

TORINO PROCESS 2018-2020 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

NATIONAL REPORT

Disclaimer

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC - national Torino Process report (NRF)

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ACRONYMS

Electronic document flow system

ADB Aisan Development Bank

AVPE Agency for Primary Vocational Education

FQE Final qualification examination

GDP Gross domestic product

HEI Higher education institution

GIZ German federal enterprise for international cooperation

GOS State educational standard

State Service for Execution of Punishments **SSEP**

SMS State Migration Service

EAEU Eurasian Economic Union

ETF European Training Foundation

ICT Information and communication technologies

EMIS Education management information system

KATO Kyrgyz association of tour operators

KSPU Kyrgyz State Pedagocial University

PwD People with disabilities

MCIT Ministry of Culture, Information and Tourism

MES Ministry of Education and Science

ILO International Labour Organisation

ISCO International standard classification of occupations





MLSD Ministry of Labour and Social Development

MoF Ministry of Finance

NAB National Accreditation Board

NBKR National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic

NQS National qualification system

NAEP National assessment of education progress

PVET Primary vocational education

NQF National qualification framework

NRF National reporting framework

NSC National Statistical Committee

ISPC Independent certification of professional competencies

NSDC National Skills Development Council

PDF Per-capita financing

NAT National admission test

PD Professional development/upskilling

VL Vocational lyceum

VET Vocational education and training

DGKR Decree by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic

UNDP United Nations Development Program

TVET Technical vocational education and training

RSMC Republican Scientific and Methodological Centre

EDS Education development strategy

SVS Secondary vocational education school





SDF Skills Development Fund

SDG Sustainable Development Goals





1. NATIONAL REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Building Block A: Country and VET Overview

A.1: Country background

A.1.1. Introduction

In the two years since the past Torino process, there were certain events in the Kyrgyz Republic that influenced the development both of the country and the education system, and the VET system in particular.

In 2017, Presidential elections were held in the Kyrgyz Republic. In the elections of October 15, 2017, Jeenbekov Sooronbay Sharipovich was elected President of Kyrgyzstan, gaining 54.76 % of the votes. On November 24, 2017, he officially took office.

Over the past five years the resident population of the Kyrgyz Republic increased by 8% and as of 01.01.2019 equalled 6.4 million people, of whom 50.4% were women, 49.6% were men.

In urban areas, the share of women exceeded that for men, and equalled 52.5 per cent, while in rural areas, where fertility was higher; men slightly prevail and made 50.6 per cent¹.

As of 1.01.2018, the population by working age distributed as follows: under working age (children and5adolescents under 15 years) -33.8%; working age (16-57 years for women and 16-62 for men) - 58.5; over working age (58-63 years) - 7.5%².

One can note the growth of GDP, including GDP per capita. Positive trends were recorded in agriculture, where output increase was 2.7 percent, in construction, it was 7.8 percent, and in wholesale and retail trade, it was 5.5 percent.

In 2018, the inflation rate in the consumer sector was 0.5 percent, while in 2017 it was 3.7 percent.

Diagram 1.1.

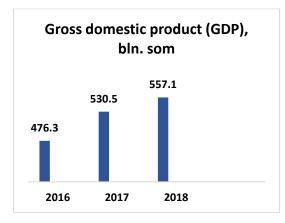
Diagram 1.2

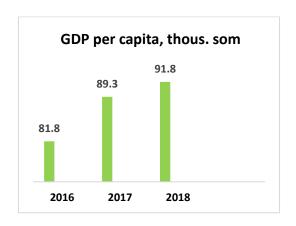
² National Statistical Committee, Women and Men of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2013-2017



¹ National Statistical Committee, Women and Men of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2013-2017



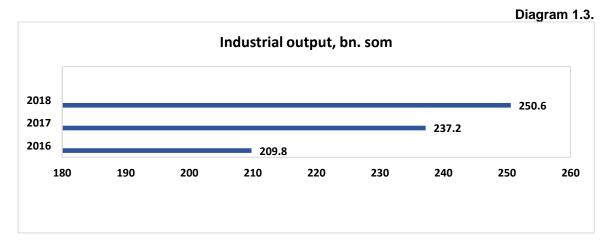




Source: National Statistical Committee, Kyrgyzstan. Brief statistical handbook, 2019

Foreign trade turnover of the Kyrgyz Republic in January-November 2018 amounted to 5.9 billion US dollars and, compared to the same period in 2017, increased by 6.2 percent, while export increased by 0.8 percent, and import by 8.2 %.

The volume of trade with the EAEU member-states amounted to 2345.1 billion US dollars (exports - 24.2%, imports -75.8%), and compared to 2015, decreased by 5.2 percent. At the same time, export of goods increased by 38.9 percent, import decreased by 13.9 percent.



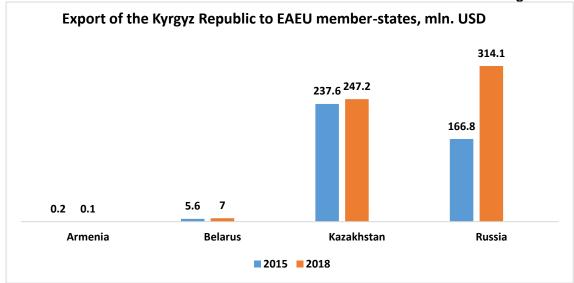
Source: National Statistical Committee, Kyrgyzstan. Brief statistical handbook, 2019

The biggest share of the country's trade with the EAEU member-states acrrue to Russia (55.5 percent) and Kazakhstan (43.4 percent).









Source: National Statistical Committee, Kyrgyzstan. Brief statistical handbook, 2019

Regional development

Focus was on regional development, promoting favorable business climate, digitalization projects and national scale investment projects with view of developing strategic industries. This work has been carried out since 2018, which was declared the year of regional development, and regional development was identified as the midterm key priority for the national development.

Special attention was paid to promoting favorable conditions for business development in the regions. As a matter of priority, investment projects have been implemented in the regions aimed at creating new jobs and allocation of production subject to the existing raw materials. A number of industrial enterprises were launched for storaging, sorting, packaging and processing of agricultural products, as well as textile and clothing enterprises, and production of construction materials. In general, more than 200 new enterprises have been set up in the regions of the country.

Actions were taken to strengthen the financial and economic foundations for the local governments' development. It was agreed with the donor community and financial institutions that funding for the regional development projects would be increased.

Transport, energy and social infrastructure in the regions is being updated. Under the state program on security and socio-economic development of selected border areas of the Kyrgyz Republic with special status, it was decided to allocate 296.2 million som from the Republican budget for 3 years for infrastructure development.

As a follow-up, 2019 was declared the year of regional development and digitalization.

In accordance with the National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040, digital technologies should be introduced as a priority in such areas as education, health, tourism, agriculture, telecommunication, banking, light industry and construction³.

³ National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018–2040, section 5 (Decree by the President of KR № 221 dated October 31, 2018)



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A. 2: Overview of vocational education and training

A. 2. 1. Overview of VET: set-up and regulatory framework

In the Kyrgyz Republic, in accordance with Article 11 of the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On education", general (main and additional) and professional (main and additional) educational programs are delivered. General education programs aimed at forming culture and adaptation of an individual to living in society, creating a foundation for conscious choice and accomplishment of professional educational programs.

Professional educational programs are aimed at consistent professional development, training of specialists of appropriate qualification.

Professional programs include the programs of:

- primary vocational education;
- secondary vocational education;
- higher professional education;
- postgraduate professional education;
- continuous professional education.

The mandatory content minimum and standard duration of accomplishing each main general education or main professional educational program are specified by respective state educational standards.

Primary vocational education

Primary vocational education includes training, skills upgrading and retraining of skilled workers.

Persons with basic general or secondary general education are accepted for primary VET programs. Training of skilled workers is delivered through a common program integrating general and vocational education.

If necessary, conditions are created for persons who do not have basic general education to obtain a profession.

Primary vocational education programs are delivered in primary VET schools.

Persons who have completed the primary vocational education program are awarded a qualification in respective occupation⁴.

Types of educational organisations of primary vocational education

The educational organizations of primary vocational education include vocational lyceums and vocational schools (under the institutions of the State Service for Execution of Punishments under the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic).

The following programs are delivered in primary VET schools:

- integrated program of secondary general and primary vocational education after the basic general education, with a training period of at least 3 years;
- the program of primary vocational education after the basic general education, without accomplishing secondary general education, with a training period of 1-2 years;
- the program of primary vocational education after the secondary general education, with a period of training not less than 1 year;
- programs of professional training, retraining and upskilling, with a period of training up to 1 year.

⁴ Law of KR "On Education", Article 20





Documents on primary vocational education:

- diploma of primary vocational education;
- certificate (short-term vocational training, retraining and upskilling);
- certificate (for educational programs in occupations, related to work at facilities supervised by special organisations and agencies, to obtain admission to working at such facilities or vehicles)⁵.

Secondary vocational education

Secondary vocational education involves training and retraining of middle-level specialists after basic general or secondary general education.

Persons who have successfully completed training in secondary vocational education programs are awarded a qualification in their relevant specialty.

Secondary vocational education programs are delivered in educational institutions of secondary vocational and higher vocational education⁶.

In secondary vocational education, the standard period of full-time study is 1 year 10 months after secondary education, and 2 years 10 months of full-time study after basic general education.

Documents on secondary vocational education

Nationally recognised document about the corresponding level of education and qualification is a prerequisite for continuing training in programs of subsequent level of education.

Normative legal documents on education

The main document regulating primary and secondary vocational education is the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Education" dated April 30, 2003 No. 92. Over the past two years, at least 9 additions and amendments were introduced to the Law, which related to social protection of students, licensing and accreditation, funding, and etc.

In June 2019, amendments related to the concepts of "national qualification system", "national qualifications framework", "professional standard", etc. were introduced in the Law.

Education is also addressed in the Labour Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, where special conditions of payment, working conditions and leave of teachers are specified.

The following documents are common for the VET system:

"On introducing new conditions of remuneration for the employees of educational organizations" dated January 19, 2011 No. 18 in 2019 salaries of the pedagogical staff of general schools, primary and secondary vocational education were increased by 30%. In this connection, a new Government Decree №511 dated September 30, 2019 was put in force, and according to which the previous legal act ceased to be in force)

"On approval of the Instruction on calculation of the employee salaries in educational organizations " of May 31, 2011 No. 270.

The Law of the Kyrgyz Republic «On Primary Vocational Education» also guides the system of primary vocational education. However, this Law has not been amended since 2012.

⁶ Law of KR "On Education", Article 12



⁵ Law of KR "On Primary Vocational Education", Article 10, 13



The following documents are also important for the system of primary vocational education:

- Resolution of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 245 of 25 April 2003 "On normative legal acts regulating the activities of the primary vocational education system;
- Government Resolution "On approval of the Occupation List of primary vocational education in the Kyrgyz Republic" dated July 28, 2003 No. 473, as amended by Government Resolution dated November 3, 2018 No. 520;
- Government Resolution "On the List of occupations and specialties not allowed to train in primary vocational education in the form of externship" of February 13, 2007.

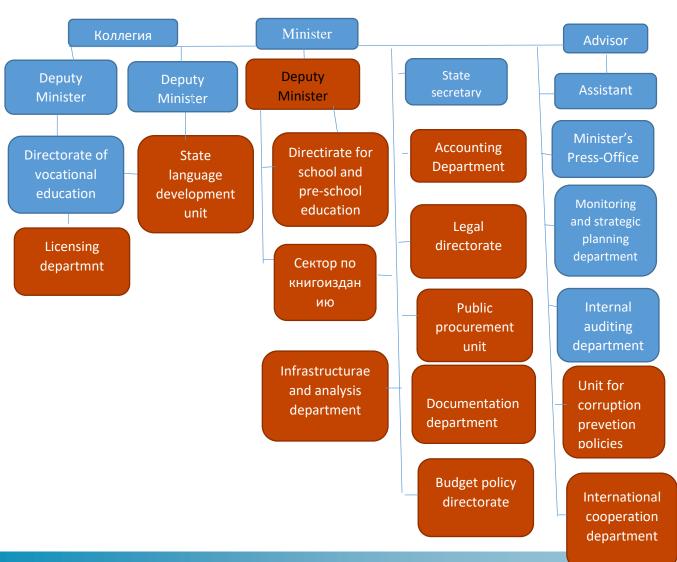
For secondary vocational education, the regulatory document is Government Resolution No. 160 of March 28, 2018 "On approval of acts regulating educational organisations of secondary vocational education of the Kyrgyz Republic".

A. 2. 2. Institutional and governance arrangements

VET system is part of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic: secondary vocational education as a structural unit, primary vocational education as a subordinate organisation.

Figure 1.1.

Structure of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic



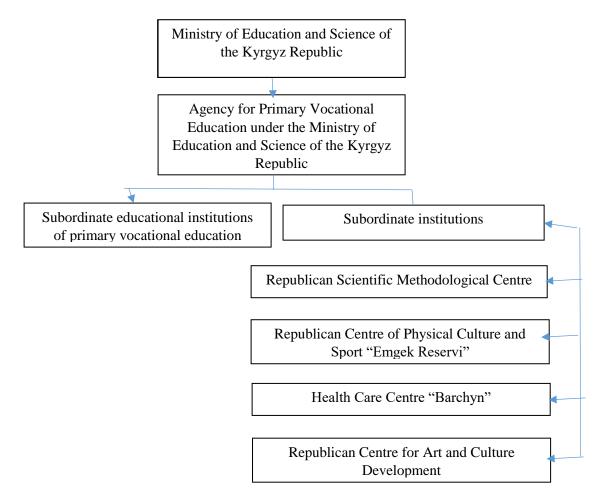




The primary vocational education system is governed by the Agency for Primary Vocational Education through itsOffice that includes the following departments: department for education and training and social partnership; personnel and document control department; department for analytical work and international cooperation; department for financing and accountancy.

Also subordinate to the Agency are educational institutions (vocational lyseums and specialised vocational schools), Republican Scientific-Methodological Centre, Republican Centre for Physical Culture and Sports "Emgek Reservi", Republican Centre for Creative Work and Culture Development, and Healthcare Centre "Barchyn".

Figure 1.2. Structure of the Agency for Primary Vocational Education







A.2.3. Basic statistics on VET

Number of VET educational institutions by type

In the system of primary vocational education, all educational institutions are public and financed from the national budget. Resulting from optimisation measures in the system of primary vocational education, the number of school by the beginning of 2019 decreased to 98. This resulted in significant budget savings due to reduced administrative staff burden, in consolidation of individual schools, and the savings were invested in the modernisation of school facilities.

Changes in the number of PVS and SVS for the period 2014-2018⁷

Table 1.1.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of PVS	101	101	101	99	98
Number of SVS	129	130	139	145	148

Table 1.2.

Distribution of SVS by type of ownership for 20188

		Number of SVS	
	Total	Public	Private
Kyrgyz Republic	148	114	34
Batken region	10	9	1
Jalal-Abad region	18	12	6
Issyk-Kul region	11	7	4
Naryn region	4	4	-
Osh region	3	3	-
Talas region	5	4	1
Chui region	12	10	2
Bishkek c.	56	38	18
Osh c.	29	27	2

At the same time, the number of educational institutions in the secondary vocational education system has increased. Thus, over the past five years, their number increased by 11.0%, and the number of private colleges increased by 2.8%. That said, from the total number of SVSs most are public, while private colleges are a little more than 20%. Programs of secondary vocational education are also delivered in many institutions of higher professional education. In addition, some institutions of higher professional education have organized secondary vocational education institutions.

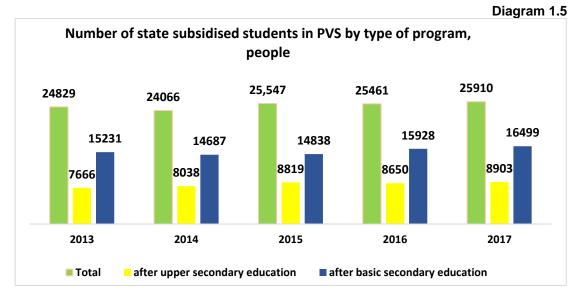
⁹ National Statistical Committee, Education and Science in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2018



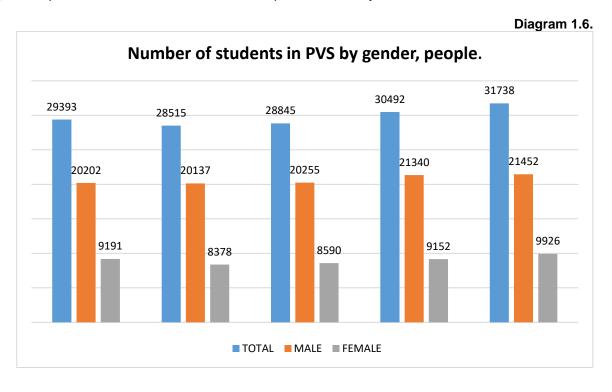
⁷ National Statistical Committee, Education and Science in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2018

⁸ Administrative data from MES KR





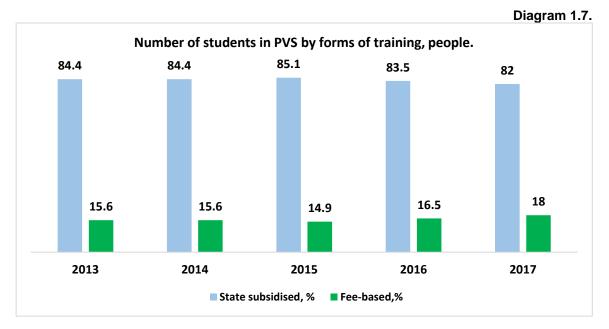
In 2017, the number of students in primary VET schools increased by 8 percent as compared to 2013 and amounted to more than 31 thousand people, of which more than 31 percent are girls. Every year, on average, more than 13 thousand students of educational institutions of primary vocational education, along with a qualification, obtain a certificate of completed secondary education.



Source: National Statistical Committee, Education and Science in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2018







The number of students in the PVET system on budget training, despite the reduction in the number of educational institutions, remains stable at more than 80%. At the same time, the number of girls also remains unchanged – within 30% of the total contingent.

Diagram 1.8. The number of students enrolled in PVS for fee-based training by source of funding, % 58 56 55 38 38 37 31 27 21 18 8 4.5 4 1.5 2015 2016 2018 2017 ■ Individual fee funded training ■ Training funded by companies ■ Training funded by Employment Services ■ Training funded from SDF (ADB project)

ETF Working togeth



Source: Administrative data of the Agency for Pimary Vocational education

In the fee-based form of training, the number of students increased dramatically over the past two years, primarily due to the activities of the Skills Development Fund established under the ADB project.

Diagram 1.9. PVET graduates by forms of training, thousand people. 35 29.8 27.5 30 25.7 25.5 24.8 25 20 14.1^{15.7} 14.6 12.9 13.5 12.1 13.112.7 ¹³ 11.8 15 10 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 ■ Total ■ State subsidised ■ Fee-based

Source: National Statistical Committee, Education and Science in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2018

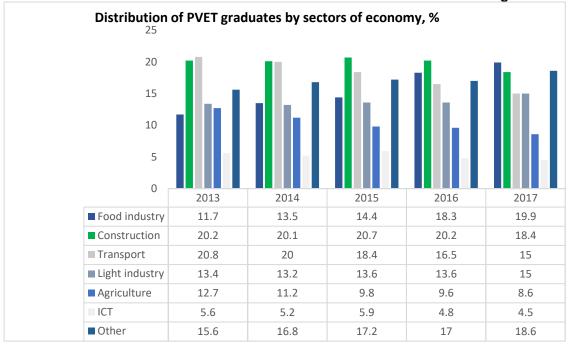
Graduation from primary vocational education programs in 2017 increased by 20 percent as compared to the previous period, and the share of fee-based training increased.

Graduation by occupation shows that over the past five years, the structure of training has not changed. Throughout the whole period, training is mainly offered for the occupations of construction, light and food industry. In such industries as energy, metalworking, mining, tourism limited training programs are offered.





Diagram 1.10.

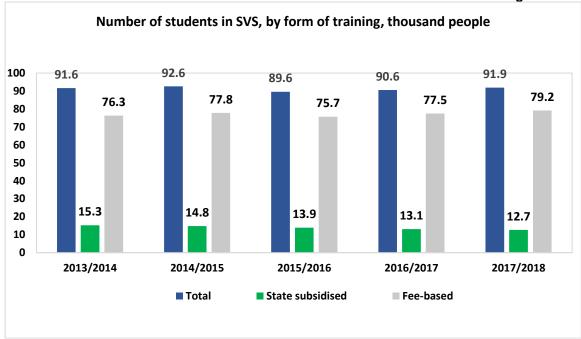


In the system of secondary vocational education, the total number of students is in the range of 90 thousand and more. In addition, the number of fee-based students prevails.



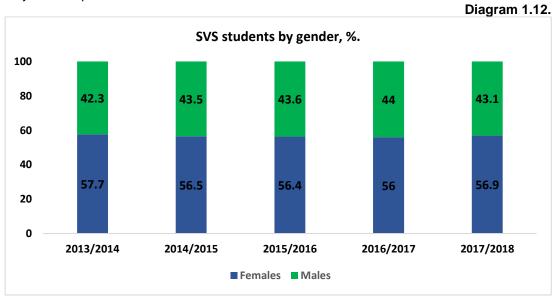






The share of girls among secondary vocational students remains quite high. At the same time, girls traditionally prevail in such specialties as education, technology of consumer goods, health care, culture and art, services.

By contrast, young men choose occupations related to mechanical engineering and metalworking, processing of forest resources, mining, construction and architecture, electronic technology, energy and other traditionally "male" specialties.

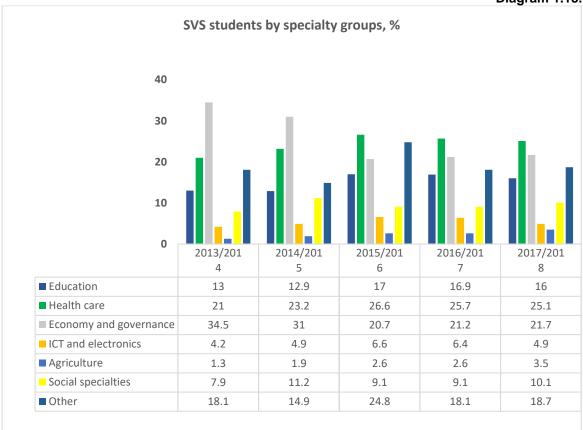


Source: National Statistical Committee, Education and Science in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2018





Diagram 1.13.



VET teachers

If men among teachers in the system of PVET at the beginning of the 2017/2018 academic year accounted for 49-50%, women prevailed (about 70%) in the system of secondary vocational education.

The number of PVET and SVET by gender¹⁰

Table 1.3

	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018		
Number of PVET teachers, people	3405	3505	3548	3680	3610		
male,%	50,4	50,1	49,4	49,9	50,4		
female,%	49,6	49,9	50,6	50,1	49,6		
Number of SVET teachers, people	7230	7547	6725	7427	7496		
male,%	30	30,5	30,6	31,4	30,4		
female,%	70	69,5	69,4	68,6	69,6		

¹⁰ Education and Science in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2013-2017: Collection of Statistics, Bishkek 2018





Financing of the education system from the state budget in recent years demonstrates growth dynamics. In particular, there is a noticeable increase trend in vocational education. Spending on education from the state budget in 2017 increased by 1.6 times as compared to 2013.

