strengthening their capacities for implementation of new curricula), teacher and trainers (CPD) and other pre-requisites needed for introduction of new pedagogical approaches (modular and learning outcome-oriented curricula). Curricula documents will encompass key competences, as well as the green and digital transition. Quality and relevance of adult education programs will be raised and level 5 VET qualifications as well as micro-credentials will be introduced.  Milestone: Adopted curriculum documents in VET  Implementation of micro-credentials in adult education  Indicative timeline: 2023-2027</p> <p><u>Support to VET schools for their program profiling</u>  Support will be provided to VET schools in accordance with the new curriculum approach in strengthening their autonomy and flexibility in order to ensure the personnel and program conditions necessary for the successful implementation of the new curricula documents,</p>

as well as the introduction of additional educational content (e.g. optional content aimed at strengthening the level reading, math, science and digital literacy of students in VET). VET schools, in cooperation with founders and stakeholders, will create short and medium-term development plans. Support to VET schools will include the education of students with developmental disabilities, along with the development and increase in the availability of VET programs characterized by inclusiveness for different categories of vulnerable groups and those for whom educational services are more difficult to access.

Milestone: Established program profiling of VET schools

Indicative timeline: 2027

#### Strengthening regional centres of competence for the implementation of VET and adult education

Further strengthening of the organizational and operational capacities of the already appointed RCC. The activities will contribute to the strengthening of the professional capacities of the centres' employees, the networking of the centres with partner institutions and economic entities locally and nationally, especially with the aim of providing support for the digital and green transition of the economy. The development, improvement and implementation of formal VET curriculum and adult education programs are also foreseen. Also, mechanisms will be developed to connect regional centres of competence with the European platform of centre of excellence in VET.

Milestone: Improved formal VET curricula and adult education programs

Established network of centres to support the economy

Indicative timeline: 2027.

#### Provided support mechanisms for continuing the implementation of work-based learning in the world of work

Continuation of support for strengthening work-based learning while ensuring professional training and pedagogical and safety conditions for its implementation. The activities will be aimed at methodological support for employers and/or mentors at employers related to teaching students (curricula, methods, techniques), as well as the development of methodological materials and other types of material support necessary to establish appropriate conditions for the implementation of the curriculum in the part of learning implementation work-based learning and thereby ensured the quality of its implementation. It is also necessary to expand the network of employers who accept students for work-based learning in accordance with the planned strengthening of the share of work-based learning in all new VET curricula.

Milestone: Implemented support mechanisms for VET students and/or employers and mentors at employers

Developed a unique register of employers for the implementation of work-based learning

Indicative timeline: 2027.

<b>EU policy priorities addressed</b>	
<b>Council Recommendation on VET</b>	<b>Osnabrück Declaration</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.</li> </ul>
<b>VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)</li> </ul>	
<b>Scope (national, regional, local)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> regional</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local</li> </ul>	
<b>Beneficiaries/target groups</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national authorities (MoSE, AVETAE, MoESD, Mots)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VET s (IVET, CVET)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> teacher, trainers and mentors</li> </ul>	
<b>Responsible ministries/bodies</b>	
Ministry of Science and Education (MoSE)	

Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy (MoLPS) Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MoTS) Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development Agency for VET and Adult Education (AVETAE) Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA) Chamber of Crafts Chamber of Commerce
<b>Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)</b>
National - state budget, EU funds

<b>Title</b>
2. Improving the quality of VET
<b>Rationale/background, challenges addressed</b>
<p>The existing VET QA System in Croatian encompasses various processes and mechanisms (such as the Self-assessment of VET schools according to the Vocational Education and Training Act and implemented by the Agency for VET and Adult Education (AVETAE), national exams and State Matura exams (implemented by National Centre for External Evaluation of Education), external evaluation of VET providers work – inspection (implemented by Inspection service in the MoSE) and professional-pedagogical supervision (implemented by AVETAE and ETTA), Quality Assurance in implementation of CROQF, QA related to apprenticeship training in certified craft workshops, work of the EQAVET NRP). However, it is necessary to further strengthen and widen the culture of quality by better aligning existing mechanisms and tools for monitoring the development of the VET system (through developing the VET QA policy framework) and introducing new ones (external evaluation, VET QA indicators, graduate tracking) linked with the EQAVET. The existing processes</p>

need to be better linked this will assist in setting up a more coherent system of VET quality assurance which will enable evidence-based decision-making.

The quality of VET is to a large degree based on capable, expert, and motivated teachers. VET Teachers and Trainers have a specific position. Alongside pedagogical competencies, they need to be continuously linked with the developments of their respective industry area. In the area of in-service training of VET teachers and in-company mentors, there is a need to expand the scope, quality and relevance of in-service teacher training processes.

#### **Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan**

- further strengthening VET QA culture
- raising the quality level of the implementation of adult education programs by introducing a system of external evaluation of adult education institutions
- strengthening the capacity of VET teachers and mentors at employers
- development of a hybrid model of teachers and trainers in VET institutions and in companies

#### **Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline**

##### Development of VET QA policy framework.

New VET Quality Policy Framework, in conformance with EQAVET (cycle, descriptors, and indicators) and the national VET context and environment will be developed. It should describe all national processes of VET QA, applicable both to IVET and CVET. It should define clear and measurable objectives and national VET QA indicators that can be the same as EQAVET indicators or modified.

Milestone: VET Quality Policy Framework

indicative timeline: development phase (2025 – 2026), implementation (2027.)

##### Introducing provider-level graduate tracking, linked with the self-assessment of VET providers.

Using the experience of three rounds of pilot graduate tracking, implemented by AVETEA, develop and introduce provider-level graduate tracking, linked with the self-assessment of VET providers.

Milestone: provider-level graduate tracking

indicative timeline: development phase (2025 – 2026), implementation (2027.)

Introduction of external evaluation of adult education providers, including CVET.

Based on provisions of Adult Education Act, and self-assessment of adult education providers an external evaluation will be introduced.

Milestone: external evaluation

indicative timeline: implementation (2023.)

Further strengthening relevance, scope and quality of in-service teacher and mentor training

Using the new model of in-service teacher training approach, further efforts will be made in equipping and building teachers' and trainers skills and competences

Milestone: n/a

indicative timeline: continuous

Introduction of a new model of hybrid teachers and trainers

In order to respond to the growing need for high-quality experts who teach in VET providers, a model will be created that will ensure the prerequisites for the occasional work of experts from the world of work in VET providers. At the same time, all models of the sustainability of this approach, as well as the provision and attractiveness of this opportunity for experts from the world of work, but also for the acquisition of pedagogical competences of experts, will be investigated.

Milestone: introduced model

indicative timeline: 2027

**EU policy priorities addressed**

<b>Council Recommendation on VET</b>	<b>Osnabrück Declaration</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand.</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills.</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET.</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation.</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.</li></ul>



<b>VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)
<b>Scope (national, regional, local)</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local
<b>Beneficiaries/target groups</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national authorities (MoSE, AVETAE) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VET s (IVET, CVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> teacher, trainers and mentors
<b>Responsible ministries/bodies</b>
MoSE, AVETAE
<b>Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)</b>
National, EU funds

<b>Title</b>
3. Raising the attractiveness and internationalization of VET
<b>Rationale/background, challenges addressed</b>
Despite encompassing almost 70% of secondary education student cohort, perception of VET in society still is low. Unlike in some EU countries, increasing the attractiveness of VET in Croatia is not linked with increasing the number of students in VET (69% in 2019)

<p>compared to EU-27 average of 48,4%), but with increasing the image of VET. It is necessary to support changes in attitudes towards VET, which is for the most part considered a second, weaker, option in comparison with gymnasium education. The central measure for increasing the VET attractiveness in Croatia is improving its image and promoting VET as a desirable career choice.</p> <p>This measure will implement national and regional activities adapted to different target groups in order to raise the visibility and attractiveness of VET and to promote its attractiveness and innovative aspect, as well as the importance of vocational skills for the development of the economy and modern society. Large-scale events will be held (eg national skills competitions based on the WorldSkills model, job fairs, etc.) and other forms of promotional event, that emphasise the importance of VET, in cooperation with VET stakeholders. In addition, participation of Croatian teams at the EuroSkills and WorldSkills competitions will contribute to the promotion of the Croatian VET system.</p> <p>Furthermore, it is necessary to undertake a series of activities that will aim at the increase of international mobility of students and teachers. The transnational cooperation of VET schools will be encouraged, especially within the Erasmus+ program. Plan is to strengthen Croatian VET System's position and visibility as part of the of the European area of education, and a internationalization strategy of VET will be developed accordingly.</p>
<p><b>Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increasing the visibility and attractiveness of VET with a new model of skills competitions and implementing promotional and media campaigns</li> <li>- Cooperating with other EU countries in preparing national teams for international competitions such as WorldSkills and EuroSkills increasing the internationalization of VET and mobility of students and teachers</li> </ul>
<p><b>Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline</b></p>
<p><u>Further raising the visibility and attractiveness of VET</u></p> <p>Organisation of yearly national skills competitions and media campaigns with the purpose of promoting excellence, innovation and visibility of VET. National skills competitions will be open for international teams as well members of Croatian Team will participate at other countries skills competitions, as a part of preparing national teams for international competitions such as WorldSkills and EuroSkills.</p> <p>Milestone: yearly national skills competitions and yearly media campaigns</p> <p>indicative timeline: 2023 - 2029</p>