Over the past 5 years, the share of investments to education in the national budget was quite significant - 21 to 24 percent on average.

However, in 2017 as compared to the previous year, the share of such expenses decreased from 24.0 percent to 22.5 percent, and by 0.6 percentage points as compared to 2013. The share of spending on education in GDP also decreased from 7.6 percent in 2016 to 7.2 percent in 2017, while compared to 2013 it increased by 0.3 percentage points.

Secondary education accounts for the bulk of education expenditure, with an average of 57 per cent, and higher professional education for 13 per cent¹¹.

Financing of the education system from the state budget¹²

Table 1.4

i manerig et me eaueanen eyetem nem me etate baaget							
	2013 г.	2014 г.	2015 г.	2016 г.	2017 г.		
National budget expenditures on education in million soms	24089,7	25915,4	29995	36299,3	37387,9		
as % of GDP	6,9	6,5	7,0	7,6	7,2		
as % in the total national budget expenditures	23,1	21,4	22,3	24	22,5		
on higher education	3078,1	3412,3	3854,2	4395,4	4802,7		
on secondary education, including primary and secondary vocational	4.4050.4	45400.0	40007.0	20000	00000 4		
education	14852,1	15102,6	16997,2	20233,2	20983,4		

However, the structure of financing presented in the data by the National Statistical Committee does not allow for allocating expenses separately for primary and secondary vocational education.

A. 2.4. Vision for VET and major reform undertakings

During the reporting period, a number of important strategic documents were adopted fundamental for the development of strategic activities in the education system.

- In January 2016, the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) set out in the 2030 Agenda, adopted by world leaders in September 2015 at the historic United Nations summit, officially entered into force. This is a main guiding and policy-defining document in various spheres of social and economic life of the country, including the development of vocational education.
- 2. The program of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic "Zhany Doorgo-Kyrk Kadam"¹³, adopted in August 2017, is the first and very important stage in implementing the Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for the period up to 2040.

An important role in the Program is assigned to vocational education, to training managers for the agro-industrial complex, light industry, and other associated sectors of strategic importance. Establishing close links of vocational schools with entrepreneurs and industrial companies is

¹³ Program of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic "Zhany Doorgo-Kyrk Kadam"



¹¹ Education and Science in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2013-2017: Collection of Statistics, Bishkek 2018

¹² Education and Science in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2013-2017: Collection of Statistics, Bishkek 2018



envisafed. An important role is assigned to training of programmers and setting up a big IT Academy.

- 3. Through the Resolution of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic "On approval of the Government Action Plan for 2018 on implementing the Program of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic "Unity. Trust. Creation" dated August 30, 2018 No. 413, the Program of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic "Zhany Doorgo Kyrk Kadam" is recognized as invalid.
 - The new document defines the tasks and activities to ensure equal access to quality education for children with special educational needs through organizing their education in general education institutions, as well as in the system of vocational education.
- 4. In the field of education, the Education Development Strategy until 2020, adopted in 2012, is being implemented. In June 2018, the EDS Action Plan for 2018-2020 was adopted as a three-year plan for the implementation of the Education Development Strategy in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2012-2020. The main objective of this phase is to establish the foundations of results-based education and a gradual transition to education for sustainable development.

The Ministry of Education and Science is currently working on the next phase of the strategy until 2030. The aim of the strategy is to create conditions for effective use of internal and external resources for sustainable development of the education system, equity of access and quality of educational services. Based on these goals, crosscutting thematic (content) areas have been identified for all levels of education. Namely, the education content focused on developing skills and competencies of each student; digitalization of education (both training in ICT skills and creating electronic learning environments, the use of distant and other technologies, and developing digital management); professional development of teachers; inclusive education; assessment of learning outcomes (combination of self-assessment of educational institutions at all levels and external evaluation, also within accreditation) and building an effective and safe learning environments of the strategy until 2030.

A. 3: The context of VET

A. 3. 1. Socioeconomic context

Over the past five years, numerous reforms were introduced in the Kyrgyz Republic. These include introducing e-government as an important tool for modernizing public sector governance, the empowerment of agencies for more effective local governance, including a clearer mandate of local authorities, improving public finance management, and the adoption of laws on gender equality and family violence.

The VET system is assigned with the function of supporting socially vulnerable youth and young people with disabilities, addressing regional issues, training personnel with view of digitalization processes.

Tools for matching supply and demand in the labour market are being developed through the development of a National Qualifications Framework. The concepts of the National Qualification Framework and the National Qualification System are embedded in legislation.

VET system and employers managed to reach common understanding in forming a training system at a new level, which allowed for developing independent certification, dual training, and validation.

A successful development factor was attention to secondary vocational education, as evidenced by targeted 3rd ADB project.

¹⁴ From the speech by the Minister of Education and Science of the KR Kudaiberdieva G. K.





A. 3. 2. Migration and refugee flows

The national migration policy is a priority area of government activity, an integral part of socio-economic development and foreign policy activities, in this regard, a draft concept of migration policy until 2040 was developed aimed at defining the long-term state migration policy priorities.

External migration. There are over 700 thousand citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic in Labour migration, out of them more than 640 thousand in the Russian Federation, 35 thousand in Kazakhstan, 5 thousand in South Korea, 30 thousand in Turkey, more than 20 thousand people in other foreign countries (Europe, USA, middle East, Asia).

According to the National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic, iUS \$ 1991.3 million was transferred n 2016 to the Kyrgyz Republic, and U \$ 2,288. 09 million in 11 months of 2017, which is by 20 % more than in the same reporting period of the last year¹⁵.

Recognition of education documents issued by educational organizations (educational institutions, organizations in the field of education) of the EAEU Member-States to citizens applying for teaching, legal, medical or pharmaceutical jobs in another member-state, as well as academic degrees and scientific knowledge, by-passing the procedures established by the legislation of the member-states for recognition of education documents, within the framework of the Advisory Committee on social security, pension rights, medical care and professional activity of workers of the EAEU Member-States.

The total number of employed persons in 2018 is 8,258, including through private employment agencies and with coordination from the State Migration Service.

One should note that as compared to 2017 (2793 employed citizens), in 2018, the number of employed increased by 195%.

Kayrylman. The total number of ethnic Kyrgyz living on the territory of the Republic today is more than 35 thousand people.

In 2017, 1506 ethnic Kyrgyz were granted the status of kairylman; in 2018, the status of kairylman was granted to 664 ethnic Kyrgyz.

Refugees. The number of refugees in the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic as of the end of 2017 is 171 people including 92 people from Afghanistan, 79 people from other countries (Syria, Ukraine, Iran, Morocco, North Korea, Ethiopia). The number of asylum seekers was 101.

As of January 1, 2019, the number of refugees in the Kyrgyz Republic is 187 people, including 87 people from Afghanistan and 100 people from other countries. The Number of applicants for refugee status (asylum seekers) is 109 people.

A. 3. 3. Education sector context

After grade 9, graduates can continue their education in grade 10, enter the Labour market or continue their education in primary and secondary vocational education schools. Primary and secondary vocational education achools deliver programs through which graduates, along with acquiring an occupation, get complete secondary general education.

¹⁵ Information on the activity of the State Migration Service under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic for the end of 2017 and 2018 (source: website of the SMS)

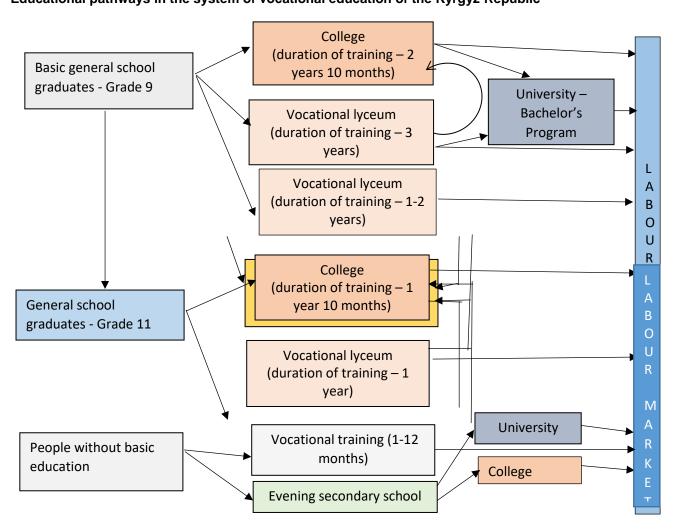




Certificate of secondary general education is a prerequisite for the admission to higher education institutions. Enrolment to all areas and specialties of higher education both state-subsidised budget and fee-based is only done by the results of the National Admission Test (NAT).

NAT has two parts - the main test of a projective character that determines applicant's aptitude for learning at a university, and subject tests, built on the school program materials and determining applicants' the level of knowledge. Currently, graduates can choose from six subject tests – chemistry, biology, foreign language, mathematics, history and physics. NAT is conducted once a year (in May, and additional testing for the sick, for competition participants, and other graduates in June). In 2017, one had to score 110 points on the main test and 60 points on the subject test to get the right to study at a university.

Figure 1.3. Educational pathways in the system of vocational education of the Kyrgyz Republic

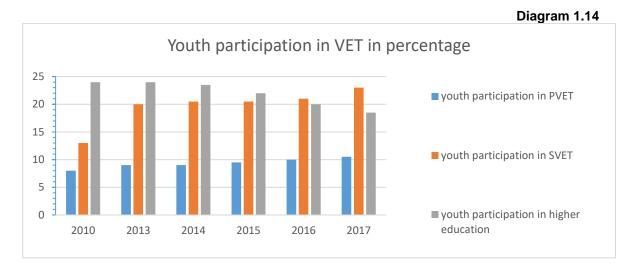


The structure presented in Fig.1.3 shows possible pathways from one system of vocational education to another in accordance with the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Education".





The diagram below shows how participation of youth in secondary and primary vocational education is increasing, in particular in the period 2016-2017, while the coverage of youth in higher vocational education is slowly decreasing.



Source: National Statistical Committee. Men and Women, 2016-2017

A. 3. 4 Lifelong learning context

The Education Development Strategy until 2020 defines the context of lifelong learning. Current work on the National Qualification System, including the development of a National Qualification Framework will allow for transparent mechanisms for promoting lifelong learning.

Lifelong learning in the VET system is implemented through adult retraining programs in various areas. This training is delivered:

- in a fee-based mode
- by the assignment of employment services
- by the assignment of enterprises
- through the Skills Development Fund

The number of students enrolled in these programs in the primary vocational education system has increased in recent years.

The validation system (recognition of non-formal education), which is being piloted in the primary vocational education system, also contributes to the development of adult vocational training.

Lifelong learning is realised through additional adult education.

Additional educational programs include educational programs of different orientation, delivered:

- in educational institutions of general and professional education outside the main educational programs;
- in educational institutions of additional education (skills upgrading courses, in music and art schools, schools of arts and in other educational organizations having corresponding licenses);
- through individual pedagogical activity.

A. 3. 5. International cooperation context: partnerships and donor support





From 1992 to 2018, 74 million 900 thousand US dollars were invested in the system of primary vocational education: of these, 14 million 900 thousand US dollars in loans, 60 million 93 thousand in grants. From 2010 to 2018, 23 million 880 thousand US dollars were invested 16.

One should note that until recently international projects worked more at the level of PVET system. 18 secondary vocational schools were involved for the first time in the second ADB project, and 42 PVS were involved. Based on this, the 3rd ADB project, that lauched its work in 2018, is focused on the SVET system.

The most significant projects are:

- 1. The second "Vocational education and skills development» project of the Asian Development Bank, with 10 million US dollars in grant, 10 million US dollars in loan, and 3, 5 million US dollars as cofinancing of the KR Government. Project dates: 2013-2017 (extended to 31 October 2018). The project aimed at improving the quality and relevance, equal access to and effectiveness of vocational education and training (VET) in the Kyrgyz Republic.
- 2. The GIZ program "Sustainable economic development: "Promotion of employment and vocational training component for the period 2017-2018. Phase 3". Implementation period: 2017-2019. Objective and main areas: the project aims to improve the employment situation in the selected regions of Kyrgyzstan of the unemployed, who participated in the Labour market and vocational education offers. Through direct support to the target group through informal qualification courses, the project has an impact on poverty reduction. Rural development is promoted by increasing the offer of qualification courses in agricultural processing and greenhouse management.
- 3. GIZ Regional program "Vocational education in Central Asia» The Program status: multi-country (partner countries: Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Uzbekistan) Implementation period: 2017-2019. Purpose and main areas: improved quality education and upskilling of specialists and managerial staff in the field of food production technology to regionally comparable and international standards.
- 4. UN Development Programme "Integrated development of Osh region of the Kyrgyz Republic" for 2017-2018. Component 4: "Long-term employment growth through strengthening of vocational education system in target areas». Objective and main areas: to assist the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic in creating conditions for conflict prevention and ensuring sustainable human development in Osh region.
- 5. The ILO project "Applying the G20 Training Strategy: a Partnership of the ILO and the Russian Federation" (Phase 2). Donor: Government of the Russian Federation. Timeline: 2016-2019. Beneficiary countries: Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Russian Federation, Vietnam, Jordan. Project objective and focus: Strengthening training systems, policies and strategies to enhance employment opportunities for both women and men, equal access to employment opportunities and equal treatment, increase income for inclusive and sustainable growth.
- 6. "Adult Education in the Penitentiary System of the Kyrgyz Republic» Project. Donor: Representative Office of the Association "German Association of People's Universities, registered Association" in the Kyrgyz Republic (DVV International). Timeline: January 2017-December 2018. Objective and main areas: Reintegration convicts in society through training, improvement of working conditions and continuous professional education from practical skills to employment.
- 7. The European Union grant of 30 million euros through budget support for the education sector to assist the government in implementing the Education Development Strategy until 2020 and the Action Plan for 2016-2017. The purpose of the program is to assist in reforming the systems of

¹⁶ Report of the Agency for Primary Vocational Education based on data from international organizations



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general and vocational education, improving their quality and pedagogical standards, improving the public finance management.

The grant funds are allocated, among other things, for purchasing textbooks, financing of the preschool education system and setting up the Internet in schools.

In previous EU budget support projects, support was provided to the primary vocational education system under the program "Strengthening and modernization of primary vocational education institutions (PVSs), ensuring relevance of VET to the labour market needs, employer participation in the VET system, as well as support for inclusive education in VET (20%)". This work was done in 2015-2016 and the system attracted 70 million soms (2015).

Total investment: 23 million 880 thousand US dollars (20 million from ADB, 3.5 million from GIZ, 380 thousand from UNDP, KTWVL, MERCICO, ILO – *not accountable*).

The number of VL involved in international projects is 92¹⁷.

Summary and analytical conclusions for Block A.

Over the past five years, numerous educational reforms were introduced in the Kyrgyz Republic. Different parties initiated these reforms: the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic through strategic programs, educational institutions – as grass-roots initiatives, international organizations. These include egovernment as an important tool for modernizing public sector governance, empowerment of agencies for more effective local governance, including a clearer mandate of local authorities, improvement of public finance management, and adoption of laws on gender equality and family violence.

In July 2019, Article 16 of the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Education" was amended as follows: "Primary general education, basic general education, secondary general education are mandatory levels of education for all citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic. The state shall ensure the enforcement of citizens' right for free secondary general education in state and municipal educational institutions to the level of state educational standards." This addition becomes a challenge for the VET system, requiring a lot of preparatory work by 2022, when it will come into force.

The VET system is assigned the responsibility of supporting socially vulnerable youth and young people with disabilities, addressing regional issues, training personnel in the context of digitalization.

The tools for matching the labour market demand and supply are being developed through the development of a national qualifications framework. The concepts of the national qualification framework and the national qualification system are introduced in legal documents.

The VET system and employers came to common understanding in the process of forming a training system at a new level, which allowed for developing independent certification, dual training, validation.

However, sustainability of reforms implemented in various programmes or through international projects is a serious problem. So far, the issues of social partnership have only been addressed in selected sectors and mostly with donor support. All this affects the quality of VET system development, its image and overall the education results.

Recommendations:

¹⁷ Administrative report by AVE submitted to the National Statistical Committee





- 1. When developing reform programmes, sustainability issues and possible risks need to be considered as a priority.
- 2. There is a need in a state program of social partnership in VET.
- 3. At all levels, in-depth analytical work should be undertaken to identify the reasons for insufficient effectiveness and the feasibility of existing programmes and projects, as well as to create a new platform for new projects to avoid repeating the mistakes.

Building block B: Economic and labour market environment

B. 1. VET, economy and labour markets

B.1.1. Labour market situation

Today, the Labour market in Kyrgyzstan is not economically and socially stable. The welfare of the population depends on the extent to which the Labour market is developed and flexible.

Unemployment paralleled with shortage of skilled labour is an acute problem in the country.

There is a downward trend in the number of working age people in the total population (from 60 % in 2013 to 58 % - in 2018).

Compared to 2013, the level of economic activity of the population decreased by 2% and amounted to 60% in 2018.

In 2016, compared to 2013, the level of economic activity of persons with disabilities increased from 27% to 37% ¹⁸. There is no data for 2017. The increase in the activity of persons with disabilities is most likely related to the program of preparing the Kyrgyz Republic for the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities implemented since 2012. Employment of persons with disabilities is also urgent in relation to receiving by Kyrgyzstan the status of GSP+ (Global System of Preferences (GSP+) of the European Union for the Kyrgyz Republic) ¹⁹ and compliance with the obligations to ensure human rights. This indicator will be monitored as part of the SDG measures.

As in previous years, the gender structure of the economically active population is dominated by the proportion of men, who accounted for 75% of the economically active population in 2018, which is 30% more than women.

There are several explanations: women are on maternity and child- care leave; it is more difficult to find a job for women than for men; women often seek part-time work, while this right is granted more to civil servants.

At the same time, this indicator has decreased by 1% for men since 2013 and by 4% for women. The economic activity of the rural population is lower than that of the urban population by 3% in 2017, and by 5% in 2013.

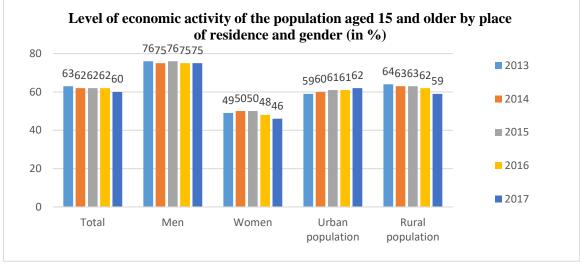
¹⁹ Resolution of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 105-R of March 18, 2015



¹⁸ "Employment and Unemployment" (results of the integrated sample survey of households and labour force in 2017), NSC



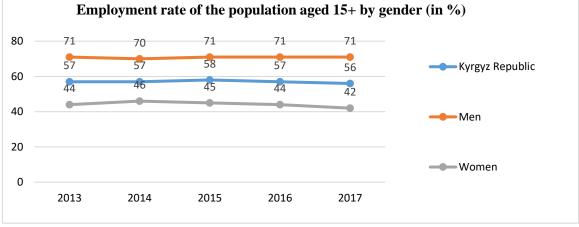
Diagram 2.1.



Source: "Employment and Unemployment" (results of the integrated sample survey of households and labour force in 2017), NSC

In 2018, as compared to 2013, the employment rate decreased by 1% and amounted to 56%. Female employment is by 29% lower than male employment (in 2013, the gap was 27%).

Diagram 2.2.

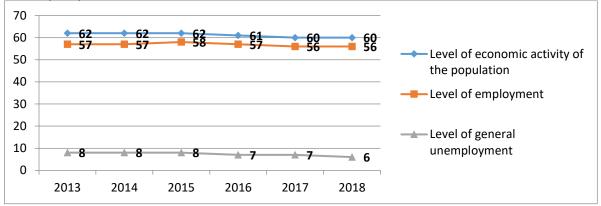


Source: "Employment and Unemployment" (results of the integrated sample survey of households and labour force in 2017), NSC



Diagram 2.3.

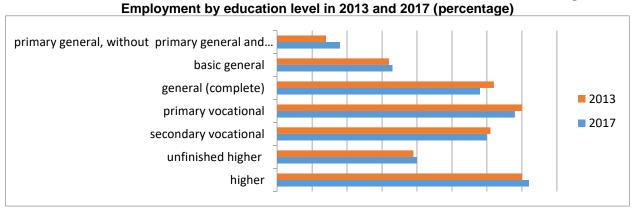
The level of economic activity, employment and unemployment of the population aged 15 and above (in %)



Source: "Employment and Unemployment" (results of the integrated sample survey of households and labour force in 2017), NSC

In 6 years, the share of employed with primary vocational education, secondary and basic general education increased by 1%, while this share for people with secondary and vocational education increased by 2% and decreased by 5 % for people with primary vocational education.

Diagram 2.4.



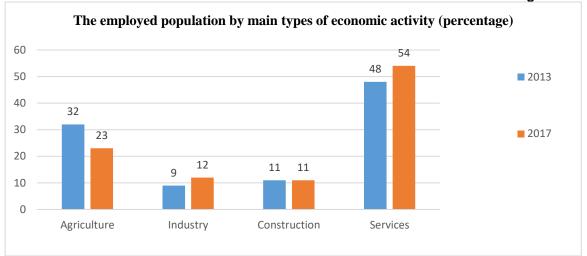
Source: "Employment and Unemployment" (results of the integrated sample survey of households and labour force in 2018), NSC

The sectoral structure of the employed population is characterised by an increase in the share of employed in the service sector by 6% and a decrease in agriculture by 12%.





Diagram 2.5



Source: "Employment and Unemployment" (results of the integrated sample survey of households and labour force in 2017), NSC

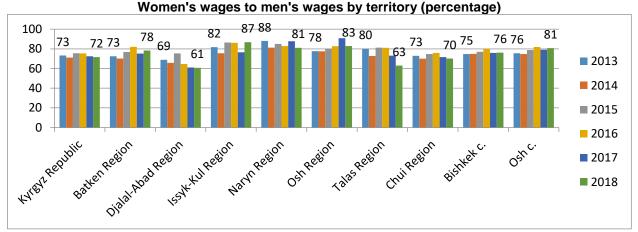
Male and female employment by economic activity has significant differences. The biggest share of women in the employed population was in the following economic activities: with the lowest wage level – 80% in education, 83% in health and social services, and 88% in real estate operations. Break down data by "male" and "female" occupations was not available.

A high proportion of men is in such economic activities as mining and quarrying -91%, electric power, gas, steam and air conditioning supply - 90%, water supply, refining, waste treatment, etc. - 73%; construction - 97%, transport and warehousing - 95%.





Diagram 2.6

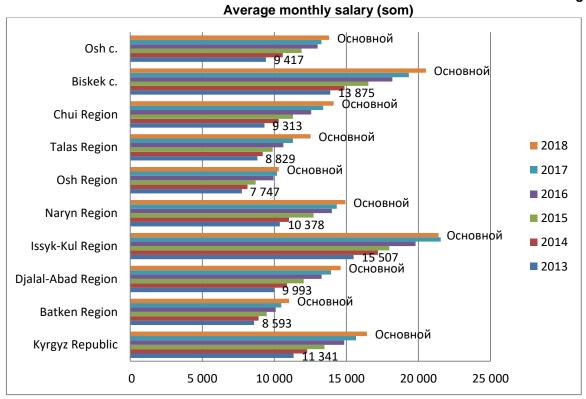


Source: Single-time survey of enterprises and institutions held in November (September). NSC http://www.stat.kg/ru/opendata/

Accordingly, the ratio of women's wages to men's wages in 2013 was higher (73%) than in 2018 (72%), while in 2015-2016 it was 75%. The wage ratio below the national average is in Jalal-Abad, Talas and Chui regions.