Development of VET internationalisation strategy

New VET internationalisation strategy will be prepared and describe the process of integrating the international dimension into the teaching and learning aspects of VET, at the system and provider level.

Milestone: VET internationalisation strategy  
indicative timeline: 2027

Increasing the mobility of VET students and teachers

In line with the available allocation from the Erasmus + national agency will promote mobility projects among VET providers with the aim of Increasing the mobility of VET students and teachers to bring it closer to EU target.

Milestone: n/a  
indicative timeline: continuous

Linking Europass Certificate Supplement with national education IT System

The e-Matica is a centralized system of the Ministry of Science and Education that serves to enter the most important data about schools, students and employees of primary and secondary schools. It allows schools to print student’s certificates from the system. Aim will be to explore possibilities of development of a new e-Matica functionality that will allow issuing Europass Certificate Supplement to each student

Milestone: e-Matica functionality introduced  
indicative timeline: 2025

**EU policy priorities addressed**

<b>Council Recommendation on VET</b>	<b>Osnabrück Declaration</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand.</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET.</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.</li></ul>

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.	
<b>VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)	
<b>Scope (national, regional, local)</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> local	
<b>Beneficiaries/target groups</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national authorities (MoSE, AVETAE) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VET s (IVET, CVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> teacher, trainers and mentors	
<b>Responsible ministries/bodies</b>	
MoSE, AVETAE, AMPEU, Carnet	
<b>Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)</b>	
National, EU funds	

#### 4. Governance of the implementation of the plan

The main body responsible for the implementation and monitoring of NIP will be the Ministry of Science and Education which will establish a small task group with representatives from MoSE and AVETAE that will oversee NIP implementation.

VET Council will be advisory body involved in monitoring of the NIP. The VET Council is a multi-stakeholder body comprised from lines ministries, social partners, chambers, VET providers, HE institutions, local government, etc. The Council coordinates the work of all stakeholders in the field of VET, initiates initiatives for adopting new or changing existing curricula, proposes measures and activities and strategies for the development of VET. Twice a year, during their regular meetings, progress on NIP implementation will be presented and discussed with them.

Implementing bodies will be expert agencies in the education system – AVETAE, ETTA, NCEEE and AMPEU

The DGVT representative, as well as ReferNET coordinator and national representative will be included in a NIP monitoring task group.

#### 5. Expected effects of the plan

Implementation of the NIP will run in line with the implementation of national strategic policy framework NDS2030 and National Education System Development Plan for the period 2022 – 2027, as well as NPOO. These crucial documents will be basis for strengthening and further development of the VET in Croatia and will be significantly supported through ESI funds in a new programming period.

On the short-term basis expected is increased relevance of VET, both IVET and CVET, due to introduction of modular, learning outcome and labour market linked IVET curricula. In addition, a number of modernised adult education, primarily CVET, programs and micro credentials will be introduced.

On a mid-term basis expected is

- Strengthened capacities of VET providers for implementation of new curricula
- Strengthened WBL in Croatian VET System
- improved VET quality assurance system by development of VET QA policy framework and introduction of QA indicators
- strengthened capacities of educational staff and professional capacities of in-company mentors

In long-term period expected is

- increased employment rate of VET graduates
- increased adult participation in LLL
- regional competence centres will become generators of stronger development of the VET system and lifelong learning aimed at economic, technological, and regional development.
- increased visibility and attractiveness of VET, as well as Improved image and perception of VET and VET skills in the society
- increased participation of VET students and teachers in learning mobility abroad

These effects will have a positive impact on the socio-economic development in Croatia and should contribute to growth of Croatia economy in upcoming period. VET system is expected to be more visible and demonstrate that it continues to be leader in development and introduction of innovations in education and training system. All relevant target groups are expected to benefit:

- policy level: strengthened capacities for evidence-based policy making
- VET providers: strengthened capacities for implementation of new curricula, higher level of flexibility and autonomy and stronger links with local/regional labour market demands, equipped for faster changes of their provision
- VET learners: equipped with relevant professional competences that make them more competitive at the labour market and key competences that enable progression and lifelong learning as well as active citizenship
- Employers: more involved in WBL and better linked with VET providers
- Teachers and trainers: improved capacities for provision of modern, innovative and high-quality VET
- Society: VET is recognised as a desirable education and career choice.

Potential risks are related to capacities of public administration to plan, implement, and monitor all major interventions. Ongoing and planned activities will put a lot of pressure on public administration. Due to uncompetitive salaries in the public sector and high staff turnover additional efforts will be needed to ensure staff retention measures.

Furthermore, motivation and participation of VET teachers and trainers is a challenge. They are a key factor in implementation of VET System reform. New modular curricula foresee a major shift in teaching and learning paradigm and practice and this will require significant investment of resources (time and finance) in their capacity building.

Successful implementation of all measures is linked with ensuring financing from ESI funds. Any delays in programming, approval and contracting of project will have cause delays in their implementation. Policy makers will establish good coordination mechanisms and ensure adequate measures that prevent delays.

Possible low interest of employers for VET reform and modernisation, including WBL and teacher and in-company mentors training. In cooperation with employer representatives (employer association and chambers) it will necessary to ensure channels that communicate importance of their participation, as well as potential incentive measures.

## Annex 2 – National level reforms and actions defined in the VET Recommendation and the Osnabrück Declaration

VET Recommendation priorities	Detailed VET recommendation priorities	Osnabrück Declaration objectives	Specific national level actions by 2025
<p>A. Vocational education and training is agile in adapting to labour market changes</p>	<p>A.1 VET programmes that offer a balanced mix of vocational including technical skills well aligned to all economic cycles, evolving jobs and working methods and key competences, including solid basic skills, digital, transversal, green and other life skills which provide strong foundations for resilience, lifelong learning, lifelong employability, social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development;</p> <p>A.2 VET curricula, programme offers and qualifications which are regularly updated, building on skills intelligence (i.e. graduate tracking systems, skills anticipation mechanisms, including at sectoral and regional levels);</p> <p>A.3 an appropriate degree of autonomy of VET providers, flexibility, support and funding to adapt their training offer to changing skills needs, green and digital transitions and economic cycles;</p> <p>A.4 VET programmes at all levels which comprise work-based learning components that are further expanded also in continuing vocational education and training, and complemented by appropriate support and measures to stabilise the offer of apprenticeships and to address specific challenges of small companies to create work-based learning opportunities in different sectors of the economy.</p>	<p>1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET</p> <p>4. European Education and Training Area and international VET</p>	<p>1.1. Explore the possibility of setting up a network of voluntary experts and executives, retired or on sabbatical, to support their peers in the fields of VET and apprenticeships as part of the EAfA</p> <p>1.3 Reinforce work-based learning and apprenticeships by implementing the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships and making use of the on-demand support services, and policy learning initiatives. Strengthen the use of quality and inclusive apprenticeships as a tool to support school/training-to-work transitions of vulnerable groups and to improve citizens' qualification levels.</p> <p>1.5. Develop national and regional skills intelligence systems including skills anticipation and graduate tracking; enable social partners, decision-makers, stakeholders and providers to adapt and update VET programmes, curricula and guidelines in a timely and effective manner</p> <p>4.4. Promote intercultural knowledge, skills and competences as part of qualification and curricula requirements in VET qualifications in line with the Key Competence Framework</p>
<p>B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at</p>	<p>B.1 learner centred VET programmes that offer access to face-to-face and digital or blended learning, flexible and modular pathways based on the recognition of</p>	<p>2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture</p>	<p>2.1. Develop national skills strategies for quality and inclusive lifelong learning with all relevant national, regional, sectoral stakeholders and social partners. Besides education and</p>