The average monthly salary of workers in the country for 2013-2018 increased by 69% and amounted to 16,427 soms, and is still one of the lowest in the world.

Diagram 2.7



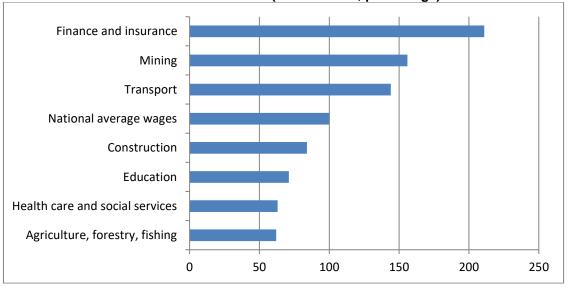
Source: http://www.stat.kg/ru/opendata/





Significant sectoral wage disparities persisted in 2018. The highest wages were in financial and insurance sectors, in the mining industry. The lowest wages were in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, in education, health care. At the same time, wages in transport, mining, financial and insurance sectors are above the national average.

Diagram 2.8
The average monthly nominal wage for certain economic activities and the national average wage ratio in 2018 (in US dollars; percentage)



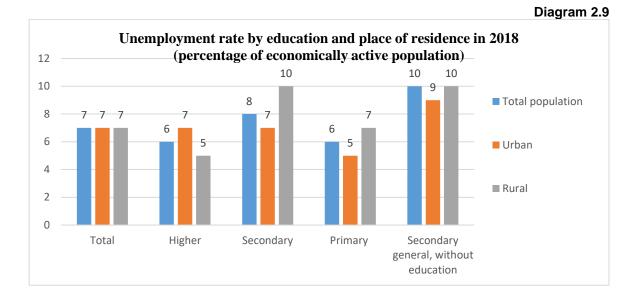
Source:http://www.eurasiancommission.org/ru/act/integr_i_makroec/dep_stat/econstat/Pages/statpub.asp x

Labour costs totalled 20011 soms (291 US dollars), which is significantly lower than in the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). Labour costs include in monetary and non-monetary (in-kind) forms of remuneration for worked and non-worked time, housing costs, social protection, vocational training, welfare, travel and other expenses, as well as different taxes.

Unemployment of rural and urban population differs, depending on the level of education. The share of urban unemployed with higher professional education is high (7%), on the contrary, there is high share of unemployed with primary vocational education -9%.

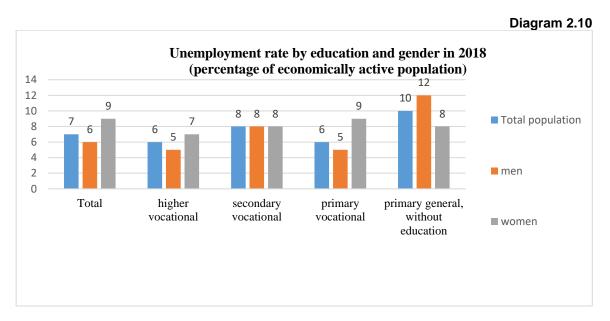






Source: "Employment and Unemployment" (results of the integrated sample survey of households and labour force in 2018), NSC

The highest share of unemployment is with women and men with primary vocational education.



Source: "Employment and Unemployment" (results of the integrated sample survey of households and labour force in 2018), NSC





Table 2.1 Dynamics of the unoccupied population registered in state employment services for 2013-2018, thousand people²⁰

thousand people						
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of unemployed population registered in state employment services, thousand people.	94,2	93,0	87,7	84,1	80,3	89,6
of these accounted as unemployed, %	62	63	64	66	72	79,1
From the unemployed:						
Unemployment benefit set	0,4	0,4	0,5	0,3	0,0	0,0
People employed through employment services for the year, %	42	52	58	54	54	38,2
Stated by companies demand for workers	7,0	6,5	6,2	6,5	6,2	5,3
The number of inactive population per notified vacancy, people	13	14	14	13	13	17
Registered unemployment rate, percentage	2,3	2,3	2,2	2,2	2,3	2,8

Because the labour supply outpaces the demand for it, and there are 17 people claiming for one job, for one vacancy declared with the state employment services, it is not possible to provide jobs for all those who applied to the employment service. The number of unemployed people registered by the state employment services has decreased since 2013by 4%, and the number of those recognized as unemployed has increased by 18%.

The registered unemployment rate has remained low for a long time, within the natural unemployment rate. This is because people with agricultural land plots of non less than 0.05 hectares of irrigated land and involved in agricultural production, can not be recognized as unemployed. Most of the unemployed are young people not allocated a land plot. Another reason is granting unemployment benefits if continuous insurance period prior to applying to the employment services is at least 12 months over the last 3 years, upon submission of the personal insurance account notice, confirming insurance payments to the Social Fund²¹. At the same time, the unemployment benefit itself is very low - 300 soms. It is obvious that the legislation in the field of employment needs to be revised.

Youth on the labour market

The youth unemployment rate in 2018 decreased by 1% and was 11%. The share of young people with secondary vocational education did not change, and of those with primary vocational education increased by 1%.

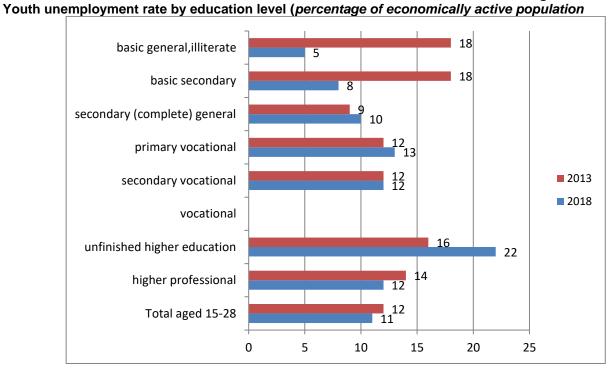
²¹ Law of the Kyrgyz Republic «On Employment Promotion» (2015, No. 214)



²⁰ "Analysis of the current state of the labor market and labor productivity of the Kyrgyz Republic", Report by NSC,



Diagram 2.11.



Source: "Employment and Unemployment" (results of the integrated sample survey of households and labour force in 2013-2018), NSC

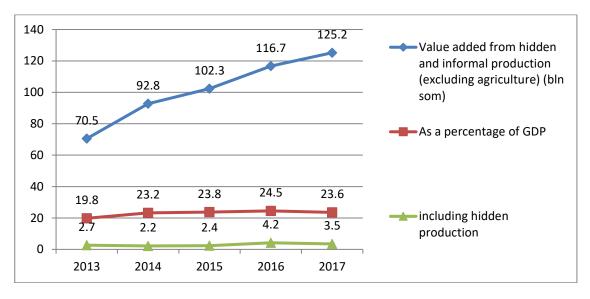
The level of non-observed (hidden and informal) economy increased by 4% and was 24% in 2017. Value added resulting from hidden and informal production (excluding agriculture) amounted to 125.2 billion soms (in 2013 – 70.5 billion soms), which is 24% of GDP (20% in 2013).the share of hidden production increased from 2013 by 0,8%, though decreased by 0,7 if compared to 2016.





Diagram 2.12

Non-observed (hidden and informal) economy

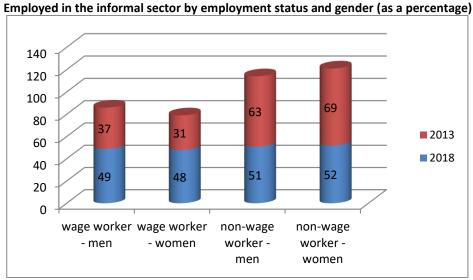


Source: http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/nacionalnye-scheta/

Employment level in the informal sector decreased by 1% and was 71% in 2018. Such a high level of informal employment leads both to actually unprotected labour rights of the vast majority of workers, and to serious financial problems.

Over the 6 years, the number of people employed in the informal sector and those working fro wage increased by 14%.

Diagram 2.13



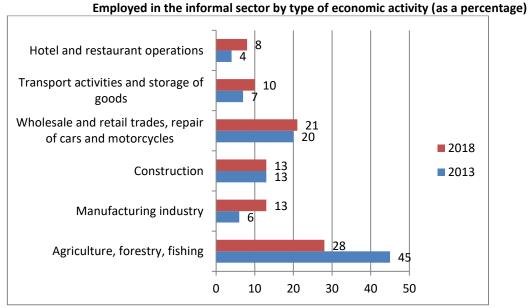
Source: "Employment and Unemployment" (results of the integrated sample survey of households and labour force in 2013-2018), NSC

Informal employement decreased in six years by 17% in agriculture, remained at the same level in construction and increased in other sectors of the economy.





Diagram 2.14



Source: "Employment and Unemployment" (results of the integrated sample survey of households and labour force in 2013-2018), NSC

In 2018, 96013 jobs were created. The biggest share of newly created jobs (93%) is in the informal sector of the economy, and here the share of jobs (75% created by individual persons comprised 80%, the rest jobs were created in family operated farms. In the informal sector, a significant number of jobs were created in agriculture -35% and 21% in wholesale and retail trade. At the same time, 26% of jobs closed, 89% of them being in the informal sector.

The prevalence of informal employment results both in non-creation of sustainable enterprises, which would attract legal investments and develop technologically advanced production, contributing to jobs with decent working conditions and leading to the growth of effective demand. Thus, informal employment is strategically harmful not only to the state and to employees, but to employers themselves, deprived of prospects for long-term development.

B. 1. 2. Specific challenges and opportunities: skills mismatch

The VET system in Kyrgyzstan is in the process of improving the training.

However, the compliance of PVET with the labour market needs remains an open question.

Both businesses and VET schools independently define the skills demand. The MLSD and the MES use own methodology, set by the Government decree, for forecasting the need for labour resources²².

²² Decree by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 203 of March 26, 2012





In addition, the Ministry of Economy has developed a Methodological basis for forecasting the needs of the economic sectors in labour resources²³.

For professional survey, there should be enough professionals and sufficient financial resources.

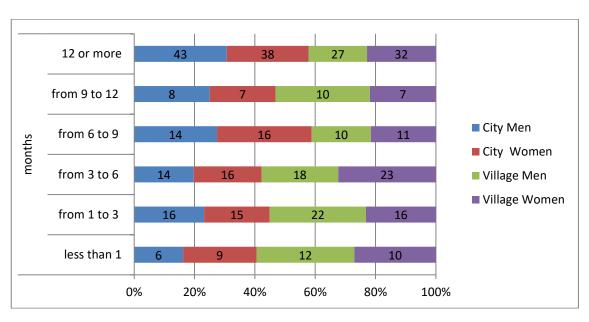
Employers are not sure about the sustainability of the business; they do not know what will happen to it in 1-3 years. People learn to be tailors, cooks and gas-electric welders for self-employment.

Until the economy is stabilized, until scientifically sound strategies are developed, it is impossible to forecast the skill needs, even in the short term"²⁴.

Responsibility for labour and employment issues were constantly assigned to different ministries. It was assigned to the the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD) in December 2015. There is an acute shortage of qualified specialists on labour and employment in the MLSD, and there is a need to set up an Institute of Labour Economics.

The unemployed population does not rely on state support for employment, only 8% of job seekers apply to the state employment service. Moreover, 61 % in search of work refer to friends, relatives, acquaintances, and 13% are desperate to find a job and are waiting for the start of the seasonal work.

Diagram 2.15.
Unemployed persons by duration of job search, the place of residence of 2017
(as a percentage)



Source: "Employment and Unemployment" (results of the integrated sample survey of households and labour force in 2013-2018), NSC

The main share of the employed in the country is in the 20-29 age group. However, according to the ILO report "Transition to the labour market of young women and men in Eastern Europe and Central Asia", the majority of young people in Kyrgyzstan are in the so-called category of "unprotected employment".

²⁴ Focus group discussion on "Economic situation and the state of the labor market", 13.06.2019



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²³ Order No. 50 of the Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic dated February 29, 2016



In 2016, the final report on the labour market study in Kyrgyzstan for 2015 was presented in Bishkek, conducted with the support of GIZ (German society for international cooperation) in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD).

The study surveyed 910 employers and 1,700 job seekers across Kyrgyzstan. The study has been conducted since 2012 by 10 pilot local employment services. The study used the methodology developed in 2012 by the GIZ program "Vocational education and employment promotion in Kyrgyzstan".

In 2015, according to the study findings, employers began to emphasize more the problems of the shortage of financial resources for business development, low purchasing power of the population. The deficit of human resources, on the contrary, was rated lower by 5%. All this is due to the financial crisis, the unstable economic situation.

The situation with employment of persons with disabilities has changed for the worse: only 22% of employers are willing to hire them, compared to 27% in 2014.

Schoolteacher is the most difficult to fill occupation. Only among the surveyed employers, there were 40 vacancies, which indicates a deficit across the country. Cooks and doctors are in the 2nd and 3rd place. The demand for tailors is characteristic for Bishkek. Low wages is the reason for this.

The situation with job seekers remains without significant changes. Almost a third of respondents (28%) have higher education and 20% - secondary special education diploma. 35% of respondents were with secondary general education.

A third of the unemployed (32%) did not work on their own choice. One in five respondents is looking for a job for the first time and can not find a job after graduation. Two hundred and seven respondents (12%) lost their job because of staff redundancy. Eight per cent were were out of work due to the change of residence and for health reasons²⁵.

Labour market studies and dialogue platforms were expected to be conducted annually by 10 pilot employment services largely on their own.

However, there is no information about these studies on the website of the Labour Market Information System (http://www.zanyatost.kg/).

B. 1. 3. Specific challenges and opportunities: migration

Under the Global programme on integrating of the migration component into the development strategies implemented by the International Organization for Migration / UN Agency for migration and The United Nations Development Programme with financial support from the Swiss government, the document "Kyrgyzstan. Migration profile" (Study), which is an assessment of the migration situation in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2015-2017²⁶.

According to the Study, "the labour market of Kyrgyzstan is labor-extensive; the existing labour market mechanism was not able to solve the problem of reducing the search time for both employers and job seekers". It is noted that a significant professional advancement is transition from agricultural domestic work to work in urban construction or in the service sector in the destination country; there is no development of other additional skills. Most people are involved in construction, trade and hospitality sectors. The authors also note that according to the World Bank data, the share of remittances (over 90% of which come from the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan) in the GDP of the Kyrgyz Republic remains the highest in the world since 2011 (over 30% in Kyrgyzstan).

²⁶ The "Kyrgyzstan. Expanded Migration Profile" study. National Institute for Strategic Studies (http://www.nisi.kg/)



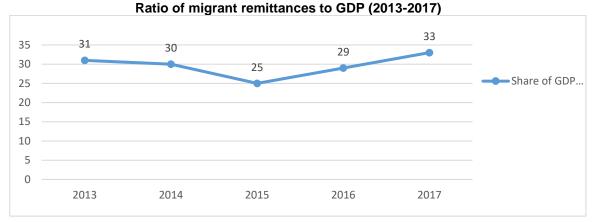
²⁵ http://bb-program.kg/ky/node/290



Remittance inflows in 2015-2016 decreased due to oil price downturn, tougher migration policy, as well as the overall economic deterioration in Russia.

At the same time, in 2016 in Kyrgyzstan, the World Bank estimated an 18% increase in remittances, which is primarily due to country's participation in the Eurasian Economic Union.

Diagram 2.16



Source: The "Kyrgyzstan. Expanded Migration Profile" study. National Institute for Strategic Studies (http://www.nisi.kg/)

Table 2.3. Individual money transfers carried out through transfer systems (Million US dollars)²⁷

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Balance	3 396,2	1 811,9	1 344,4	1 634,3	2 030,5	2 143,0
Inflow	3 899,9	2 235,9	1 683,6	1 991,3	2 482,4	2 685,3
CIS countries	2 245,0	2 188,3	1 630,8	1 942,0	2 439,3	5 079,9
Kazakhstan	25,4	20,1	8,3	3,5	4,2	6,4
Russia	2 219,1	2 167,9	1 622,3	1 938,5	2 435,1	5 073,4
Other	0,5	0,4	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,1
Overseas countries	23,2	47,5	52,8	49,3	43,1	87,8
Belgium	0,1	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
UK	1,5	1,5	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,0
Germany	1,8	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,0	0,0
USA	16,6	12,0	30,5	38,2	24,2	50,9
Other	3,1	33,8	22,0	11,0	18,9	36,8

Note:

Source: Periodic regulatory bank statements of commercial banks.

²⁷ https://www.nbkr.kg



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^{&#}x27;1. Without additional assessment by NBKR; Anelik, Blizko, Contact, Migom, MoneyGram, Western Union, Unistream, Golden Crown, Leader, Fast Mail, Allure, and other. transfer systems and transfers through Public Corporation "Kyrgyzpochtasy";

^{2.} The dollar equivalent calculation of money transfers was carried out at the NBKR exchange rate on the day of transaction.



It is also noted that since 2015, the labour market of the Kyrgyz Republic expanded for foreign migrants by 2000 people.

At the same time, most of the foreign citizens from 80 countries are in demand over the past three years in such sectors of the economy as industry, transport, communications and construction, as well as energy, exploration and mining. Most of them are citizens of the People's Republic of China.

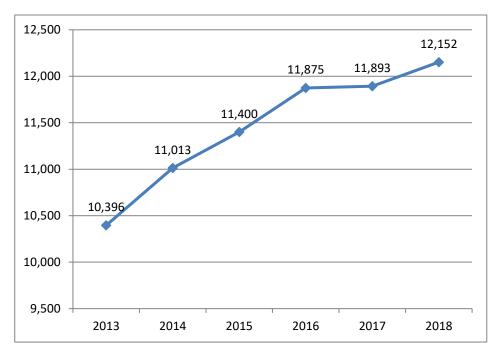
Such situation with migration developed due to the fact that before the policy of external labour migration was a priority in the employment policy of the labour and migration authorities (prior to the transfer of labour and employment function to the MLSD at the end of 2015).

The reason for labour outflow is not only the lack of jobs, but also low wages, economic and political instability, as well as a high level of corruption.

B. 1. 4. Specific challenges and opportunities: digital transformation

In 2018, 19.4 thousand economic entities (enterprises, organizations and institutions) were surveyed in the Republic, out of them 63% used information and communication technologies, which increased by 15% compared to 2013²⁸.

Diagram 2.17 Enterprises and organizations using computers and information and communication technology (items)



Source: Information and Communication Technologies in the Kyrgyz Republic 2013-2017, 2018, NSC

In 2018, the number of specialists in enterprises and organizations dealing with computers and information and communication technologies increased by 1.7 times as compared to 2013.

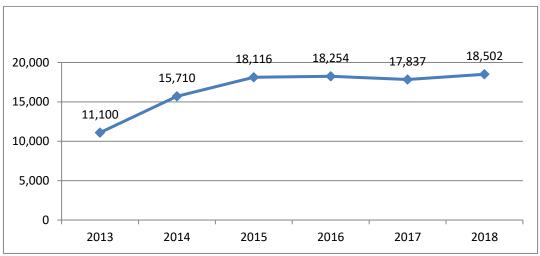
> Diagram 2.18 Specialists of enterprises and organizations dealing with computers and

²⁸ Information and communication technologies in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2013-2017, 2018, NSC





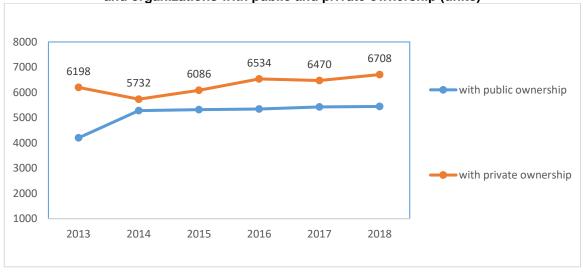
information and communication technologies (people)



Source: Information and Communication Technologies in the Kyrgyz Republic 2013-2017, 2018, NSC

The share of economic entities with state ownership using ICT in 2018 was 45%, and 55% of private entities.

Diagram 2.19
The main indicators of information and communication technologies development in enterprises and organizations with public and private ownership (units)



Source: Information and Communication Technologies in the Kyrgyz Republic 2013-2017, 2018, NSC

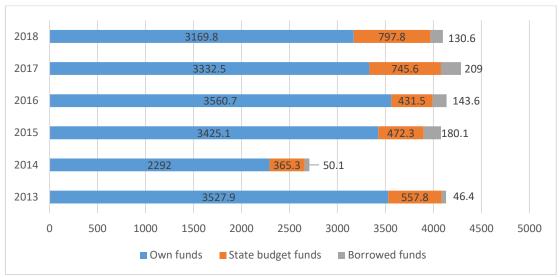
Expenses of enterprises and organizations for the development and use of information technologies and computing facilities at their own expense decreased by 10%, these from the state budget increased by 29%, and almost 3 times increased expenses covered through fundraising.

Diagram 2.20.

Costs of enterprises and organizations for the development and use of information technologies and computing resources by sources of financing (million soms)



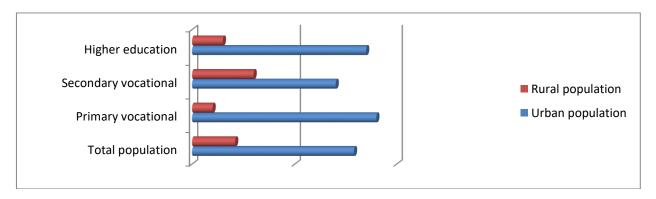




Source: Information and Communication Technologies in the Kyrgyz Republic 2013-2017, 2018, NSC

According to preliminary data, the level of education among the employed population aged 15 years and older, 28,141 people were trained in the information technology sector in 2018, including: 9.2% were trained through primary vocational education, 32.9% through secondary vocational education, and 31.6% through higher vocational education. In addition, in this area urban employed population, as compared to rural employed people, has a primary vocational education by 80% more, secondary vocational education by 40% and higher professional education by 70% more.

Diagram 2.21 Level of education of the employed population aged 15 years and older in the information and communications sector in 2018 (in %)



Source: Assessment of the level of digital development in the Kyrgyz Republic, Institute for Statistical Research and Professional Development, NSC, 2019

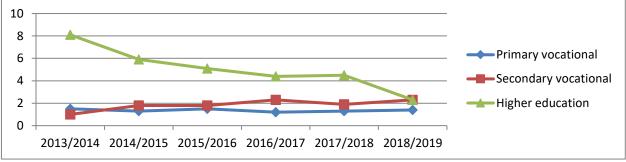




Compared with 2013, in 2018/2019 academic year, the number of graduates with primary vocational education in the specialty "Information Technology" decreased by 8.5%, with secondary vocational education in the specialty "Computer Science and Computer Engineering" increased by more than two times, the number of those with higher professional education in the area of "Technical Sciences" decreased by almost four times.

Diagram 2.22





Source: Assessment of the level of digital development in the Kyrgyz Republic, Institute for Statistical Research and Professional Development, NSC, 2019

The main disadvantages of the digital development process in Kyrgyzstan include internal adverse factors²⁹:

- low level of digital literacy among rural population;
- limited participation of citizens and businesses in the development of services;
- weak capacity of government officials in the field of digital transformation;
- limited awareness of digital technology among the employees of public organizations;
- lack of innovative educational programs for digital transformation;
- lack of digitized data in most ministries;
- citizens' mistrust and their unwillingness to use electronic services, which is caused by lack of awareness and other socio-economic reasons;
- lack of personnel with the necessary qualifications;
- risk of digital inequity between urban and rural populations.