<b>VET Recommendation priorities</b>	<b>Detailed VET recommendation priorities</b>	<b>Osnabrück Declaration objectives</b>	<b>Specific national level actions by 2025</b>
the core of vocational education and training	<p>the outcomes of non-formal and informal learning and open up career and learning progression; continuing vocational training programmes designed to be adaptable to labour market, sectoral or individual up- or reskilling needs; and</p> <p>B.2 VET programmes which are based on modules or units of learning outcomes and validation mechanisms allowing the transfer, recognition and accumulation of individuals' learning outcomes with a view to gaining a qualification, a partial qualification, as relevant in the national context.</p>	– relevance of C-VET and digitalisation	training provision, the national skills strategies may include guidance, incentives for improved skills provision by employers, increased participation by employees, validation of prior learning and targeted public approaches for reaching out to inactive and unemployed individuals, NEETs or individuals at risk of unemployment
C. Vocational education and training is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for the digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand	<p>C.1 integration of VET into economic, industrial and innovation strategies, including those linked to recovery, green and digital transitions; expansion of the training offer fostering the acquisition of entrepreneurial, digital and green skills;</p> <p>C.2 establishment of Centres of Vocational Excellence, which act as catalysts for local business investment, supporting recovery, green and digital transitions, European and regional innovation and smart specialisation strategies, development of vocational education and training, including at higher qualification levels (EQF levels 5-8), in line with national context and provide innovative services such as clusters and business incubators for start-ups and technology innovation for SMEs, as well as innovative reskilling solutions for workers at risk of redundancy; and</p> <p>C.3 access to state-of-the-art infrastructure, digitalisation strategies in line with national context</p>	<p>1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET</p> <p>3. Sustainability – a green link in VET</p>	<p>1.4. Support Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) and improve permeability between vocational and academic pathways, including work-based learning and enhanced cooperation between VET, HE and research centres, thus establishing quality and effective VET and apprenticeship programmes at EQF level 5 and above</p> <p>3.1. Create incentives for greening VET programmes, including education and training in green technologies and innovation, in energy efficiency, circular economy, environmental awareness, sustainable use of learning and training material, digitalisation to reduce climate effects</p> <p>3.2. Define labour-market-relevant skills for the green transition that are to be incorporated in curricula and VET provision, including basic skills across all sectors and occupations and sector-specific skills in cooperation with the social partners</p> <p>3.3. Define and support opportunities to enable teaching and training staff, managing teams in VET providers and trainers</p>

VET Recommendation priorities	Detailed VET recommendation priorities	Osnabrück Declaration objectives	Specific national level actions by 2025
	and environmental and social sustainability in VET programmes and organisational management, thus contributing to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.		and mentors in companies to act as multipliers and mediators, in view of increasing digitalisation and sustainability within the provision and management of training programmes
D. Vocational education and training is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills	<p>D.1. permeability between both initial and continuing vocational education and training, general education and higher education;</p> <p>D.2 development of VET at EQF levels 5 to 8;</p> <p>D.3 delivery based on a mix of open, digital and participative learning environments, including learning conducive workplaces supported by state-of-the-art and accessible infrastructure, equipment and technology, and accompanied by versatile pedagogies and tools (e.g. ICT based simulators, virtual and augmented reality);</p> <p>D.4 initial and continuing professional development of VET teachers and trainers to foster technical and digital skills and effective innovative training methods, including teaching in virtual environment, in line with state of the art vocational and digital pedagogy, work with digital learning tools, and in diverse and multicultural environments;</p> <p>D.5 internationalisation strategies supporting a strategic approach to international cooperation in VET;</p> <p>D.6 Opportunities for learning mobility of vocational learners and staff, including virtual mobility, long-duration mobility and mobility to Partner Countries</p>	<p>1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET</p> <p>2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of C-VET and digitalisation</p> <p>4. European Education and Training Area and international VET</p>	<p>1.2. Support the development of digital infrastructure for learning and teaching purposes in VET including artificial intelligence and AR/VR technologies and develop suitable institutional teaching and training arrangements underpinned by adequate infrastructure, especially in remote and rural areas thus ensuring social inclusion</p> <p>2.2. Develop targeted information measures on the benefits of CVET and ensure user-friendly access to information on IVET and CVET offers at national and regional levels addressing gender and other stereotypes for an equal, fair and diverse society</p> <p>2.5. Support VET teachers, trainers, guidance counsellors, adult educators and mentors by equipping them with the adequate skills and tools for and through digital technologies; in particular through systematic approaches to, and opportunities for, initial and continuous professional development in both school and work-based settings, as well as distance education and training, enabling them to progress in their careers</p> <p>4.1. Support and facilitate the mobility of VET and adult learners, including apprentices, for example by developing support structures and providing information on opportunities in host countries</p> <p>4.2. Increase the rate of mobility of VET learners as well as teachers and trainers, while strengthening measures to ensure</p>