Obviously to solve these problems funding for vocational training of the unemployed need to be increased. Digital literacy courses need to be developed in partnership with commercial companies and educational institutions. Courses should be adapted to the needs of different social groups (e.g. the elderly, persons with disabilities, etc.). In turn, mastering by citizens of basic skills in information technology will contribute to the popularization of public digital services. Training of citizens can be organised in vocational schools through municipal or government order. The role of local authorities in this is important.

In the process of digital development in Kyrgyzstan, the approval of the "Road Map" for the implementation of the "Digital Kyrgyzstan 2019-2023" concept³⁰ of digital transformation is important. In particular, it is planned to develop a program for the digital education development in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2019-2022 and an action plan for its implementation, develop and introduce the education management information system (EMIS), develop "electronic textbooks", set up a National Electronic Library, build conditions for distant access to higher professional education, introduce the "Education" Unified National Information System.

³⁰ Resolution by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 20-R dated February 15, 2019



²⁹ "Digital Kyrgyzstan: the Current State and the Way Forward", http://ict.gov.kg/



There are no measures relating separately to the PVET and SVET systems.

B. 1. 5. Strategic policy responses involving education and VET

The National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040³¹ stipulates the task of ensuring the matching vocational education and the labour market. The methodology of labour market needs forecast and assessment of competencies against the labour market requirements will be revised. Outsourcing, with the involvement of financial institutions, public organizations, representatives of small and medium-sized businesses, of the program of microcrediting, training and retraining of the unemployed, financed from the national budget is planned, based on the public-private partnership and social order.

Programs for training and retraining of the unemployed will draw on the use of advanced information technologies, online services.

The state policy on human resources development will draw on introducing and improving the national qualification system.

The system of primary, secondary and higher professional education will have effective mechanisms to adequately respond to the needs of educational services consumers and employers' needs for qualified personnel.

Results-based management and funding will be provided at all levels of education, including the use of the normative (per capita) funding mechanism.

Youth policy will focus on creating an enabling environment for youth participation in decision-making processes through formal and non-formal education and training. Creating conditions for employment and self-realization of young citizens of Kyrgyzstan will be a priority.

The state policy on employment will focus on improving the quality of the labour force, eliminating the sectoral and regional mismatch between supply and demand in the labour market with the priority of sectors with higher benefit, employment growth and demand in the market.

The system of education and training of specialists will be subordinate to the market requirements, aim at priority sectors of the economy, the specific characteristics of the regions in the country. The National Council for Sustainable Development coordinates this work.

B. 1. 6. The role of VET in remedies through active labour market policies

Active labour market policy contributes to employment promotion.

According to the Ministry of Labour and social development, in 2018, 35% of the unemployed were provided services under the active measures, 29% of them were referred to vocational training and retraining, 71% to paid public works.

Employment services mainly employ the resources of the vocational education system.

Training of unemployed was mainly provided in occupations in demand at the labour market: gas welder, hairdresser, computer operator, accountant with knowledge of 1C, cook, seamstress, tailor, office manager, electrician, driver.

In the MLSD budget, expenditures on social protection of the unemployed amounted to about 0.5%,

³¹ Decree of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic UP No. 221 dated 31 October 2018





including 0.03% for unemployment benefits, or 35.0 million soms. The amount of disbursements on the training check for the officially unemployed is set at 5, 0 thousand soms³². At the same time, 38% of the registered unemployed was employed.

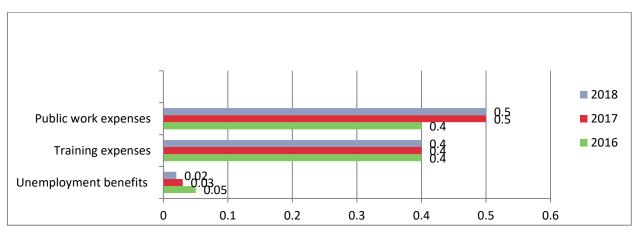
Labour market review of the Kyrgyz Republic 2013-2018³³

Table 2.4.

Labour market review of the Kyrgyz Republic 2013-2018							
Indicators	measure ment unit	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Persons with official status of unemployed	thousand people	58,4	58,2	56,0	55,5	57,5	70,8
Number of people covered by active employment promotion measures, including:	thousand people	30,4	34,3	34,8	29,4	27,2	25,0
- paid public works (PPW)	thousand people	21,1	24,9	25,3	21,1	19,7	17,7
- vocational training	thousand people	7,3	8,1	8,5	7,6	7,2	7,3
- microcredit	thousand people	2,0	1,3	1,0	0,7	0,3	-
Number of people covered by passive employment promotion measures (unemployment benefits)	thousand people	0,4	0,4	0,5	0,2	0,1	-
Number of employed people	thousand people	39,7	48,1	50,7	45,6	43,0	27,1
Approved in the country quota for disabled persons	jobs/for year	755	673	624	553	690	601
Number of employed disabled persons, including	people	230	205	214	229	271	174
- for jobs limited by quota for disabled persons	people	100	160	156	166	150	69

Expenditure on labour market policy measures (percentage)

Diagram 2.22



³² Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic "on measures to implement the law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Employment Promotion" dated April 12, 2016 No. 208

³³ https://budget.okmot.kg/ru/exp_vedom/index.html



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Source: https://budget.okmot.kg/ru/exp_vedom/index.htm

During 2017-2018, the Skills Development Fund (SDF) was established as a component of second ADB project "Vocational Education and Skills Development". The main purpose of SDF is to meet the skills development needs of the population, as well as to assist employers in the training and skills upgrading of workers in a short time. During this period, 17,503 people were trained in 81 VET schools. Of these, about 54% are from enterprises and organizations in all the regions of the country. In 2019, it is planned to train 5,000 people with view of gender (at least 30% being women) at a cost of 0.5 million US dollars. Currently, institutionalization of the SDF, its subordinated affiliation, financing, composition of constituent organizations and possible sources and mechanisms of financing are being defined.

B. 1. 7. Identification of skills demand and its bearing on VET provision

The methodology for forecasting the need for labour resources was approved by the Government Decree No. 203 of March 26, 2012. Forecasting the demand for labour resources is necessary for strategic planning of training and retraining of personnel, focused on skills demand on the labour market in line with national socio-economic development goals.

The structure and volume of training matching the country's economic sector needs is the outcome of the skills forecast on the national labour market.

Forecasting methods integrate:

- computational analysis method based on macroeconomic indicators, strategies of social and economic development of the Kyrgyz Republic;
- expert assessment method based on direct employer surveys.

The basis of the computational analysis method is the calculation of the professional structure by the main economic sectors. Forecasts of line ministries are the basis for defining the future demand for specialties and occupations.

When preparing the forecast of the demand for labour resources based on computational analysis, the forecasts of the gross domestic product, development of economic sectors and creation of new jobs are considered.

Consolidated forecast of the demand for labour resources is prepared by the competent government employment authority.

Based on the expert assessment method, the skills demand forecast is developed through employer surveys that collect information about current and future number of staff employed in enterprises, organizations and institutions, by occupations, specialties and posts for the short-term (1 year) and medium-term (3-5 years) period.

Sample employer survey is proposed, as continuous reading is in most cases difficult due to the big number of enterprises, as well as significant time and material costs.

The advantage of the expert assessments method is direct participation of employers. Forecast estimates are based on employers' own estimations of jobs expansion or reduction and (or) the creation of new jobs. Disadvantages of the method are associated with the complex data collection and processing.

The consolidated forecast of the need for labour resources is sent to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic to use for the training of qualified personnel, and is posted on the website of the competent state employment body.

In addition, the Ministry of Economy approved by its order the methodological basis for forecasting the needs of national economic sectors in labour resources.





Employment and unemployment, measured by the National Statistical Committee on a quarterly basis are the target variables of the methodology.

Two main approaches to forecasting labour supply and demand are proposed. The first approach is based on the time series variable characteristics in question, along with labour market indicators for the near future, if there are any. The second is based on the relationship between employment/unemployment and economic growth, as defined by economic theory (e.g., Oaken's law).

Forecasting steps include defining the task; gathering information; statistical data; exploratory analysis of the predicted series characteristics; model selection, evaluation and validation; use and evaluation of the projection model.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Development of the Kyrgyz Republic under the ILO "Applying the strategy of professional training of the group of 20" project completed a pilot on developing practical skills of competent bodies, social partners and experts in the field of labour market analysis and planning of training through vocational education and training (VET) in the Kyrgyz Republic (on the example of Chui oblast). The pilot project conducted for the first time a deep analysis of the occupational and qualification structure of the employed in the labour market, which allowed to identify the dynamics of skills supply and demand in certain occupations for a short-term period of up to 3 years. With the account of identified needs on the labour market and the assessment of the current unemployment of qualified personnel, recommendations were developed for training staff by lyceums, colleges and universities in the region for mass occupations.

The skills demand and supply analysis in the Chui region was done under the following significant restrictions. The information collected did not contain the category "occupation" or "specialty", which did not allow for professional identification of labour market participants (both employed and unemployed). The information ignores the occupations mastered in the workplace, which from the very beginning excludes a significant portion of job seekers from the search for jobs. Occupations in which respondents consider themselves competent are not documented either in the registration of the unemployed or in regular household surveys.

Overcoming these limitations requires a revision of the unemployed registration form, changing the methodology of calculating the registered unemployment rate and the use of data from a single source, entry in the form of regular reporting of legal entities additional questions about the structure of the workforce by occupation and qualifications, matching job titles used by employment services and educational institutions of vocational and higher education. Decision need to be made on the division of powers between agencies, services and ministries with regard to collecting, processing, interpretation and use of information on the state of the labour market, the current and future skills need by occupation.

Currently, work is underway on the Methodology for analysing the demand for skilled labour and its application for the development of recommendations to the vocational education systems. At the same time, private agencies may be involved in the survey trough the state social order.

Starting from 2020, the MLSD is planning to develop a National Classification of Worker Occupations, Employee Posts, harmonized with the International Statistical Classification of Occupations ISCO-2008, developed by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics.

B. 1. 8. Supporting migrants and refugees through VET

Kyrgyzstan has ratified most international treaties and conventions on refugees and thus, has committed itself to help refugees and solve their problems as consistent with its economic capabilities. However, the country's economic opportunities are weak. There is no way to help refugees with everything they need - apartments, employment, high social benefits, as in the developed western countries. Refugees know this and leave to countries that are better off.





Training, retraining and upskilling of foreigners in educational institutions of the Kyrgyz Republic, and citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic in foreign educational institutions are carried out under intergovernmental agreements of the Kyrgyz Republic, and agreements between educational institutions or with individual citizens (article 49 of the Law of the KR "On Education", 2003, № 92).

In 2018, the Information and Consulting Centre under the State Migration Service found jobs for 8,258 unemployed citizens: jobs for 430 people in the Russian Federation, for 6,598 people in Turkey, for 412 people in the Republic of Korea, 255 people in Germany, 197 people in the United Arab Emirates, etc.

This was done with the assistance of private employment agencies. To date, 85 market participants in accordance with the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic provide citizens with employment services in 14 countries.

Employment abroad includes compulsory professional and legal training:

- the St. Petersburg State Autonomous institution "Centre of Labour Resources" announced the recruitment of 100 trolleybus drivers with the condition of confirmed qualification.
- under the trilateral agreement with Japan Style training centre and "IBS Association Cooperative" on employing Kyrgyz citizens in Japan recruitment to Japan for elderly care was announced for the graduates of the "Nursing" specialty.
- Fitters, millers, turners, drivers, grader, bulldozer operators, electricians of 5-6 qualification levels were required to work in Kazakhstan without qualification requirements.

Work is underway to develop a legal act on the establishment of centres for evaluation and recognition (validation) of citizens' non-formal education in educational institutions of primary vocational education. No other information was found.

B. 2. Entrepreneurial learning and entrepreneurship

B. 2. 1. Job creation and VET

In accordance with the Regulations on graduates' tracer study in primary and secondary vocational education schools,³⁴ regular tracer studies of PVET and SVET graduates is conducted in the Kyrgyz Republic. For example, 81% of the 2016-2017 academic year graduates were employed, 80% work in Kyrgyzstan, 69% - work in their specialty³⁵.

In 2018, SVET graduates were surveyed. According to the reports by SVSs, the survey of graduating students and graduates of 2017 was conducted in 26 public SVSs subordinate to the MES of the KR. In total, 4692 state-subsidised graduates of 2017 took part in the survey. Of these, 53% of graduates were employed, 28% of graduates continue their education in higher education. The share of graduates who are not employed after completion the studies in SVSsa is 19%.

B. 2. 2. VET policies to promote entrepreneurship

New subjects "Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship and Business" in the amount of 120 hours, with 2 and 3 years duration of training; 60 hours for students with a 10 months period of training, 40 hours for educational institutions under the State Service for the Execution of Punishment (SSEP) were introduced

³⁵ http://kesip.kg/



³⁴ MES Order No. 1307/1 of 20.09.2016



in the curricula of primary and secondary vocational education with different terms of training. This allows graduates of vocational schools to gain knowledge on entrepreneurship.

Summary and analytical conclusions for Block B.

Considering high level of employment in the informal sector (71%), monitoring of graduate is difficult. Tracer study is used as a tool for minimising these difficulties.

The Ministy of Labour and Social Development of the KR is working on digitalising employment record books and labour contracts. Electronic databases with data on employed from all economic entities will in the future provide for monitoring graduates.

In 2018, most of newly created jobs (93%) was in the informal sector of economy. In addition, there is low level of legal literacy in labour relations.

It is worth noting that labour rights of people working in this sector is not protected by legislation. Employed here are in most vulnerable and unprotected position. The large scale of the informal sector is directly linked with the undeveloped economy.

The youth unemployment rate in 2018 remains to be high, above the national average (by 5% and amounts to 11%; of them only 29% were referred to vocational training and retraining.

In 2018 only 35% of unemployed were covered with active employment policies. Employment services mainly use theresources of the primary and secondary vocational education. And the share of social protection costs in the MLSD budget is 0,5%, including the unemployment benefits – 0,03%, or 35 mln som.the payments on the training voucher for officially registered unemployed is 5,0 thousand som, while the actual cost of training is several times higher.

There is a low level of digital literacy among the rural population, limited awareness of digital technologies among public organization employees, mistrust on the part of citizens and their reluctance to use electronic services, due to lack of awareness and other socio-economic reasons; lack of personnel with necessary qualifications, as well as the risk of digital inequity between urban and rural populations.

The National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040 sets the task of ensuring coherence between the system of vocational education and the labour market. Programs for training and retarining unemployed should build on the use of modern information technologies and online services. It is obvious that at present specialists are required that are prepared to working under constant social and technological changes.

Acquiring basic information technology skills will foster the promotion of digital services.

Recommendations:

- 1. Consider the issue of increasing payment for vocational training in established size, with defining thre funding sources and submit a proposal.
- Develop digital literacy courses in partnership with commercial companies and educational
 institutions and implement them in all lyceums and colleges. Courses should be adjusted to the
 needs of various social groups (for example, youth, seniors, persons with disabilities, etc.).
 Training of citizens can be organised through municipal or state social order in vocational
 education institutions.
- 3. With view of reducing youth unemployment and promoting working occupations, provide more information on the situation at the labour market for various groups of society. Use various formats and opportunities for informing the population.





- 4. Review the restriction on registration of unemployed by residence registration, because internal migration is growing, and residence registration in the region limits the access of unemployed to training
- 5. Institutionalize the methodology for the analysis of the demand for skilled labour (MLSD).

3. Building Block C: Social Environment and Individual Demand for VET

C. 1. 1. Participation in VET

An important factor in ensuring access to primary vocational education is that it is free for persons under 28 years of age for the first time applying for primary vocational education programs.

The system of primary vocational education creates opportunities for tuition-free vocational and general secondary education; nevertheless, the enrolment is not increasing. The number of state-subsidised students in the VET system remained stable at the level of 25-27 thousand people over the past five years.

Meanwhile, more than 90 thousand people study in secondary vocational education, with fee-based students prevailing.

According to the NSC of the Kyrgyz Republic, the economically active population of the country is growing and totals 2,547. 4 thousand people (2017), of whom 1 577. 1 thousand are without vocational education.

Table 3.1

Involvement of youth in PVET and SVET (from the population aged 15-17 years)

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018
Involvement	11,5%	11,6%	12,2%	12,0%

Learning outcomes in high school

One should note the low level of education in secondary schools; children come after grade 9 with an extremely low level of knowledge. Previously, this was not a problem for the system of primary vocational education because enrolment was without entrance exams, through simple testing.

In the 2017-2018 academic year, the Ministry of Education and Science of the KR conducted for the first time the accreditation of schools, offering programs of basic and secondary general education through new procedures and instruments for the assessment of education quality, developed in line with international practices.

Vocational schools from most regions of the country were involved in the accreditation of general education programs – 5 schools from the urban area and 11 from the rural area.

Based on the conclusions of expert commissions, the Board of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic accredited:

- for a period of 5 years - five schools, which is 31% of those accredited





- for a period of 1 year 11 schools 69%;
- there were no non-accredited educational organizations.

This form of accreditation has become mandatory since 2018, and now educational institutions, including vocational schools, are responsible for the results of accreditation, and therefore for the quality of general education programs.

There is no standard national test for measuring high school performance, other than the National assessment of education progress (NAEP), which previously related to the 8th grade students.

The aim of NAEP is to obtain an objective and scientifically sound understanding of the knowledge and abilities of grade 8 students set in the national education standard.

The assessment was conducted in 2017 in three languages (Kyrgyz, Russian and Uzbek) throughout Kyrgyzstan.

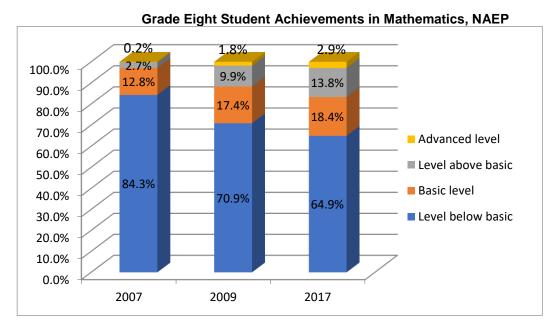
Three subjects were identified for the assessment: mathematics, reading and comprehension, and natural sciences (chemistry, physics, biology and physical geography). This assessment recognizes four levels of achievement: below basic, basic, above basic, and advanced.

Math proficiency tested in 2017 showed that 35.1 % of students had a basic level or above, higher than in previous years (15.7 % and 29.1 % in 2007 and 2009 respectively). However, this result is still low, as only 18.4 % of students have basic level results, 13.8 % above basic level and 2.9 % advanced level. The average score in 2017 was 524.4; this is higher than in previous years.



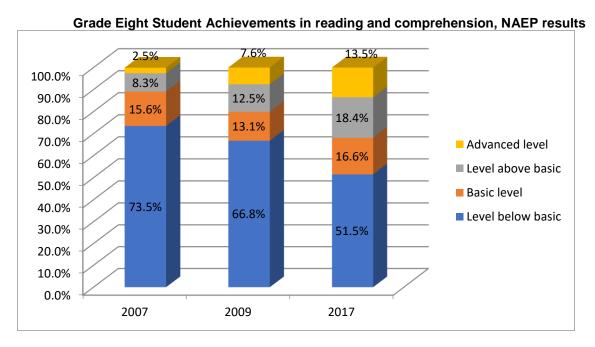


Diagram 3.1



Source: Report on NAEP, CAETM 2017

Diagram 3.2



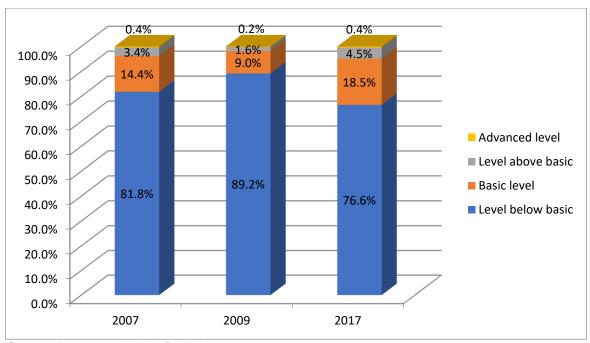
Source: Report on NAEP, CAETM 2017

The lowest scores of the grade 8 students in NAEP of 2017 were in natural sciences. In 2009, little more than 10 % of grade 8 students achieved basic level or higher as compared to 18.2 % in 2014 and 23.4 % in 2017. The share of grade 8 students who demonstrated knowledge and skills at a level above basic in 2017 increased by 4.5 %, which is both higher than in 2009 and in 2007. Indicator of advanced level of knowledge and skills remained insignificant, as in 2007.





Diagram 3.3
Grade Eight Student Achievements in science, NAEP results



Source: Report on NAEP, CAETM 2017

The are 120,0 thousand people in the age group of 15-29 years in the country without basic general education - 9 years of secondary school, which prevents them from getting secondary general education (11 grades) and also makes it impossible to get secondary vocational and higher education.

However, according to the law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Primary Vocational Education" they may get vocational education with a period of training of 1-2 years (without the right for a certificate of secondary education) "Where appropriate, conditions are created for obtaining a profession for persons without basic general education".

Besides, they can obtain basic general education (9 classes) in the evening school. According to MIS in 2018, 14 people without basic education enrolled programs with the training period of 1-2 years.

Exemption from army service for the period of study in the PVET system as stipulated by the Resolution of the KR Government № 365 dated 21.06.2000 "On amendments to the Decree of the Government of the KR dated 23.04.1993 No. 173 "On granting postponement of military service to some categories of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic" could be considered as access to education.

However, this provision was waived by the Resolution of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic dated July 25, 2014 No. 424.

With view of supporting and developing alternative forms of education, a Regulation on obtaining primary vocational education in the form of externship was developed. However, this form of training has





limitations, since professional training requires special facilities, pedagogical control over individual processes.

Therefore, the Government Resolution No. 54 of 13.02.2007 "On the List of Occupations and Specialties in Which Primary Vocational Education in the Form of Externship is not Allowed" was adopted.

Currently, distance learning is being considered for introducing, and is supported by the Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Approval of Regulatory Legal Acts Regulating Distance Education Technologies" dated June 26, 2014 No. 354.

However, there are a number of problems, and despite the measures taken, one cannot say that access to vocational education is fully ensured.

One obstacle is poverty, especially in rural areas. Thus, according to the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, there is highly uneven expense distribution. In 2018, according to the survey, spending of the richest quintile 4.3 times exceeded spending of the poorest quintile.

The survey results show that the poverty level in 2018, calculated on consumer expenditures was 22.4 percent for the country as a whole and decreased by 3.2 percentage points as compared to the preceding year.

The value of the general poverty line in 2018 amounted to 32,679 soms per capita per annum, the value of extreme poverty being 17,471 soms. The poverty rate in rural areas decreased by 4.8 percentage points and in urban areas by 0.4 percentage points.

In 2018, 1 million 429 thousand people lived below poverty line in, of which 68.0 percent were residents of rural settlements³⁶.

Thus, rural youth has access predominantly to vocational education, given that vocational lyceums (VLs) are mostly located in the rural area, as well as in mountainous, cross-border and hard-to-reach areas. Rural youth can participate in other levels of education, including secondary vocational, in the cities, depending on their financial situation. One should note that almost all colleges are located in urban areas.

Other problems include the following:

- Students experience financial difficulties for travelling to the place of study, food, as well as insufficient dormitory places.
- The programs offered do not necessarily meet young people's needs. Even though most schools
 have tried lately to update the list of occupations offered, still they mostly focus boys (car mechanic,
 plumber, electrician, crane operator, etc.) For girls, the choice of occupations is restricted to the
 standard list: cook, seamstress, farmer-mistress).
- For the last 3-4 years infrastructure is modernised in more than 70% of schools, thanks to projects, but in general, the school equipment lags behind the employers' requirements and the labour market in general.
- The absence of a stable system of cooperation between educational institutions and enterprises creates problems with practical training and subsequent employment.
- Problems with developing income-generating activities, marketing goods and services produced during training, in particular in rural areas,
- Insufficient conditions for training of PwDs: few specialized programs, methodological materials, lack
 of trained specialists, inadequate living conditions in dormitories, learning environment³⁷.

³⁷ The rationalization strategy of the system of primary and secondary vocational education until 2021



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³⁶ National Statistical Committee, The Living Standard of the Population of the Kyrgyz Republic 2018-4-2018.



C. 1. 2. VET opportunities for vulnerable and marginalized groups

The following groups of people are referred to marginal groups, that need some level of education: orphans or children left without parental care, and other children in difficult situations; neglected and street children and adolescents; children and adolescents with deviant behaviour; children experiencing (having experienced) abuse and domestic violence; families, including families with many children, suffering from an unfavourable moral and psychological climate in the family; persons suffering from drug addiction and (or) alcoholism; persons suffering from incurable diseases and AIDS; persons released from correctional institutions; persons in special educational institutions; persons without definite residence; persons having experienced physical and mental violence.

According to the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Basics Social Services to the Population", persons from the following groups have the right to study in the system of vocational education:

- citizens (adults and children) with disabilities;
- orphans or children left without parental care, children in crisis or difficult life situation;
- street children and adolescents;
- children experiencing (having experienced) abuse and domestic violence;
- persons who have served their sentences in prison;
- persons in correctional institutions (system of SSEP under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic).

One of the directions in the Education Development Strategy for 2012-2020 (EDS) is supporting and ensuring access to education for all categories of the population, in particular for persons with disabilities. As of 2018, the total number of disabled persons in the Kyrgyz Republic at the age of 18-35 years is 18288. Of them 1869 are persons with hearing disability, 1622 disabled persons with a musculoskeletal apparatus disorders.

As of 2018, the number of 420 PwD participated in vocational training, including 201 women³⁸.

Training of PwD is organised in vocational schools, having appropriate conditions, specialised programs, and shorter working week (28 hours per week).

Persons with disabilities can obtain an occupation at home in accordance with the Regulations on Obtaining Primary Vocational Education in the Form of Externship.³⁹

Orphans or children left without parental care, other children in a crisis or difficult life situation; neglected and street children and adolescents; children experiencing (having experienced) abuse and violence in the family may study in an ordinary school or in rehabilitation groups of vocational lyceums.

Students from socially vulnerable groups of the population, rehabilitation groups, and orphans have the following social benefits:

- social scholarship depending on the duration of study and academic performance:
 - those in a 10 months training program, not provided with food, and having excellent grades receive 500 soms, those graded as good and excellent get 400 soms, those only graded as good get 300 soms,
 - those in a 2-3 year training program, provided with food, having excellent grades receive 300 soms, graded as excellent and good get 250 soms, only graded as good get 200 soms.
 - orphans, children left without parental care, having disabilities in mental development, are entitled to a social scholarship for full-time education in the amount of 624 soms.
- free meals according to the established norms of 110 som per day.
- clothes, footwear, bedding, medicines, textbooks, educational materials, stationery according to established norms.

³⁹ Order by the Agency for Primary Vocational Education No. 1/38 dated 29.01.2008



³⁸ Administrative data by APVE



3000 soms as severance benefit.

There is no tracking of students from rehabilitation groups by gender.

In the system of the State Service for Execution of Punishments, compulsory primary education or vocational training is organised for convicts with no qualification in which the convict can work in this institution and after his release. There are six vocational schools in the system of primary vocational education opened in correctional institutions for the training of convicts. Training of convicts is delivered by occupations in a training or manufacturing workshop. Convicts master qualification as welder, electrician, joiner - carpenter.

The duration of training and the workload of students are set depending on the conditions. The main training period is 10 months. Training groups are completed from persons having a relatively equal level of education without age restrictions. Training in vocational schools ends up with final qualification examinations, with awarding respective qualification and issuing a certificate.

There is a correctional facility for women, where 300 people are detained. Occasionally, girls aged 14-18 are referred to this institution. For example, in 2017 there were two teenage girls. This is because there is no specialized institution in the Kyrgyz Republic for teenage girls who have committed offences. Training is delivered on the occupation of seamstress, hairdresser, electrician, as well as new occupations: vegetable grower, baker, pastry cook, plasterer-tiler.

For adolescents held in correctional institutions, the administration and the authorized state education body create conditions for obtaining basic general and primary vocational education, as well as for self-education (the law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Education"). The branch is opened at vocational school № 7 (SSEP) where children are trained as computer users, gas welders. Adolescents in conflict with the law, having committed offense prior to the enrolment to vocational schools, having a criminal record, can be admitted at the request of the Internal Affairs organs for a probationary period of 3 months.

If there are no identity documents of the teenager, the educational institution has the right to apply to law enforcement agencies with a request for identification of the teenager.

Problems with access to and participation in VET.

Rural lyceums are not attractive for young people: no new specialties are introduced due to the lack of engineering and pedagogical personnel, of modern facilities, required training programs, there is no place to practice, there is no opportunity to find a job. For example, 90% of rural lyceums train machine operators, but for practical training, there are no polygons, machinery, and aggregates. Training is delivered on outdated equipment. Cooks, seamstresses, machine operators, builders are trained every year, regardless of whether or not there are jobs.

In rural schools conditions for training are insufficient (programs, methods, personnel, dormitories with required conditions for PwDs). Not enough funds are allocated for PwD support, for purchasing medicines, soap, detergents, bed linen, not enough educators, and health workers.

Criminalization of youth is observed. In lyceums, many have to drop out of school because of conflicts among students, extortion, and crime.

However, the main problem with access and participation in VET in rural areas is poverty. The low level of well-being of the population is the main reason of poverty. The lack of financial resources forces a part of the population to survive, and in this situation, children suffer most.

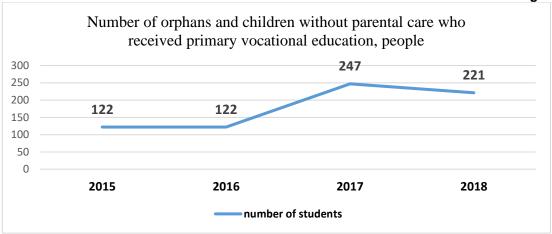
Over the period 2014-2018, the value of the child poverty index in the country as a whole increased from 70.1 percent to 73.5 percent. Improvement in each of the six sub-indices that make up the child poverty index was observed.





At the same time, the sub - index of education and upbringing increased by 7.4 percentage points, demographic losses - by 6.8 percentage points, material child poverty— by 3.4 percentage points, child deprivation - by 1.9 percentage points, child risks-by 0.8 percentage points and the sub-index of health increased by 0.4 percentage points⁴⁰.

Diagram 3.4.



Source: Report of the Agency for Primary Vocational Education: the SDG matrix of indicators

Students of rural lyceums are forced to skip classes during the agricultural season (March-November). This is because they need to help their families, and there is an opportunity to earn. Parents refuse to let students into classes. This affects the quality of education.

Students of rural vocational lyceums are unable to buy school supplies, class materials for industrial training.

Unfavourable situation in the family, addicted to drink parents, parents in migration, early marriage of girls force students to drop out of education.

VET promotes educational opportunities for young people and adults from disadvantaged groups through:

- vocational training and development of professional skills: special curricula, the right to choose study in a rehabilitation group or through an inclusive program, individual forms of training
- development of life, core skills (educational process), health support (sports, summer recreation, medical examination), professional and career guidance, consultation, psychological support. There are positions of psychologist, educator and health worker.
- clubs and sports activities.

C. 1. 3. Policies to improve VET access and participation

The policies on access to vocational education are reflected in the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, Labour Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, Code of the Kyrgyz Republic on Children, The Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On the Rights of and Guarantees to Persons with Disabilities", Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Basic Social Service to the Population in the Kyrgyz Republic".



National Statistical Committee, The Living Standard of the Population of the Kyrgyz Republic 2018-4-2018.



Students of orphanages after receiving basic general education have the right for free primary vocational education. Time of students training in the full-time program in the system of primary vocational education is added to the years of pensionable service in accordance with the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Graduates are employed according to contracts between PVSs and organizations regardless of ownership, organizational and legal forms, or individually in accordance with the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic.

If there are medical contraindications that prevent training in the chosen occupation, the state-subsidised student has the right to obtain another occupation free of charge. Education of orphans and children without parental care is supported by the state until the age of majority.

For the purpose of socialization of the above-mentioned groups and further employment, rehabilitation centres opened in 20 vocational schools, in which: orphans (231 people); children with disabilities (286 people); social orphans (132 people) are trained.

The Education Development Strategy for 2012-2020 (EDS), the Education Development Concept until 2020 states that the education system will integrate inclusive education at all levels of education by 2020.

The strategy of training and retraining of skilled workers by the system of primary vocational education for 2019-2023 includes the following performance indicators:

- the share of young students aged 15-24 years in the PVET system is doubled (from 3 to 6%);
- employment rate of graduates of the PVET system reached 70% (current 62%);
- the share of adult students aged 25-64 years in the PVET system increased (from 0.5% to 2 %);
- the share of students from vulnerable groups in the PVET system is 10% (current share is 5.7%);

In 2018, the number of inclusive programs developed for training off-the-school youth and PwD increased: 14 inclusive programs for training PwD were developed.

C. 1. 4. Promoting VET access and participation for vulnerable and marginalized groups

Vocational schools with rehabilitation centres, along with educational activities, provide for social and labour rehabilitation of minors from low-income families, orphans, children from orphanages and other socially vulnerable categories in specialised groups.

Prior to the beginning of training, a medical, psychological and physical examination of persons with disabilities is done. Individual student development plans, based on their level of knowledge, are developed, together with a representative of the Ministry of Labour and social workers, for further training in the rehabilitation group. If necessary, individual training is organised⁴¹.

Enrolment is based on the decision of the admission committee. This category of students is trained in rehabilitation groups, but there are students enrolled in an inclusive system together with other students, in the same institution, in a regular study group, in accordance with the chosen occupation.

Training is delivered according to special curricula, in Kyrgyz and Russian languages; individual forms of training and additional training are provided⁴².

⁴² Information of APVE on ensuring access to education for people with disabilities in the system of vocational education, as of $01.01.2017\,$



⁴¹ Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic On measures of Social and Labor Rehabilitation of Minors from Low-Income Families, Orphans, Disabled People, Children from Orphanages and Oher Socially Vulnerable Categories. (1999), http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/33960



For improved employability on the labour market upon completion of training, the training format is revised, a competence-based modular system of training is introduced. In 2017 - 2018, 13 programs for rehabilitation groups were developed and tested. Upon completion of the training, an independent certification conducted under the GIZ project⁴³.

Based on the specifics of rehabilitation groups, training programs not only provide professional knowledge and skills, but also teach to apply them in different situations, develop the ability to independent social and family life.

During 2017 and 2018, within the second ADB "Vocational Education and Skills Development" project, the Skills Development Fund (SDF) in cooperation with the national employment services and relevant organizations dealing with PwD trained 477 PwD in all regions of the country in the following areas: PC user, seamstress, carpenter, nail service master. The training was delivered at the request of various organizations/associations that work with PwD.

In vocational schools the positions of psychologist, educator and health worker, sign language interpreters were introduced, but due to low wages, the schools experience an acute shortage of these specialists.

Forty schools have been renovated considering possible training of PwD: ramps, classrooms and toilets on the first floors and other conditions.

Schools work with employers on employment of children without parents, PwD after graduation of training. A representative meeting was organised in early 2019 on this topic, with the participation of deputies of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic, employers, orphan and PwD students.

C. 1. 5. Flexible VET provision in support of participation in VET

The PVET and SVET systems can provide access to courses, qualifications, flexible training regimes for young people, adults and young people. One should note the low level of education in secondary schools; children come after grade 9 with an extremely low level of education.

In the 2017-2018 academic year, MES KR conducted for the first time accreditation of PVSs, implementing programs of basic and secondary education with the use of new procedures and instruments of education quality evaluation, developed to meet international practices (more details in Block in block C. 1. 1.).

Within the second ADB "Vocational Education and Skills Development" project, competency-based modular training programs were developed. These programs were tested and delivered in pilot lyceums, which showed that these programs provide an opportunity for:

- entering the labour market upon completion of modules and returning to continue training at any convenient time.
- obtaining a partial qualification or a qualification drawing on units of learning outcomes
- learning according to individual training programs,
- introducing distance learning.

The results of testing new programs in 23 vocational schools and 18 colleges showed that the PVET and SVET systems are ready to shift to an outcome-based system of education, but no regulatory documents

⁴³ Minutes of the Round Table on Amending the Legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic on Disability Issues, Access to Education for People with Disabilities, Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic, September 18, 18, p. 1.





developed for implementation (financing, certification, apprenticeship, etc.), the introduction of modular technology is fragmented and non-systemic⁴⁴.

Short-term courses have become a significant segment in vocational training programs offered by VSs (47% of all PVS graduates in 2018). The number of students in energy courses grew to 48 %, to 78% in mining industry, to 89% in the financial sector, to 64% for information technology, and to 56 % in the food industry.

At the same time, training in agriculture, construction, light industry and mechanical engineering has dropped. The Skills Development Fund provides training for women, out-of-school youth, and persons with disabilities to improve employment opportunities.

Special attention on the organisation of short-term courses was paid to rural educational institutions. There were 20,726 applications for training, 46.5% of them from employers.

In total, over two years, SDF trained 17,503 people in 15 batches, 49% of them being female. 477 PwD were trained in all the regions in various occupations. Employment rate of graduates of short-term courses trained through SDF amounted to about 75%, since training was delivered at enterprises; many graduates were employed at these enterprises. In order to get new orders SDF held meetings with employers, organised PR-campaigns, created SDF accounts in social networks, mailbox. Schools cooperating with SDF learned to apply new approaches, methods of work with the external environment, with employers, to develop a marketing policy.⁴⁵

C. 1. 6. Validation of non-formal and informal learning

Developing information technologies, unpredictable labour market, urges independent mastering of new competencies to avoid becoming unemployed, and the recognition of non-formal education in Kyrgyzstan becomes relevant. The Education Development Strategy in the Kyrgyz Republic 2012-2020 comprises a separate section on the adult education system reform.

The system of non-formal education covers professionally directed and general cultural courses of training, retraining, advanced training in vocational lyceums, colleges, universities, centres of continuous education, adult education centres, on various intensive training courses.

More than 1,000 centres in the country have a state license to provide informal educational programs for adults, the unemployed population, to increase their competitiveness in the labour market. There are 12 adult education centres in all regional centres of Kyrgyzstan, which offer various vocational courses; training for special target groups: single mothers, pensioners, unemployed women, migrants, and youth at risk.

Student training fees, co-financing of employment services, grants, voluntary contributions from business structures, and funding under state programs is the source of funding for the courses.

The system of non-formal education does not give the right for a state-recognised document that ensures the change of professional status. For the recognition of professional qualifications through non-formal education, there is no approved national qualifications framework describing the levels and types of professional activities, although the ADB project developed professional standards, competency-based training programmes. Procedures, mechanisms, forms of documents (certificates) on recognition of non-formal education have not been developed.

⁴⁵ Project Completion report of the Second ADB "Vocational Education and Skills Development" Project



⁴⁴ Kyrgyz Republic. Education Sector Overview 2007-2017



The GIZ project, with the aim of promoting employment, is piloting mechanisms for the recognition of nonformal education through the validation of acquired competencies. This is particularly important for migrants.

The lyceums have the informal education experience: training in clubs, circles, various courses, trainings, short programs.

For example, VL No. 43 organises seminars, trainings in production of organic fertilizers for farmers, the Lyceum issues own certificates, only they are not educational documents recognized by the state as official.

C. 2: Equity and equal opportunity in VET

C. 2. 1. Success of learners in VET.

The analysis of the enrolment and graduation ratio in primary vocational education shows that the share of dropouts increased; if in 2014, there were 2087 people (7.2%), in 2018 it was 2464 people (7.8%). This is an alarming symptom for the PVET system and requires a more detailed analysis of the dropout reasons.

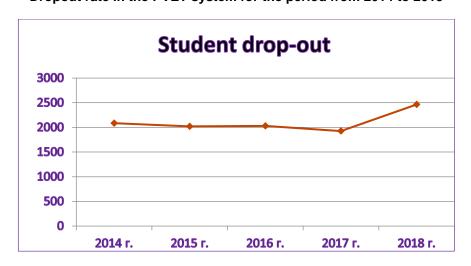
The main reasons for high dropout are:

- migration (students drop out of school to work outside the country);
- poverty students do not have money for travelling, clothes (children are forced to drop out of school and go to work to sustain the family).

Young people with low level of education and low motivation come to PVET and SVET institutions.

Diagram 3.5

Dropout rate in the PVET system for the period from 2014 to 2018



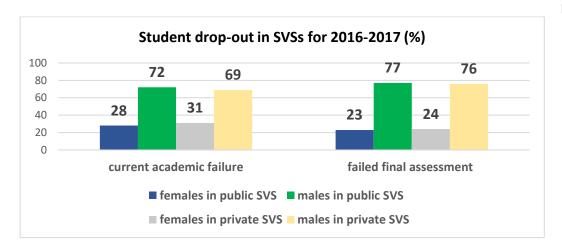
Source: Administrative data of the Agency for Primary Vocational Education

At the same time, the employers' requirements to the level of specialist training are raising due to complex conditions of modern production, the development of new technologies.





Diagram 3.6.



Source: Administrative data of the Agency for Primary Vocational Education

The analysis of the tracer study questionnaire revealed the following reasons of students drop-out from educational institutions:

- change of family status (creation of a family, birth of a child);
- difficult financial situation in the family (the need to earn money);
- learning difficulties;
- poor socio-communal and sanitary conditions in the educational institution;
- dissatisfaction with training quality, in particular in the organization of practices.

From PVS and SVS teachers' point of view, the main reason of dropout is weak school education, low level of functional literacy, weak arithmetic skills, failing students, poor student attendance.

PVS and SVS provide support to help students remain engaged in the learning process and complete the course. Teachers, masters of industrial training drawing on student's attendance, behaviour, and social status develop programs of social assistance, consultations in training.

The results of the final exams in lyceums in 2018, under independent assessment by employers in the framework of GIZ F and ADB projects on the project showed a sufficient level of competence of PVS and SVS graduates.

In the process of training, focus is on developing entrepreneurial abilities and qualities that ensure the competitiveness as young entrepreneurs of graduates, including orphans and persons with disabilities. Such competencies as critical thinking / problem solving, creativity; communication and teamworking are developed.

However, the programs, methods for training effective behaviour, adaptation to changes in the labour market are insufficient.





Over the past three years, in PVET and SVET there is a system of training on building a successful professional career: occupational skill competitions are held in lyceums, among lyceums, championships of occupations, trainings, seminars to improve the competitiveness of students.

C. 2. 2. VET learners in need of additional learning and training support

The PVET and SVET systems provide for additional support measures for young people from socially vulnerable groups, especially in rural educational institutions. In the PVET system, 80% of the trainees are unemployed, refugees, migrant children, teenagers from single-parent vulnerable families, disabled persons, orphans, social orphans⁴⁶.

Students need additional support during the adaptation period in lyceums and colleges to remain involved in the educational process and continue their education when facing some difficulties. Many students cannot get used to the new team, to new forms of training organization, they feel insecure, feel a sense of fear.

Every year, 10 % of the newly enrolled quit schools at an early stage. Psychologists, educators in schools are foreseen, but in fact, they are difficult to find, they do not apply because of small wages.

Additional support is needed in solving problems related to academic performance. School graduates who do not read or write well come to PVS. In SVET students experience information overload, lack of time to prepare for classes, due to the inability to plan their activities.

Schools try to involve them in the educational process through consultations, additional classes, but the lack of masters, teachers create difficulties. In addition, mechanisms, tools, methods for defining additional support in training and employment have not been developed.

No additional measures are envisaged formally. Involving students in the learning process depends on the initiative of each school.

Masters and teachers help students to solve different problems affecting academic performance, with housing, health problems, etc.

C. 2. 3. Measures in support of equity in VET

The law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women" (as amended By the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic dated 14 July 2011 No. 97, the National Development Strategy for 2018-2040 and the Government Program for 2018-2022 provide for the development of human capital through quality in education and health care with the necessary social support for vulnerable groups of the population.

With regard to children and young population, comprising 56 per cent of the population, the Government pursues a policy aimed at strengthening youth as a state asset and promoting their active citizenship. The Resolution of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic dated July 19, 2019 No. 360, the Concept of Inclusive Education Development in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2019-2023 note:

- In order to provide vocational education to persons with special educational needs, special educational conditions shall be created at the level of primary and secondary vocational education, including:
 - barrier-free environment in education and training;

⁴⁶ Education Development Strategy 2012-2020, National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic 2018-2040 "Unity, Trust, Creation"





- technical equipment of the educational process and the development of training courses for teachers and other participants of the educational process aimed at developing their interaction with students with special educational needs;
- development and implementation of special programs aimed at facilitating the adaptation of young people with special educational needs to the conditions of the primary and secondary vocational education schools.

According to the Concept, the main measures aim at developing a national policy on vocational education. Key policy provisions will include:

- (1) institutional development of schools;
- (2) standardization and certification of skills;
- (3) support for transition from study to work;
- (4) setting the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the vocational education sector, and some other.

Big importance will be attached to employers' involvement in the organization of the training process and the assessment of lyceum and college graduate training outcomes and qualification.

Short-term modular training courses (integrated short-term training programs, modular training) will be increased in order to ensure access of vulnerable young people at the age of 14-25 years and adults aged 25-64 years to primary and secondary vocational education.

Adult education centres, centres for validation of qualifications of adults and adapted for migrant workers programmes are set up. Pilot educational centres of excellence will be created, integrating programs of primary and secondary vocational education, most popular on the current and future labour market⁴⁷.

C. 2. 4. Inclusive education and VET

The Concept for Inclusive Education Development in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2019-2023 and Government Decree No. 360 of 19 July 2019 define inclusive education, as "Inclusive education is education ensuring equal access to education for all students, with account of diverse special educational needs and individual opportunities". Kyrgyzstan signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2011. On March 14, 2019, the law on ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was signed.

In Kyrgyzstan, in recent years, a number of legal documents have been developed, which set out protection and support strategies, a number of medical, social, pedagogical and professional medical rehabilitation measures for persons with disabilities, which aim at inclusion⁴⁸.

As of January 2018, the economically active population accounted for 2,525,200 people, of which 181,400 are PwD (7.2 % of the population).

PwD training groups were set up in 17 vocational schools. From 2013 to 2017, 2536 young people with disabilities were trained.