VET Recommendation priorities	Detailed VET recommendation priorities	Osnabrück Declaration objectives	Specific national level actions by 2025
	<p>are in place, facilitated by the use and recognition of units of learning outcomes and of relevant European tools (Memorandum of Understanding and the Learning Agreement); and</p> <p>D.7 high quality lifelong learning and career guidance services, making full use of Europass and other digital services.</p>		<p>the quality and recognition of learning outcomes, as well as adequate support structures. Foster longer periods of mobility for VET learners abroad and ensure that apprentice work placements are in line with the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships , taking into account national regulations and collective agreements, including health and safety provisions</p> <p>4.3. Develop VET internationalisation strategies, mobilising partnerships and including commitments for concrete and targeted actions, with all relevant stakeholders in accordance with national or regional regulations</p> <p>4.5 Cooperate with other EU countries in preparing national teams for international competitions such as WorldSkills and EuroSkills</p>
<p>E. Vocational education and training promotes equality of opportunities</p>	<p>E.1 inclusive and accessible programmes for vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities, low-qualified/skilled persons, minorities, people with migrant background and people with fewer opportunities because of their geographical location and/or their social-economically disadvantaged situation; targeted measures and flexible training formats prevent early leaving from education and training and support the school-to-work transition;</p> <p>E.2. programmes accessible through digital learning platforms, supported by tools, devices and internet connection, in particular for vulnerable groups and people in rural or remote areas; and</p> <p>E.3 targeted measures promoting gender balance in traditionally “male” or “female” professions and</p>	<p>1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET</p> <p>2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of C-VET and digitalisation</p>	<p>1.2. Support the development of digital infrastructure for learning and teaching purposes in VET including artificial intelligence and AR/VR technologies and develop suitable institutional teaching and training arrangements underpinned by adequate infrastructure, especially in remote and rural areas thus ensuring social inclusion</p> <p>2.2. Develop targeted information measures on the benefits of CVET and ensure user-friendly access to information on IVET and CVET offers at national and regional levels addressing gender and other stereotypes for an equal, fair and diverse society</p>

VET Recommendation priorities	Detailed VET recommendation priorities	Osnabrück Declaration objectives	Specific national level actions by 2025
	address gender related and other types of stereotypes together.		
F. Vocational education and training is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance	<p>F.1 further development of national quality assurance systems, for both initial and continuing VET, in all learning environments (such as school-based provision and work-based learning, including apprenticeship schemes) and all learning types (digital, face-to-face or blended), delivered by both public and private providers, underpinned by a set of indicative descriptors and common reference indicators for quality assurance in vocational education and training applied both at system and provider level as defined in Annex II of the Council Recommendation on VET.</p> <p>F.2 Quality Assurance National Reference Point for VET to:  take concrete initiatives to implement and further develop the EQAVET Framework, inform and mobilise a wide range of stakeholders, including Centres of Vocational Excellence, to contribute to implementing the EQAVET framework, support self-evaluation as a complementary and effective means of quality assurance to allow the measurement of success and the identification of areas for improvement, including with respect to digital readiness of VET systems and institutions, participate actively in the European network for quality assurance in vocational education and training, provide an updated description of the national quality assurance arrangements based on the EQAVET Framework, engage in EU level peer reviews of quality assurance to enhance the transparency and consistency of quality assurance</p>		

VET Recommendation priorities	Detailed VET recommendation priorities	Osnabrück Declaration objectives	Specific national level actions by 2025
	arrangements, and to reinforce trust between the Member States;		
Making best use of the European transparency tools		2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of C-VET and digitalisation	2.3. Work with respective stakeholders to develop digital learning solutions supporting access to CVET opportunities and the awarding of CVET credentials and certificates, thereby opening the possibility to obtain full qualifications without neglecting on-the-job CVET and the positive effects of learning conducive work environments  2.4. Support linking national VET platforms or databases to the Europass in accordance with the Europass decision and the EQF Recommendation where appropriate
Sustainable partnerships at national, regional and sectoral level, involving all relevant stakeholders			
Best use of European Union funds and instruments such as the Next Generation EU (Recovery and Resilience Facility, REACT-EU), European Social Fund+, SURE, the European Regional Development Fund, InvestEU, Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, Interreg, Digital Europe, the Just Transition Mechanism and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, and the Modernisation Fund			