Today, the PVET system is ready to offer various training courses tailored to the needs of persons with disabilities, depending on the form and degree of disability. PVET schools started specialising in training by types of disability.

⁴⁸ Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on Social Services for the Population in the Kyrgyz Republic (2001); A set of measures to ensure the rights and improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2014-2017;



 $^{^{47}}$ Strategy for training and retraining of skilled workers in the primary vocational education system for 2019 - 2023



In PVET, PwD are trained in restaurant and hotel business, clothing industry, confectionery, shoemaking, agriculture, metalworking, IT technologies.

VL No. 27 trained from 2016 to 2018 specialists in the field of metalworking, trains PwD as electric welder, car repair mechanic, category "B" driver. In rural vocational schools, vegetable growers are trained.

Most of PwD are enrolled in rehabilitation groups. Children with disabilities are trained through special curricula, in Kyrgyz and Russian languages, through individual forms of education; additional classes are provided. For effective work with PwD, for quick integration in the team, developing their labour skills, positions of psychologist, educator and medical worker were introduced; sign language interpreters were introduced in groups where children with hearing and speech disabilities are trained.

With the GIZ support in 2016 workshops for PwD, social village "Manas" were created. Short-term courses "milk processing", "production of hygienically pure milk in animal husbandry", "baking of bakery products" are organized.

With the ADB support, 41 schools have improved access to education for persons with disabilities.

C. 3: Active support to employment. Employment rate of recent graduates by gender and program

C. 3. 1. Employability of VET graduates

Employment of PVET and SVET is defined by the following regulations:

- Labour Code of the Kyrgyz Republic of 4 August 2004;
- The Code on Children of August 7, 2006;
- Regulations on the assignment and use of graduates of higher and secondary special educational institutions of the Kyrgyz Republic" dated July 8, 1993 No. 296 as amended on February 2, 2010 N 52.
- Agreement between educational organizations of primary vocational education and organizations regardless of ownership.

Employment of graduates of educational institutions of higher and secondary education is based on the "Regulations on the assignment and use of graduates of higher and secondary special educational institutions of the Kyrgyz Republic", approved by the Government Resolution No. 296of 8 July 1993. "Graduates of higher and secondary special educational institutions who have completed a full course of study and defended the diploma project (work), passed the state exams, are assigned by the decision of the commissions on personal assignment according to the specialty and qualification acquired and are considered young specialists for three years from the date of conclusion of their employment contract with the administration."

Employment of graduates of primary vocational education should draw on contracts between the educational organization of primary vocational education and the organizations irrespective of organizational and legal forms and forms of ownership, or individually in accordance with the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic. (Article 20 of the Law "On Primary Vocational Education"). However, in fact, this norm is not observed in practice.

Monitoring of the employment of PVS graduates became an innovation in the system of vocational education in Kyrgyzstan, as a method for determining the quality of education in educational institutions.





Tracer study was first introduced in 2013 with the support of the European Training Foundation. However, this work fully developed within the second ADB project. Schools track the activities of their graduates 9 months after graduation. The program was launched in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic, and the Agency for Primary Vocational Education.

Analysis of responses from 2017 graduates showed the following results: 81.3 % are employed, they found a job in1 to 6 months after graduation; and, 18% were employed after practical training in the field, 17, 3 % are self-employed by occupation, 80% - work in the Kyrgyz Republic;

69% - work in their specialty;

78% - are satisfied with the quality of training;

74% - would choose again the same educational institution;

68% - would choose the same specialty;

70% - used their acquired skills;

70% - do not need retraining.

In addition to knowledge and skills in the specialty, graduates (81,3) acquired such qualities as the ability to develop new ideas and solutions (79,0%), the ability to easily adapt to changing working conditions (76,8%), the ability to effectively organize their working time (78,4%), the ability to work productively with others (71,3%), the ability to apply theory in practice (73,7%), the ability to solve problems (78,8%), feel responsible (74,7%).

For the question on the "Probability of choosing the same specialty", 68 % of the respondents chose the same specialty, which indicates a good career guidance campaign of educational institutions. However, 29 % of graduates said they chose the wrong occupation. Statistics of 2017 showed that about 69% of graduates of all professional educational institutions of Kyrgyzstan were employed in their specialty⁴⁹.

C. 3.2. Economic factors with an impact on transition

The following economic factors prevent graduates of VET educational institutions from entering the labour market:

- the structure of the economy has changed, with dominating small-scale, raw agricultural sector and the service sector, new jobs are not created, there are few vacancies for highly skilled workers.
- rapid obsolescence of occupations and technologies, emerging new occupations, and thus changing skills requirements of the labour market, require constant and systematic skills improvement, with modern facilities.
- PVET and SVET graduates face problems with employment due to low wages, access to transportation, busy work schedule in the workplace, lack of housing.

C. 3. 3. Overview of policies in support of employability and transition to employment

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic undertakes steps to address the problem of youth employment. One of the solutions for youth employment was the Youth Labour Exchange, with an opportunity for employment and training. The Youth Labour Exchange identified vacancies in enterprises and organizations.

In 2015, there were more than 500 vacancies in education, construction, services, trade and other areas. As a result, 210 people were referred for work and training. The Youth Labour Exchange did considerable work on employing teenagers, in particular graduates of rehabilitation centres and orphanages. At present, the Youth Labour Exchange was closed.

⁴⁹ Project Completion report of the Second ADB "Vocational Education and Skills Development" Project 2019. APVE website: www kesip.kg





Since 2017 and to date, the Agency signed 15 MoUs with leading business associations and with other interested bodies (Crafts Council of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Union of Jewelers and Entrepreneurs on Marketing of Precious Metals and Stones, State Enterprise "National Union of Folk Arts and Crafts "Kyiyal", Association of Small Hydropower, JIA Business Association, the Association of Tour Operators, the Union of Constructors, Association of Light Industry, State Enterprise "Kyrgystourisms", etc.), which undertake to conduct skills competitions and provide graduates with jobs, to participate in the development of training programs, in final qualifying exams, organise industrial practices.

Graduates entering the labour market are in fierce competition, so the curriculum introduced modules on communication skills in such disciplines as "Legal Basis of Professional Activity" and "Healthy Lifestyle", and in career guidance activities, used brochures "From Study to Work" which reflects employer requirements for recruitement, gives practical advice on how to behave during the negotiation process.

C. 3. 4. Career guidance

Career guidance including professional information, professional campaigning, professional advice, vocational selection play important role in reducing the level of unemployed youth in the country. Until 2016-2017, various ministries and departments, each within their powers, independently conducted career guidance among young people, without a common system of career guidance, without a holistic approach.

In 2017 in order to improve the quality of career guidance, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic issued:

- joint MES order No. 1332 \ 1 of September 26, 2017 and the order of the Ministry of Labour and Employment No. 155 of September 29, 2017 "Action Plan for 2017-2018 on the implementation of the concept on developing the system of career guidance for young people»;
- joint action plan on career guidance of the Agency for PVET under the MES KR and Bishkek city Directorate for Employment Promotion of the MLSD KR for 2017-2018. Order 1\84 of 25.05 2017;
- methodological guidelines "Social Marketing and Career Guidance in vocational training»;
- audio and video clips released on 7 sectors of the economy (agriculture, construction, transport, energy, light industry, tourism, services) with information on the average salary of the occupation in the labour market, which are annually broadcast on TV and radio;
- specialised TV and radio programs developed. Bilim.akipress.org website launched to cover the
 educational system of the Kyrgyz Republic (a joint project of "AkiPress" IA and the Ministry of
 Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic), regular coverage of vocational guidance activities of
 the VET system is through this site;
- a governmental media plan is implemented to inform the wide public about training for the garment industry with participation of APVE, vocational schools and the Association "Legprom". Six stories in Kyrgyz and Russian languages were released on national TV channels and radio, articles were published in newspapers.

To implement the Concept of Vocational Guidance of Young People, the Agency for Primary Vocational Education coordinated activities of various international projects: the ADB "Vocational Education and Skills Development" project, that allocated resources for developing quality innovative materials and methods of vocational guidance work, the GIZ (German society for international cooperation) "Promotion of Employment and Vocational Training" program.

In the project supported PVET and SVET schools, annual career guidance plans were adopted and implemented, the championship of working occupations was held for 3 occupations: "electrician", "electric and gas welder", " master of dry construction (plasterboard)", trainings organised on new approaches to career guidance (81 participant) and social marketing (26 participants).

According to the developed legal and regulatory documents on vocational guidance, 98 Vocational Guidance Councils were established and included representatives of partner enterprises, local authorities, schools, employment services.





Offices/centres are functioning that provide students with information, advice on finding places of practical training and employment.

These offices / centres are responsible for finding partners, concluding contracts, providing information and organizing various career guidance activities for school leavers, and also for employers. Every year, these centres hold events to attract applicants to their educational institutions and help their graduates with employment. More than 800 staff and students were instructed to provide career guidance using traditional and innovative methods.

Since 2017, under the GIZ (German society for international cooperation) "Promotion of Employment and Vocational Training" program, the Ministry of Education and Science supports career guidance programs in the school system through a model of social partnership. The partnership model is based on close and sustainable cooperation of employers, schools, vocational lyceums, youth homes, employment promotion offices in three regions of the country and Bishkek. As a result of the project, Memorandums of understanding between social partners were signed in the regions comprising regional employment departments, education departments, labour and social development departments, universities, vocational schools, youth homes and employers, and GIZ. The duties and actions of each social partner were defined within the officially signed Memorandum.

The main achievements of new approaches in career guidance work were as follows:

- changing public attitudes towards the PVET system (positive image);
- admission of applicants to the city schools is through testing on a competitive basis for such
 occupations as cook, tailor, car mechanic, IT-technology specialties;
- changing attitudes towards career guidance of educational institutions themselves.

For systematic career guidance, the Agency has a reserve of certified staff of schools trained in new approaches to career guidance⁵⁰.

Summary and analytical conclusions for Block C.

There are no regular studies in Kyrgyzstan on socially vulnerable category of youth.

There is quantitative analysis of youth in the NEET group, however, the reasons why they do not work, do not study are not defined. Their needs are not studied. In this situation, it is difficult for the VET system to respond to the needs of this category of youth and adults.

There are no programs in the system of professional development to train teachers on working with each individual category of youth and adults. Analytical materials on future skills needs are insufficient. College and vocational programs in each region are not coordinated, with no account of the regional structure of the workforce, gender and the preferences of young people in training and employment. There are insufficient state social programs that promote youth employment through creation of new jobs in promising sectors of the economy, through attracting public funds, funds of private enterprises and investors.

Recommendations:

 Actively use the State Social Order to address the issues of reaching young people and adults from socially vulnerable segments of the population, people with disabilities, introduce incentive mechanisms to enroll people with disabilities in learning. Develop a policy for employing people

⁵⁰ Second ADB "Vocational Education and Skills Development" Project, 2017. "Vocational Education and Skills Development" Project Completion report 2019





with disabilities, socially vulnerable youth and mechanisms for encouraging employers to employ them.

- 2. Cooperate at the system level with mass media on improving the attractiveness of VET for youth and adults.
- 3. Conduct a study to identify the problems of youth from the NEET groupand develop recommendations on attracting this category to the VET system. The PVET and SVET schools need to actively cooperate with employment services, social protection services, socially oriented non-profit organizations (Association of Social Entrepreneurs, etc.), and employers in the organization of training, in employment of the graduates;
- 4. Engage in cooperation a network of socially oriented enterprises for practical training of people with disabilities, orphans, and socially vulnerable youth (cafes, shops, enterprises).
- 5. Improve the capacity of teachers to work with students from vulnerable groups. Use innovative methods and technologies in training (distance learning courses, video courses for people with disabilities). Involve and encourage volunteers among young people in training people with disabilities, at-risk teenagers.
- 6. Develop regulatory legal acts and implementation mechanisms for the component "Accessibility of the environment" (universal design of buildings, premises, equipment, sidewalks, ramps, etc.)

D. INTERNAL EFFICIENCY AND OPERATION OF THE VET SYSTEM

D. 1. Teaching and learning environment

D. 1. 1. Teaching and learning methods, including work-based learning

Organization of the educational process

In the VET system, both in SVET and PVET, training is traditionally divided into theoretical and practical training. Training in the PVET system is peculiar for its practical (industrial) training, the share of which is more than 60 %. Theoretical training is delivered in groups of 25-30 people, and in industrial training, the group is divided into subgroups of 12-15 people. Teachers with specialised education conduct theoretical training; masters of industrial training conduct industrial training. Theoretical training is conducted in classrooms for special disciplines. Industrial training takes place in training workshops equipped in accordance with the qualification trained. Practical training in the workplace is a mandatory component of the curriculum in the PVET system; its share reaches 30-50% of the total time allocated for practical training. Industrial practice is mainly conducted before the completion of the course.





Table 4.1.

The volume of the PVET system infrastructure (thousand soms)⁵¹

	2016		2017		2018	
	thousand	thousand	% increase	thousand	% increase	
	soms	soms		soms		
Infrastructure (incl. equipment)	524 824,1	712 351,1	35,7	865 407,1	21,5	
Repair of buildings and structures	86 830,2	118 431,8	-	55 190,6	-	

In SVET, training is also divided into theoretical and practical. Theoretical training includes both lectures (group is 30 people, a teacher is with specialized education) and laboratory / practical classes (students can be divided into subgroups depending on disciplines; teachers are usually the ones that conducted lectures). To practice skills in the production environment the SVET system provides different types of practices: practical training, industrial placement, pre-graduation internship.

Practical training is usually held in the equipped training workshops of colleges. To conduct classes in training workshops, colleges have training masters, their functions in addition to training students include also monitoring the functioning of existing equipment. The report does not provide information on college facilities.

During industrial and pre-graduate practices, head of the practice from the college and a enterprise is assigned to college students.

The hours of practical training at enterprises vary in different educational institutions and depend on the occupation, equipment of industrial training workshops, and availability of contracts with enterprises on the organization of students' practice.

In each educational institution, contracts with enterprises on the organization of industrial practice (from 4 to 20) are signed. The number of contracts in individual educational institution depends on the location and availability of enterprises/ companies in the region according to the occupations provided.

However, even if VLs have agreements with enterprises, not all the students can have practical training or get jobs at this enterprise. Analysis of the questionnaire "A" of the tracer study showed that not all respondents had internship opportunities, and in some cases, even with the "Yes" answers, they could hardly specify the duration of the internship.

In reality, considering insufficient numbers of enterprises, in particular in the regions, it is difficult for the schools to find places for practice or employment of growing number of students.in this case the students (in particular in SVET have the right to independently find places for production practice.

Currently, in PVET, data through tracer study allows to identify at the system level the number of students who found places for internship or employment (in the enterprise). In the SVET system, the schools undertake this work on the school level and on their own.

Teaching methods

Traditional teaching methods prevail in both PVET and SVET: here the teacher provides basic information on a given topic, and students work on a pre-defined algorithm of actions.

Nevertheless, recently, teachers both in PVET and in SVET are trying to diversify teaching methods and apply innovative approaches: more practice-oriented tasks, project methods, case studies.

⁵¹ Administrative data of the APVE





The requirements for the student-centred training are prescribed in several normative documents for the VET system⁵². However, during the focus group discussions, it was noted that the use of active teaching methods is not applied systematically in PVET and SVET, especially in rural educational institutions.

Standard 4 "Minimum requirements for student-centred learning and assessment of learners' (students') performance" provides for only ".. educational organizations of secondary and higher professional education criteria for the application of innovative teaching resources, pedagogical methods, forms and technologies to improve the quality of education" The existing requirements do not have such a criterion for the PVET system, while the group discussion participants noted that such a criterion was relevant for all levels of vocational education.

Independent work of students promotes the independent learning competences: for SVET students it is 40% of the training time⁵⁴, and for PVET students it is 10-15% of the total time⁵⁵ depending on the training duration (in the PVET system, such principle was included for the first time).

In the SVET system, independent work of students takes various forms: from writing reports on the topic to project work; independent work is evaluated during training and is a mandatory component of educational achievements of students.

The focus group discussion noted that the use of traditional teaching methods is more appropriate in the current environment, because new, innovative approaches are not always possible due to a number of reasons: the teaching staff capacity, the learning environment limitations, the lack of educational materials and equipment. Although the respondents of the focus group discussion noted, that the application of innovative methods was well perceived by students and motivated them to learn, if the appropriate conditions were created, they would apply them more often.

The use of multimedia technologies in the educational process

Within the Second ADB project, a survey of educational institutions was conducted on the use of e-courses in the educational process. The survey covered 42 PVET schools (43%) and 18 SVET schools (12%).

The analysis showed that 24% of the survey participants⁵⁶ indicated that they use electronic learning tools. These are basically ready-made tools downloaded from open Internet sources.

Educational institutions that use electronic learning tools indicated what they use in their professional activities: most of them are electronic textbooks and video courses.

All the materials used are mostly ready-made downloaded from open Internet sources and used during lessons.

⁵⁶ Introduction of e-learning in PVET (Report on the system capacity, Second ADB Project, 2017)



⁵² Government Resolution No. 160 dated March 28, 2018 "On Approval of Acts Regulating the Activities of Secondary Vocational Education schools of the Kyrgyz Republic". Government Resolution No. 41 dated January 22, 2018 "On Approval of the Model State Educational Standards for Primary Vocational Education in the Kyrgyz Republic".

⁵³ Minimal requirements to the accredited educational organisations of primary, secondary and higher professional education of the Kyrgyz Republic (Resolution of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No 525 dated October 4, 206, No 799 dated December 11, 2017)

⁵⁴ Government Resolution No. 160 dated March 28, 2018 "On Approval of Acts Regulating the Activities of Secondary Vocational Education schools of the Kyrgyz Republic".

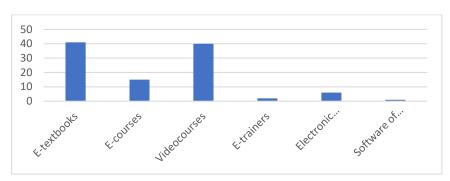
⁵⁵ Government Resolution No. 41 dated January 22, 2018 "On Approval of the Model State Educational Standards for Primary Vocational Education in the Kyrgyz Republic".



Video courses in the finished form taken from the site youtube.com. Creation of their video courses in the course of this analysis is not revealed. These electronic simulators belong to the category of computer simulators on the keyboard.

Diagram 4.1.

Use of electronic learning tools (%)



Source: Introduction of e-learning in the PVET system (system capacity report, ADB project 2, 2017)

The survey showed that the schools (8% of schools)⁵⁷ have experience in creating e-lessons. They are mainly developed with Power Point. These courses are the material of the lesson, collected in a single file with graphics and sound effects.

The focus group discussion noted that the following are main problems of the weak use of multimedia technologies in the system:

- insufficient infrastructure for wide use of electronic resource opportunities;
- the teachers unable for methodical support to the functioning of electronic educational content at the required level of quality.

D.1. 2. Teaching and learning environment

Infrastructure

Since there are no standards in the country for assessing the school infrastructure, the degree of satisfaction may depend on the level of demand and culture of educational environment perception.

There is insufficient systematic information on the infrastructure of vocational schools available in the national official statistics; and it is not fully reliable to analyse how equipped the educational process is. It is very difficult to assess their quality, in the absence of uniform standards for infrastructure and resources.

Mapping of educational institutions is not done in a systematic mode either.

Funding is allocated from the state budget and through donor support for school infrastructure (major repairs). Annual minor repairs are done by educational institutions from own budget.

Almost 80% of PVSs and 30% of SVSs have partially improved their infrastructure, but overall the state of all educational institutions is at the level of 65% of satisfaction.⁵⁸.

⁵⁸ Kyrgyz Republic. Education Sector review for 2007-2017



⁵⁷ Introduction of e-learning in PVET (Report on the system capacity, Second ADB Project, 2017)



Training equipment is a big challenge for all vocational training institutions.

Even though 86 % of the equipment is in working condition⁵⁹, it is obsolete and outdated. Most of this equipment is no longer used in the market today, but schools use them if only to teach the principles of mechanisms.

The same as repair and rehabilitation works, training equipment is mainly provided by donor projects. Over the past 10 years, significant support has been provided by the GIZ, the EU, ADB, ILO in providing PVS and SVS with technical resources. Within the ADB project alone, repair works were carried out in 2015-2017in 41 PVS and 18 SVS, modern training equipment and machinery for 30 working occupations and 15 specialties of secondary vocational education were delivered.

Nevertheless, the infrastructure requires constant improvement, respectively, to ensure mathcing rapidly changing production technologies, training should be conducted on modern equipment.

Equipping educational institutions with computers

An important requirement of the labour market computer skills, so the provision of vocational schools with computers over the past 5 years has improved significantly.

Although the licensing ratio of computers per student for all levels of vocational education is 12:1, in SVET this figure in 2017 was 10 students per computer nationwide.

Provision of educational institutions with computers has improved compared to 2013, but does not yet reach the licensing standard, the national average in 2017 was 15 students per computer.

Since PVET schools are mainly located in rural areas, Internet access is an issue⁶⁰.

In 2017, connection of computers to the local network and access to the Internet improved, thanks to technical support from donor projects and there is a state policy on introducing information technologies, however, there is no data in the official statistics.

In general, the infrastructure and resource provision of vocational schools is satisfactory, but their condition may be different depending on their financial viability and managerial potential. The effectiveness of its use for educational purposes is a more important question.

Availability of multimedia equipment PL (% by region)61

Table 4.4.

Region	Interactive whiteboard	Computers	Projector
Batken Region	50%	100%	70%
Bishkek	44%	89%	100%
Djalal-Abad Region	45%	85%	85%
Issyk-Kul Region	63%	88%	100%
Naryn Region	71%	100%	100%
Osh Region	64%	93%	100%
Talas Region	67%	100%	100%
Чуйская область	40%	93%	80%

⁵⁹ Kyrgyz Republic. Education Sector review for 2007-2017

⁶¹ Introduction of e-learning in PVET (Report on the system capacity, Second ADB Project, 2017)



⁶⁰ Telecom's network channels are mainly used, and these do not allow sufficient use of the Internet for educational purposes.



In the SVET system, over 55% of colleges use multimedia technologies⁶². Teachers conduct open lessons using multimedia support, extracurricular activities, conferences using projectors, electronic TVs, audio and video support of lessons.

In colleges (mainly in colleges under the universities), AVN electronic document flow system was introduced. All mid-term and final assessments are carried out centrally, through testing. Colleges use the MOODLE educational portal, which hosts e-courses developed by teachers.

Under the "Skills for Inclusive Growth Sector Development Program" project, at the end of 2019 it was planned to purchase multimedia equipment and further introduction of such innovative technologies into the educational process in selected colleges.

Access to the Internet is provided in 60% of colleges. SVSs create their sites, pages on the Facebook, have e-mail. Electronic information resources of colleges are not only available to teachers and students, but also to students' parents and social partners.

Libraries of many colleges actively use computer technology, thanks to available appropriate technical facilities and professional staff. Using innovative forms of service to readers, libraries expands information opportunities through the Internet, access to electronic resources, own Web site; also access to Internet resources through wireless technology WI-FI is provided in libraries.

Training material

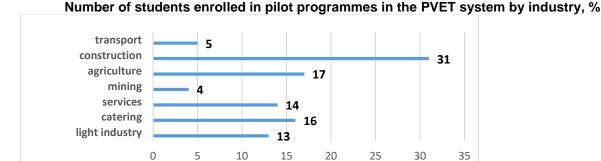
The provision of textbooks and manuals in the educational process does not reach the licensing requirements both in PVET and in SVET. Library collections of educational institutions are updated systematically, but not in big volumes. The availability of educational materials for special subjects in the national language remains a problem, especially for educational institutions in the rural areas.

D. 1. 3. Policies to improve training/teaching and learning methods in VET

Competency-based learning

The transition to competence-based training a main direction of improving training in the VET system. Modular competency-based training programs were developed and tested in 2017-2018 under the ADB "Vocational Education and Skills Development" project The project involved 42 (45 %) PVET schools and curricula for 30 qualifications was developed for them; and 18 (14%) colleges, which curricula developed for 15 specialties (after grade 11).

Diagram 4.2



⁶² Administrative data by MES



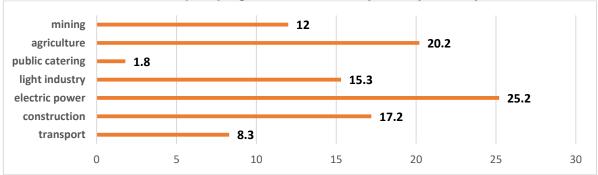


Source: Report on the results of competency-based curriculum piloting (ADB project 2017-2018)

In total, 669 students were enrolled in pilot programs in vocational lyceums, including 36 PwD (5.4 % of the total number of enrolled students), 607 students were enrolled in colleges.

Diagram 4.3





Source: Report on the results of competency-based curriculum piloting (ADB project 2017-2018)

In general, piloting modular programs in the VET system was satisfactory and proved the possibility of using modular technologies in educational institutions of the system.

Regular monitoring of the piloting was organised based on the Monitoring plan and established criteria.

According to most of educational institutions that piloted competence-based modular programs, the advantages of these programs for educational institutions are obvious and provide opportunities for clear formulation of the training program objectives and tasks that meet the employer's needs and is clear to them; actual training of students for work; increased practical training; increased effectiveness of students' and teachers' personal activities; conditions for standard, objective, independent assessing the quality of learning programs.

Teacher/master of industrial training were able to use in the process of implementation, student-centred teaching methods based on independent educational and cognitive activity of students⁶³. The focus group discussion participant⁶⁴ also confirmed that piloting demonstrated good results in the PVET system. The method was piloted in the 2017-2018 academic year.

Participants attribute these results to new approaches: the training was practice-oriented, modular, and student-centred. The documentation developed introduced the concept of learning outcomes. The educational process aimed at their achievement. The so-called "interdisciplinary course" introduced, also helped to concentrate the knowledge needed to perform a particular type of work, which was very difficult to achieve with traditional discipline-based training approach.

At the end of each module, an intermediate assessment was organised, confirming the developed competences, and this allowed students to develop confidence in their skills.

In the PVET pilot schools, an independent evaluation of student learning outcomes was organised upon completion of training. Analysis of the independent assessment results showed that 75.6 % of students

⁶⁴ Focus-group discussion with VET teachers on July 18, 2019.



6

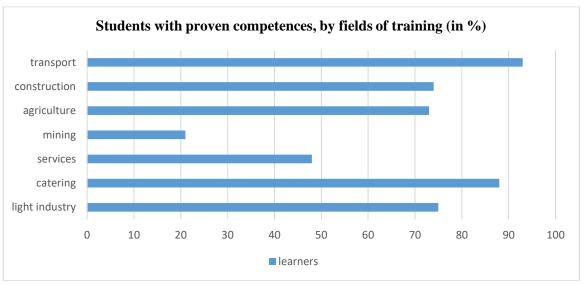
⁶³ Report on the results of competency-based curriculum piloting (ADB project 2017-2018)



that participated in the assessment, confirmed their competences in full. The certification results of were better than those achieved through traditional training.

In the SVET system, piloting still continued in the 2018-2-019 academic year (since the duration of training in colleges is 1 year 10 months), but the focus group participants stressed that this approach is more interesting for students, although it requires more training from the teacher.

Diagram 4.4



Source: Report on the results of competency-based curriculum testing (ADB project 2017-2018)

The focus group participants stressed that in order to ensure the implementation of this approach at the system level, decisions should be made in the following areas:

- updating the structure of the state educational standard and curriculum (the approach was tested through the pilot curriculum) - it was noted that in 2018 the Model state educational standard of primary vocational education was adopted as a policy measure, reflecting the competence-based approaches to curricula, developed for PVET;
- methodological support and continuous monitoring of the implementation of the new approach (while piloting, the support was provided by the project implementation unit);
- capacity building of teachers, training in new methods of teaching and assessment of learning outcomes;
- funding for training supplies and for the evaluation of learning outcomes (in the PVET system the focus group noted the implementation of normative funding in the PVET system as a policy measure under this item);
- compatibility of modular curricula (titles of modules and interdisciplinary courses) with the curricula
 of secondary and higher professional education (name of disciplines) for recognition in fast-track
 studies on similar training areas (participants noted the work, under the policy matrix of the 3rd ADB
 project, on the National qualification system and the National qualifications framework as a policy
 measure to ensure transitions from one level of qualification to another).

On-the-job training

To train VET graduates in accordance with the labour market requirements, more attention is paid in VET system to training in the workplace - training with elements of dual training.





In the PVET system, this approach was initiated and supported by the Agency for Primary Vocational Education. APVE developed a package of normative documents regulating the organization of dual training, which included a Provision⁶⁵ on pilot organization of dual training in PVS, the model agreement on joint organization of training in production, instruction on mentorship in enterprise, apprenticeship contract.

APVE successfully promotes on-the-job training in the following occupations: seamstress, ICT specialist, hairdresser, cook, postal operator, call centre operator. In the framework of on-the-job training, schools have the opportunity to build training programs to employers' requirements. Time for practical training in this form of training organization increases from 60% to 80%. The training schedule depends on the qualification, the enterprise specifics.

There is positive experience of introducing work-based training in the SVET system as well: Technical and Economic College in Kara-Balta organizes dual training in power supply, technology of bread and bakery products, technology of processing of milk and dairy products, winemaking.

The focus group discussion participants noted that this approach is very effective for providing graduates with competencies relevant for the labour market.

D. 1. 4. Improving the training and learning environment

Funding for the improvement of the learning and learning environment comes from three main sources: own funds of educational institutions, public funding and donor support.

In 2017 -2018, a big share of the equipment of schools came through donor support.

Under the second ADB project, support was provided to 59 PVSs, in which 306 workshops and classrooms, 60 computer classes and 33 dormitories were renovated. All renovated workshops were equipped with training equipment and appliancers to deliver training in 45 qualifications PVET and SVET, selected for the implementation of competency-based training.

In addition, 33 dormitories were provided with furniture and bed linen for 2740 places (616 rooms).

Sixty computer classrooms (a 14 computers set) and office equipment (MFP, air conditioning, interactive whiteboard and projector) were installed in the VET system.

With view of introducing MIS and BMAS-1C, one computer with the two-nuclear processor, MFP and 4G modem was delivered to all 99 PVS and four subordinated organisations.

In addition, four hangars were completely reconstructed as a training and production centre (TPC), where 30 workshops, 9 classrooms, warehouses, locker rooms and production shops were set up⁶⁶. With the technical support of GIZ, modern training and production workshops and student greenhouses for the occupations "Plumber" and "Greenhouse business" opened in six vocational schools.

Minor repairs of the buildings and constructions in 23 PVS were funded from the national budget. At the end of 2018 in VS No. 5 a new workshop for training of plumbers opened, equipped with modern technological equipment, tools, furniture, office equipment, and with quality repair of premises made. This workshop opened with the assistance of the German GROHE company and the "Keramin" company in the framework of social partnership and training of highly qualified personnel in the construction industry.

⁶⁶ Project Completion Report of the Second ADB "Vocational Education and Skills Development" project



⁶⁵ APVE order No 25/1 of February 6, 2017 On approval of the Regulation on pilot (experimental) procedure for dual training



The Internet conditions for the educational process were created for all PVSs. The total share of equipped, repaired and introducing multimedia technologies vocational schools was 87.7%⁶⁷.

As part of the state language development program of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, the state budget financed the publication of textbooks in the state language on priority areas of training in the PVET and SVET system.

37 480 thousand copies of educational and methodological materials were purchased for the system with donor support, 29.8% of them are in the state language⁶⁸. Competence-based training materials were developed and translated into the state language in 45 training areas.

D. 2. Teachers and trainers

D. 2. 1. Teaching and training staff in the VET system

Staff standards of educational organizations are normatively fixed in the VET system. As per these norms, educational categories of pedagogical personnel were defined.

Standard teaching staff in the VET system

Table 4.3

Categories of pedagogical personnel			
In PVET ⁶⁹	In SVET ⁷⁰		
Teacher	Teacher		
Sign language interpreter (teacher of hearning impaired persons)	Training master		
Master of production training	Head of production training		
Head of pre-army training (PMT)	Head of physical training		
Head of physical training	Specialist (master of production training) ⁷¹		

Requirements to qualifications of pedagogical personnel are defined in the Model state educational standards of the corresponding level. Teachers of the professional cycle in the system of secondary vocational education must have higher professional education (bachelor, specialist, master) in the relevant specialty or training area⁷².

⁷² Government Resolution No. 160 dated March 28, 2018 "On Approval of Acts Regulating the Activities of Secondary Vocational Education schools of the Kyrgyz Republic".



⁶⁷ Administrative data by MES

⁶⁸ Project completion report of the Second "Vocational Education and Skills Development" project

⁶⁹ Government Decree No300 dated May 29, 2013 "On Approval of Standard Staff of Educational Organisations of Primary Vocational Education" (as revised by the Government Decree No 729 dated December 26, 2014, No 464 dated October 8, 2018)

⁷⁰ Government Decree No 788 dated November 20, 2015 "On Approval of Standard Staff of the Organisations of Secondary and Higher Professional Education under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz republic" (As revised by the Government Decree No 216 dated April 27, 2016, No 28 dated January 17, 2017)

⁷¹ For each group of technical specialities (after grade 9), 1 specialist (master of production training) staff is introduced) (As revised by the Government Decree No 216 dated April 27, 2016, No 28 dated January 17, 2017)



Teachers of the vocational cycle in the system of primary vocational education must have secondary vocational or higher education in the relevant specialty. Masters of industrial training must have primary vocational or secondary vocational education⁷³.

However, because of high personnel turnover and low status of the VET teacher, it is allowed to hire persons with secondary general education as a teacher or master of industrial training⁷⁴.

Over the past five years, the number of teaching staff of secondary vocational education institutions increased by 3.7 percent and amounted to 7.5 thousand people, of whom 96.6 percent of teachers were with higher education⁷⁵.

Number and composition of teaching staff in PVET (people)⁷⁶

Table 4.4

			J	VI		
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 ⁷⁷
Total, people	3405	3505	3548	3680	3610	3164
of them with higher education	1939	2133	2138	2306	2313	1634
including:						
masters of industrial training.	1559	1544	1632	1670	1604	1408
of them with higher education	594	617	655	703	712	584
teachers and heads	1260	1382	1317	1397	1383	1115
of them with higher education	939	1083	1062	1162	1145	958

Over the past two years (2017-2018), the number of teaching staff of educational institutions of primary vocational education decreased by 7.6 percent and was to 3.2 thousand people, of whom 51.6 percent of teachers were with higher education. The reducing number of teaching staff in PVS is related to the ongoing optimization of the PVET system.

Number and composition of teaching staff in SVET (at the beginning of the school year, people)⁷⁸

Table 4.5

	(at the beginning of the concer year, people)				
	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Total	7 230	7 547	6 725	7 427	7 496
of them with higher education	6 920	7 250	6 525	7 226	7 241
including					
full-time teachers	5 098	5 308	4 867	5 457	5 556
of them with higher education	4 899	5 109	4 732	5 323	5 363
teachers working on part-time	2 132	2 239	1 858	1 970	1 940
terms					
of them with higher education	2 021	2 141	1 793	1 903	1 878

⁷³ Government Resolution No. 41 dated January 22, 2018 "On Approval of the Model State Educational Standards for Primary Vocational Education in the Kyrgyz Republic".

⁷⁸ National Statistical Committee, Education and Science in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2018



⁷⁴ Government Resolution No. 18 dated January 19, 2011 "On New Requirements to the Remuneration of the Staff of Educational Institutions" (As amended by the Government Resolution No. 216 dated April 27, 2016, No 485 dated September 6, 2016; No 28 dated September 17, 2017; No 708 dated December 29, 2016; No 28 dated January 17, 2017; No 404 dated June 23, 2017; No 593 dated September 20, 2017; No 648 dated October 5, 2017; No 234 dated May 15, 2018; No 415 dated September 4, 2018; No 464 dated October 8, 2018; No 466 dated October 9, 2018; No 204 dated May 2, 2019)

⁷⁵ Education and Science in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2013-2017: Statistical Digest, Bishkek 2018

⁷⁶ Education and Science in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2013-2017: Statistical Digest, Bishkek 2018

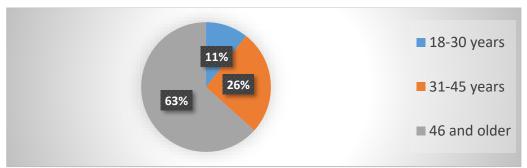
⁷⁷ Administrative data by the Agency for Primary Vocational Education



In the PVET system, most of the teaching staff is over 45 years old. This represents 63% percent of the total number.

Staff distribution in educational organizations in PVET by age, %

Diagram 4.5.



Source: Introducing e-learning in the PVET system (system capacity report, ADB project 2, 2017

Diagram 4.6. The share of teachers/masters of industrial training in the PVET system on the experience of pedagogical activity (%)



Source: Administrative data by APVE

The analysis showed that in the system of primary vocational education the share of teachers with pedagogical experience from one to ten years is nearly constant and predominant. People without pedagogical experience (12% in 2017) are getting into the system, although almost a third of the total number are teachers with pedagogical experience of over 15 years. This indicator may imply the obsolescence of the teaching staff competencies unless there is a well-functioning system of continuous development of teachers.

The participants of the focus group discussions, held when writing the report, confirmed that both in the PVET and the SVET system⁷⁹ teachers' competences are getting obsolete, both in the field of pedagogical and technical skills related to the taught disciplines. In general, the inflow of personnel with higher education into the system is growing, although there is still a certain proportion of teachers who do not have professional education. This is because of the low wages (in particular compared to the level of wages in the industry) and no special requirement of having exclusively higher education, as it is in the SVET system.

In SVET educational institutions (colleges) there is a high level of teaching staff with higher education, and the share of teachers with a degree is growing. In private colleges, the share of staff with degrees is 2.5 times higher than in the public ones. This is most likely due to the fact that university teachers concurrently teach at the colleges set up in these universities, or completely moved to work there.

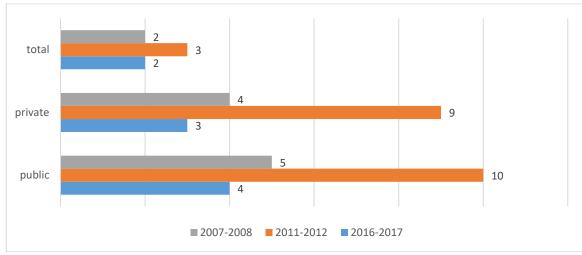
Diagram 4.7

Number of college teachers with degrees, %

⁷⁹ No data is collected on teaching staff by teaching service length in the system of secondary vocational education







Source: Kyrgyz Republic: Education Sector Review for 2007-2017

Share of women in total teaching staff in the PVET system by region

Osh c. Bishkek c. Chui **Talas** Osh Batken Naryn **Djalal-Anad** Issyk-Kul **Kyrgys Republic** 70% 0% 50% 10% 20% 30% 40% 60% ■ 2016-2017 2011-2012

Source: KYRGYZ REPUBLIC Education Sector Review for 2007-2017



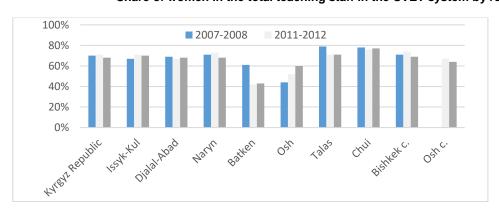
Diagram 4.8



In the country as a whole, the share of women in teaching staff of VSs of the PVET system increased by 5% and amounted to 47% in 2017. The same picture is in the regions, with the exception of Osh region and Bishkek, where the proportion of women slightly decreased.

In PVS, women make up less than half of the total number of teachers, since more men are hired as masters of industrial training; still this depends on the specifics of training programs. In traditionally female occupations, such as cook and seamstress, there are more female masters of industrial training.

Diagram 4.9 Share of women in the total teaching staff in the SVET system by region



Source: KYRGYZ REPUBLIC Education Sector Review for 2007-2017

Of the total number of teachers working in SVSs, the rate of female teachers is high (69%), although there has been a slight decline over the past five years. Their decreased share in Bishkek and Osh cities caused the overall downward trend in the share of women among SVS teachers, while there is a slight increase in other regions.

In contrast to the primary vocational education system, the proportion of women in secondary vocational education is relatively higher, which is partly due to the training in this system of specialists in humanities and social area (economists, accountants, primary school teachers, etc.).

Compliance of teaching staff to licensing requirements

One should note that as per the indicators, both levels of VET meet the national average licensing requirements for personnel potential. Nevertheless, there is a tendency in PVSs of reduced share of teachers with higher education due to their shift to colleges, where teachers' work is more attractive in terms of status and remuneration.

Therefore, a number of PVSs, in rural areas in particular, experience shortage of teaching staff with the required level of education and relevant qualifications; for this reason, it was allowed to hire people without higher and even secondary vocational education, but with the condition of passing the training (including the pedagogical minimum).

With the introduction in 2011 of new conditions of remuneration, qualification categories of teachers in educational institutions were abolished in addition to abolishing the certification of teachers, which to some extent allowed assessing their qualifications. Currently, in vocational education there is no system for assessing teachers' qualifications apart from formal requirements to the level of education.

D. 2. 2. Entering the teaching occupation in VET

Basic requirements for teachers are defined in the laws of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Education" and "On Primary Vocational Education". The main requirement, in addition to basic education, is pedagogical qualifications, giving the right to engage in pedagogical activities. Persons without pedagogical education are entitled to pedagogical activity after additional training.

In the PVET system, it is RSMC, which delivers "Fundamentals of professional pedagogy" courses for persons without pedagogical education as part of the refresher courses.





There is no such option in the SVET system.

Qualification requirements for teachers of vocational education system are defined by each educational institution independently in their administrative requirements to qualification. There are no established standard requirements for the qualification levels of the teaching staff of professional educational institutions in the country. Hiring of teachers is the responsibility of school administration.

Qualification requirements for VET teachers, developed in the Second ADB "Vocational Education and Skill Development" project were approved by the Ministry of Education and Science⁸⁰ and recommended for developing sectoral qualifications frameworks in the education sector.

In connection with the development of training in the workplace, requirements for mentors from production are developed in the VET system. APVE developed an instruction on mentoring at the enterprise (organization) involved in training with elements of dual training. This local normative document defines the requirements for the competence of the mentor from the production and his participation in the educational process. In the future, APVE considers developing a training module for training mentors from the production to conducting the educational process in the production environment.

D. 2. 3. Employment status of teachers in VET

In the system of primary vocational education, over 80 % of teachers are full-time employees of the educational organization. In the system of secondary vocational education, 25% of the teaching staff work part-time. Educational institutions try to invite representatives from the production work as part-timers.

In the system of secondary vocational education, a contract for a period of one academic year is concluded with each employee. The students-teacher ratio over the last few years in the SVET system remains unchanged at 12, while in the PVET system, this indicator in the last five years decreased from nine to eight people, which is associated with overall decreasing number of young people of this age (the size of 12-15 people in industrial training groups is set by the standard⁸¹).

The student-teacher ratio is higher in the SVET system than in PVET. This is partly because in the PVET system 2 people - teacher and master of industrial training are assigned for a group of students. Teacher salaries in VET system are linked to the level of education⁸².

⁸² Government Decree No. 18 dated January 19, 2011 "On New Requirements to the Remuneration of the Staff of Educational Institutions" (As amended by the Government Resolution No. 216 dated April 27, 2016, No 485 dated September 6, 2016; No 28 dated September 17, 2017; No 708 dated December 29, 2016; No 28 dated January 17, 2017; No 404 dated June 23, 2017; No 593 dated September 20, 2017; No 648 dated October 5, 2017; No 234 dated May 15, 2018; No 415 dated September 4, 2018; No 464 dated October 8, 2018; No 466 dated October 9, 2018; No 204 dated May 2, 2019)



⁸⁰ MES order No 1115/1 of August 25, 2017

⁸¹ Government Decree No. 18 dated January 19, 2011 "On New Requirements to the Remuneration of the Staff of Educational Institutions"



Table 4.6

Hourly rates of primary vocational education school teachers 83

Title of position	Payment per hour of teaching work, soms				
·	secondary	higher pedago	gical education		
	professional pedagogical education	bachelor's degree specialist's degree	master's degree		
teacher	60	67,5	75		

The wage-rate of teachers of educational organizations of primary vocational education is set for 20 hours of teaching work per week (800 hours per year).

Table 4.7 Rates of teachers of educational institutions of secondary vocational education⁸⁴

	rates of touchers of suddational methations of socondary resulting suddation				
N	Title of the position	Wage-rate, soms			
1	Teacher with:				
	- secondary vocational education;	5000			
	- higher education (bachelor, specialist);	5500			
	- higher education with a master's degree;	6000			

The wage-rate of teachers of SVET educational institutions is set for 720 hours of teaching work per academic year.

Official salary of masters of industrial training in PVET educational organizations s established for 40 hours of work per week.

The VET system provides for premiunms and allowances for teaching experience, academic degrees, honorary titles, work in mountenaous and remote, and rural area, and for qualification category.

The size of official salaries of masters of industrial training of PVET schools⁸⁵

Table 4.8.

Title of the position	Official salary, soms
Master of industrial training, with:	
- primary vocational education;	6450
- secondary vocational education;	6750
- higher education (bachelor, specialist);	7200

The average salary (paid from the state budget) is:

⁸⁵ Government Resolution No. 18 dated January 19, 2011 "On New Requirements to the Remuneration of the Staff of Educational Institutions"



⁸³ Government Decree No. 18 dated January 19, 2011 "On New Requirements to the Remuneration of the Staff of Educational Institutions"

⁸⁴ Government Resolution No. 18 dated January 19, 2011 "On New Requirements to the Remuneration of the Staff of Educational Institutions"



13,800 soms (\$200) in secondary schools, 10474 soms (\$152) in vocational schools, 8014 soms (\$116) in colleges⁸⁶. According to the National Statistical Committee at the beginning of 2019, the average salary in the Kyrgyz Republic was slightly over 15,000 soms (\$218), with the average salary of 10 612 soms (\$154) in the education sector.

In 2018, in order to streamline the regulation of remuneration of teachers of budget-subsidised and feebased groups, decision was made that the remuneration of school staff financed from a special account is defined by the educational organization itself, while the size of their salaries should not be lower than the size of salaries financed by the budget.

D. 2. 4. Quality of teachers and trainers in VET

Assessment of the quality of teachers of the system

The main requirements for the competence of VET teachers are defined in job descriptions, developed and approved by the school administration. The requirements for the qualification level are set by the Model state educational standards of PVET and SVET. With the VET teacher categories eliminated in 2011, certification of the VET teachers was almost abolished. The quality of teachers is mainly assessed at the level of educational institutions themselves through visits / mutual visits of lessons, conducting open lessons by teachers.

Under the second ADB project "Vocational Education and Skills Development" in 2016, the teacher qualification framework was developed for PVET and SVET⁸⁷, which describes the three qualification levels of PVET and SVET teachers.

An occupational standard was developed for each qualification level, which reflects the areas and types of the teacher's professional activity, and tools for assessing the teacher's competence.

The assessment of teacher competencies draws on modern approaches such as evidence-based assessment and teacher self-assessment. The competence of the teaching staff was assessed in 60 pilot educational institutions (42 PVSs and 18 colleges); with about 1900 people (17% of the total number of teachers in the system).

Based on the teacher competence assessment, training needs were identified in four main areas of activity: training/teaching, evaluation of learning outcomes, regulations of the VET system, and social partnership, as well as key skills, such as general social skills of the teacher.

⁸⁷ MES order No115/1 of August 25, 2017 «On approval of requirements to the qualification level of the PVET and SVET teaching staff.

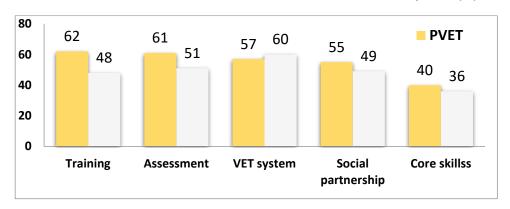


⁸⁶ Administrative data by MES KR



Diagram 4.10

The need to train teachers of the VET system (%)



Source: Training Needs Assessment Report, Second "Vocational Education and Skills Development" project, 2017.

The results of the evaluation showed that over half of the teachers need to be trained in all competencies, including key / cross-cutting skills. Moreover, in more remote regions (for example, Issyk-Kul, Osh, Jalal-Abat and Batken regions) the number of those in need of training is higher.

The main purpose of the competency assessment is to identify the training needs of teachers and drawing on the results develop a training program⁸⁸ with modules that develop required competencies.

In 2017, 603 teachers (47% of them women) were trained in these modules and certified for the first level of qualification (440 from PVS and 163 from SVS). Based on the results of the testing, APVE intends to adopt this mechanism to ensure the quality of professional development of PVS teachers and masters at the system level. Currently, based on these modules, RSMC is offering a refresher course for the newly arrived to the PVET system.

Computer literacy

Mapping of the PVET educational institutions included the collection of data in the "computer literacy" category. In total, information was collected about 5,239 people working in the PVET system, staff of 98 vocational lyceums and the Tokmok Industrial and Pedagogical College.

According to the presented data, from 5239 people: 3790 people are computer illiterate – 72 %, 1449 people are computer literate – 28%. The survey covered all employees of educational institutions.

Table 4.9
The level of computer literacy of the PVET staff by the programs used⁸⁹

Knowledge of PC programs	Number	Percentage (%)
No	3790	72%
Word	836	16%
Word, Excel	281	5%
Word, Excel, PowerPoint	191	4%
Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access	117	2%
Word, PowerPoint	24	1%

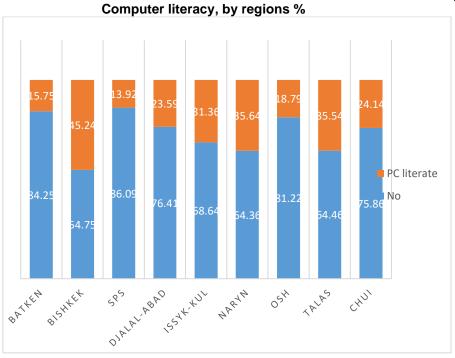
⁸⁸ The modular teacher development program by three levels of teachers, approved by SMC decision of October 10, 2016

⁸⁹ Implementation of e-learning in the PVET system (System Capacity Report, ADB project 2, 2017)





Diagram 4.11



Sources: Implementation of e-learning in the PVET system (System Capacity Report, ADB project 2, 2017)

In general, the level of computer knowledge rate is almost the same in the country. The best situation is in Bishkek, Issyk-Kul and Naryn regions. The low level of PC knowledge is in the institutions of the SPS system and Batken region.

The analysis showed that the higher the age of the system employee, the lower the percentage of knowledge on working with a personal computer.

Computer literacy of the PVET staff by age,%90

Table 4.10

Age groups	Total,	Staff,%	
	people	Proficient	Non-proficient
18-30 years of age	553	48,5	51,5
31-45 years of age	1367	37,2	62,8
46 years of age and older	3319	20,2	79,8

Professional development of teaching staff

According to the law of the Kyrgyz Republic on education, every 5 years a teacher is obliged to take upskilling courses. The Republican Scientific and Methodological Centre is the main body providing professional development in the PVET system.

⁹⁰ Implementation of e-learning in the PVET system (System Capacity Report, ADB project 2, 2017)

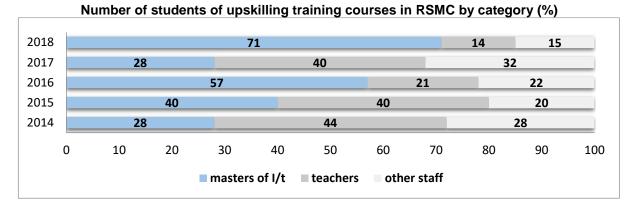




Every year, more than 600 people from the all regions of the country are trained in RSMC and master new teaching/learning methods, which is only 17% of the total number of teachers of the PVET system.

In addition, various donor projects provide training to more than 200 people (6%) a year on various issues that are relevant to the system.

Diagram 4.12



Sources: Administrative data of RSMC under APVE

As can be seen from the chart, most of the 100% of students who have completed upskilling training courses are masters and teachers, other staff category may include directors and other administrative staff.

Increasing number of specialized courses for masters of industrial training, which, along with theoretical training, necessarily provides for the development of practical skills is a positive aspect in the organization of teacher professional development. There is the first experience of teacher professional development courses delivered in enterprises (courses for masters of the sewing area).

However, in the existing system, as the focus group participants noted there is no analysis of the results of training, no tools (mechanisms) of policy formation (insufficient data collection for decision-making, stakeholder involvement), not full account of the training needs.

There is no body in the SVET system responsible for the organization of professional development at the system level; the teachers deal with professional development on their own. The Institute for advanced training and retraining of teachers of KSPU named after E. Arabaev, the profile universities, enterprises are the main providers of upskilling courses for SVET teachers. The participants noted also that internships at enterprises are not certified, which does not allow considering it a formal professional development.

The focus group discussion participants noted that in SVET there is no public funding of upskilling, teachers pay for their training, and often participation in a course is caused by the need to provide a certificate to the school, rather than real professional development.

D. 2. 5. Attracting and retaining teachers and trainers in VET

Transition to normative financing of PVET schools is one of the policy measures in relation to teaching personnel. Per capita financing mechanism was piloted in 2017/2018 academic year in 20 vocational





lyceums of Chui, Naryn regions and Bishkek with the support of the 2nd ADB "Vocational Education and Skills Development" project⁹¹.

Based on the results of the piloting, the Government decided⁹² to extend the PCF to the entire PVET system starting from 2019. Regulatory documents on converting PVS to PCF mode were prepared and approved.

According to this decision, vocational schools can in the per capita financing mode create a stimulating wage fund to motivate staff for the results and quality of work, and 60-65% of the total fund is provided for motivating teachers and masters of industrial training. In addition, the administration of vocational schools funded under the per capita financing mode can independently define the staff structure, based on the production need.

Within the policy matrix under the ADB "Sector Development Program Skills for Inclusive Growth" project, a decision was made to develop and pilot per capita financing mechanisms the SVET educational institutions⁹³.

Three colleges (located in the regions) were selected as centres for SVET teachers' training and upskilling⁹⁴ in order to form a system of professional development of SVET teachers⁹⁵. The ADB "Sector Development Program Skills for Inclusive Growth" project will provide modern technical equipment and ensure human development of selected colleges to ensure the continuous and systematic development of SVET teachers.

D.3. Quality and quality assurance

D. 3. 1. Quality and relevance of VET

The traditional system of assessing the quality of education of the VET students and graduates includes evaluation of their curren academic performance, interim and final state (qualification) certification. For the assessment of graduates on compliance of their personal achievements to the requirements of the corresponding program, assessment tools, including standard tasks, tests, etc. are developed, allowing estimating the knowledge, abilities and acquired skills. Educational institution independently, drawing on the educational programs, developes and approves assessment tools.

At the institutional level, teachers themselves evaluate the learning outcomes in accordance with the Regulation on Current and Interim Control. Evaluation is done on regular basis, and the teacher decides on how to consider the evaluation results in order to adapt the approaches to the needs of students, remains with the teacher. In general, students are offered standard courses, and they have almost no choice in terms of specialized classes.

The final state certification (final exam) is the main stage of evaluation of the training results of the graduates, after which a decision is made to assign them a qualification or academic degree of corresponding level. According to the Regulations on State Certification of Graduates of vocational educational institutions, the final certification commission includes at least three external experts or

⁹⁵ Oder by MES No 271/1 of March 12, 2018



⁹¹ Project completion report of the Second ADB "Vocational Education and Skills Development" project, Bishkek 2019

⁹² Government Decree No 545 dated November 22, 2018 "On Measures for Introducing normative financing in educational institutions of primary vocational education of the Kyrgyz Republic"

^{93 &}quot;Sector Development Program Skills for Inclusive Growth" Project Administration Manual

⁹⁴ Education Development Strategy Implementation Plan for 2018-2020 as a three-year plan for the implementation of the Education Development Strategy for 2012-2020.



employers, but the degree of their involvement in the final decision-making process varies from one provider to another.

The VET system has been piloting for several years a model of independent certification of graduates, supported by the GIZ program "Promotion of Employment and Vocational Training". In 2017, an Experimental Provision on Final Qualification Exams with Elements of Independent Certification of Professional Competencies⁹⁶ was developed. 20 vocational schools were selected for final qualification examinations with elements of independent certification.

Graduates perform practical tasks within the qualification requirements in real time mode, in the presence of the examination committee members. To bring FQE with ISPC elements closer to production practice, the graduate uses a technological map while performing a practical task. In the interview on the topic, he should show professional knowledge, applying his communicative competences. The final exam with elements of independent certification was held in five occupations (seamstress, master of construction and finishing works, hairdresser, cook, electrician)⁹⁷, with 147 graduates participating. The results of the examinations showed the available readiness of graduates for independent work.

D. 3. 2. Defining the quality of learning outcomes

The formulation of quality in the VET system is not formally set in normative documents. At the same time it is considered as the degree of matching of VET with the labour market needs, with expectations of VET students, requirements of authorized regulating bodies.

This approach is reflected in the normative documents operating in the VET system: state standards in the training fields define the requirements for training outcomes, the content of training and the educational process. Compliance with the requirements of standards is mandatory for all educational organizations regardless of its organizational form.

State educational standards are developed by educational and methodical councils, which has to include industry representatives, and are approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Based on the educational standard, educational institutions develop curricula and programs, which are subject to annual revision.

To meet the requirements of regional markets, state educational standards stipulate training hours for a variable part, which are defined by educational institutions.

D. 3. 3. Quality assurance processes in VET

The minimum quality standards in the VET system are approved by the regulatory framework and are the basis for the accreditation of programs and self-assessment of the institution. Independent accreditation procedures provide information on the satisfaction and involvement of key stakeholders in the program quality assurance processes.

An internal quality assurance system in the country, as well as the overall quality assurance system for vocational education services is emerging, and as noted in the expert review⁹⁸, the implementation of the national model of quality assurance is not sufficiently systematic; it has a number of logical gaps and contradictions. In particular, current quality assessment processes do not use quality standards, because

⁹⁸ Overview of the education quality assessment in KR: from conceptual framework to quality management tools, the EU project on developing the system of assessment in KR, 2016



⁹⁶ Order by APVE No 1/154 of April 24, 2017

⁹⁷ Administrative data by APVE



there are no approved requirements/criteria for quality assurance, there are no approved regulatory requirements frameworks for the organization of the educational process on the basis of credits, there are no educational standards for all programs at all levels of vocational education.

Although the guidelines for self-evaluation of university level educational programs⁹⁹ there are criteria to a policy of quality assurance in organizations of primary, secondary and higher vocational training, including an evaluation of the implementation of the quality education assurance system through the documented quality management system. Therefore, it is very difficult to understand how self-assessment is carried out by an educational institution in the absence of standards and regulations of the quality management system¹⁰⁰.

To ensure the systemic implementation of the quality assurance system in vocational education, the country needs first to have a logically integrated system of describing the training results at all levels of vocational education, and their compatibility with the qualifications and competencies required in the labour market. However, as it was previously described, there are no clearly defined by the labour market levels of qualification and competence for a particular occupation or type of employment. The business sector itself is not yet organized and structured so that employers can professionally define their needs for the skills and competencies that their employees should possess.

The minimum quality standards in the VET system are approved by the regulatory framework and are the basis for the accreditation of programs and self-assessment of the institution. Independent accreditation procedures provide information on the satisfaction and involvement of key stakeholders in program quality assurance processes. For the period 2017-2018, six independent accreditation agencies accredited 167 programs of secondary vocational education, 172 programs of primary vocational education. Over 84% of the programs have been accredited for 5 years.

The analysis of those independent accreditations shows that in educational institutions accredited conditionally, the following is widely observed:

- poor interaction with social partners;
- quality management system is in its initial stage of development and thus there is no mechanism for development and improvement;
- outdated training infrastracture and training manuals:
- weak work on job placement;
- low culture of quality education.

Accreditation helps educational organizations to audit their activities, assessing the results and achievements through the prism of the effectiveness of their work in the interests of stakeholders, that is, how the results and achievements of the educational organization meet the requirements of educational service consumers.

The Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic plans to improve the accreditation system. For this purpose - appropriate methodological manuals for conducting accreditation are developed; training is organised for experts and heads of educational institutions to develop appropriate modules of training on training quality assurance. The results of accreditation at the program level will be integrated into the education management information system (EMIS).

D. 3. 4. Creating and updating VET content

Educational programs for primary vocational education, are developed centrally by the Republican Scientific and Methodological Centre under the APVE with the involvement of relevant masters from the

¹⁰⁰ Kyrgyz Republic Education Sector Overview for 2007-2017



⁹⁹ Methodological Guidelines on self-assessment of the university level educational programs in KR, ERASMUS EU. 2016



PVS and practitioners from industry, and are approved by APVE decision. Standard curricula should be reviewed every three years.

The educational programs of secondary vocational education are developed based on the State educational standards (GOS) adopted by the Ministry of Education. GOS were developed by Educational and Methodological Associations (UMO) at the lead college in the respective filed of training.

Recently, this system is undergoing changes. Model National Standards of SVET and PVET stipulate that when designing educational programs an educational institution shall study the labour market needs, and update them annually to reflect changes in the needs of the industries and considering the recommendations on self-assessment for education quality assurance.

Changes to curricula and programs are agreed with employers.

Currently, the systems of primary and secondary vocational education have a methodology and experience of developing 45 educational programs based on occupational standards, which were developed with the participation of employers of respective industries. The following documents were prepared for testing this methodology in the framework of the second ADB project:

- Guidelines and procedures for the development of modular curricula and materials for competency-based learning;
- Training manual for the developer of modular training programs and materials;
- Concept paper for monitoring and evaluating the piloting of competency-based training programs.

The new methodology allows to quickly revise and update training programs based on observed changes and the labour market needs, since modules as parts of the programs can be easily updated in line with the changes in the labour market and new technologies introduced, or with new skills needs, which allows the program to remain relevant. Such programs are flexible because modules can transfer from one program to another, and competencies are applicable in various work situations, which allows accumulation of skills - qualifications.

This approach provides for developing a curriculum based on industry requirements, thus ensuring that the qualifications obtained in various educational institutions across the country are compatible and meet the labour market requirements.

The tested methodology formed the basis of the PVET Model State Educational Standard. Based on this methodology, the RSMC started to develop educational standards in 20 training fields. However, the center's limited resources (both financial and human) do not allow the RSMC to do this quickly.

Adaptation of the modular approach to the curriculum of the SVET continues under the 3rd ADB project aimed at the development of the SVET system.

D. 3. 5. EU key competences

In the VET system, along with the development of professional competencies, educational programs aim at the development of key competencies. This is set by state educational standards in both PVET and SVET. Key competencies include the following¹⁰¹:

- organize own activity, to choose methods and ways of performance of professional tasks, to estimate their efficiency and quality;
- solve problems, make decisions in standard and non-standard situations, demonstrate initiative and responsibility;

¹⁰¹ Government Resolution No. 160 dated March 28, 2018 "On Approval of Acts Regulating the Activities of Secondary Vocational Education Schools of the Kyrgyz Republic".





- search, interpret and use the information needed for effective performance of professional tasks, professional and personal development;
- use information and communication technologies in professional activities;
- be able to work in a team, communicate effectively with colleagues, management, customers;
- take responsibility for the work of team members (subordinates) and their training in the workplace, for the result of the execution of tasks;
- manage own personal and professional development, adapt to changes in working conditions and technologies in professional activities;
- be ready for organizational and managerial work with small teams.

The list of general competencies can be supplemented according to the profile of the specialty. The educational programs of secondary vocational education must include disciplines of the general humanitarian cycle (languages, philosophy, history, etc.), mathematical and natural science cycle (mathematics, natural science). This is not provided for in the primary vocational education system. Students' key competences are formed during professional competences training through a choice of methods of training, selection of tasks; for developing some skills separate disciplines are provided linked to professional training (for example, "Information Technologies in Professional Activity", "Entrepreneurship", "Professional mathematics", "Professional Language" disciplines).

D. 3. 6. Policies to strengthen quality assurance

The regulatory structural aspects of quality control have been strengthened in recent years by the adoption of several regulations and laws. They include: "Regulation No. 438 on the National Accreditation Council under the authorized state body in the field of education" dated August 4, 2014; Law No. 670 "On approval of acts on independent accreditation in the education system of the Kyrgyz Republic" dated September 29, 2015; Government Decree No. 160 dated March 28, 2018 "On Approval of Acts Regulating the Activities of Secondary Vocational Education Schools of the Kyrgyz Republic", Government Decree No. 41 dated January 22, 2018 "On approval of the Model State Educational Standard of Primary Vocational Education of the Kyrgyz Republic" and a number of local regulatory documents of MES KR and APVE.

The two most positive and far-reaching results of these new VET policies are: a) the approval of "independent accreditation" b) establishment of a new agency (National Accreditation Council (NAC)) for coordinating and enhancing independent accreditation. Implementation of these policies and strengthening of respective structures should be a priority for quality assurance in the higher and vocational education sector of Kyrgyzstan.

Summary and analytical conclusions for block D

The VET system is making progress in improving the internal efficiency of the system:

- the transition to modular competence-based programs will reduce the gap between the labour market requirements and the graduates' competencies, make training more student-centred;
- the development of training in the workplace is a conscious approach to developing knowledge and skills relevant to the labour market;
- the processes of independent accreditation of programs and independent certification of graduates 'competencies ensure the quality of the learning process by all stakeholders;
- the infrastructure is regularly improved, with account of the digitalisation of both the management of educational institutions and the learning process itself.

With this, the system of professional development of teaching staff is not effective enough, in particular, in the system of secondary vocational education.





Information and communication technologies are not used fully, partly due to the insufficient infrastructure, but largely to insufficient information competencies among both teachers and school administrations. This is especially true for rural schools.

There are no incentives for professional development in the system, no career opportunities for teachers.

Recommendations:

- Dynamic changes in the labor market, individualization of educational paths, require various
 educational programs in terms of level and focus, increased choice, the formation of an open
 market for educational programs and modules instead of a predetermined set of disciplines.
 In this regard, it is necessary to improve approaches to the development and updating of training
 programs through introducing modular competency programs focused on learning outcomes and
 key competencies, introducing various forms of practical training, including on-the-job training.
- All the innovation processes (competency-based approach, certification and validation of skills, e-learning, teacher professional development) in the system were mainly donor supported and are of one-time character.
 It is important to ensure the systemic character of innovations introduced, to set a system of
 - accumulating and anchoring positive changes in the school practice.
- 3. It is necessary to improve the staff quality in the system of primary and secondary vocational education through the modernization of the system of training, retraining and professional development of vocational education workers. To create a system of continuous professional development of teachers and school administration, it is necessary to provide advanced training in modular cumulative educational programs. For this purpose, it is reasonable to transfer the organization of advanced training to modular credit principles.
- 4. Provide for tools stimulating teachers to professional development through setting certification requirements for vocational education institutions in terms of teachers' professional qualifications, the effectiveness of their educational, and also innovative activities.
- 5. It is necessary to provide an innovative educational environment, access to educational resources, primarily in the form of electronic educational resources.
- 6. One of the important areas in developing internal effectiveness of the VET system is the improvement of computer literacy and IT skills of both students and teachers.
- 7. Create and maintain a quality management system as a means for achieving the organization's policies and goals in the field of quality, develop a culture of quality education at all levels.

5. Structural Unit E: Governance and financing of VET

E. 1: Institutional arrangements

E. 1. 1. Effectiveness of institutional and governance arrangements

According to the regulatory framework adopted in 2017, the Agency of Vocational Education under the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Youth of the Kyrgyz Republic, which existed in this status since 2012, becomes the Agency of Primary Vocational Education under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic. At the same time, the reformed Ministry of Labour and Social Development of the Kyrgyz Republic, as the body registering unemployed citizens, continues to place orders for their retraining in required skills in educational institutions of primary vocational education. In addition, the





Ministry of Labour and Social Development provides the education system with a consolidated skills need forecast for 5 years (the last forecast was provided for 2018-2023) for planning enrolment for specialties in demand by levels of vocational education.

The Agency of Primary Vocational Education under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic established a collegial management body, that is, a Board consisting of 7 people, the personal composition of which is approved by the Minister of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic. The head of the Agency of Primary Vocational Education is a member of the Ministerial Board. This allows APVE to make independent collegial decisions and participate in collegial decisions of the MES.

In management of educational institutions at the regional level, there are certain differences between primary and secondary vocational education.

Thus, in the system of primary vocational education, the Director of the PVET Agency appoints the directors of vocational lyceums, their deputies and the chief accountant. In the system of secondary vocational education only the college director and the accountant are appointed by the minister or head of a founding agency (secondary vocational schools can be administered by different ministries and departments, for example, of culture and health; this shows that the college directors are more independent in their decisions regarding the selection of deputies. Focus group members suggested that it was preferable for the school director to appoint deputy directors and create his own management staff.

Considering the digitalization processes in all the sectors of the country, the regulatory framework has been amended to allow the organization of primary vocational education to independently hire a system administrator (a specialist in the information management system).

At the level of secondary vocational education, decision was made to expand the administrative and financial autonomy, according to which the heads of educational organizations under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic can independently change to their staffing schedule as long as they are within the total number of employees set by the model staff schedule,. The changes should not exceed 5 percent of the number of employees of educational organizations.

Integration of primary and secondary vocational education.

The concept of rationalization of 2014 was reviewed, with the aim of functional integration of the PVET and SVET systems as positive transformation. The objective was not to consolidate or reduce the number of VSs, but to create conditions for the continuity and integration of PVET and SVET programmes in order to make effective use of the school resources and ensure the opportunity for continuing education at the subsequent level.

The program of rationalization of the system of vocational education and training until 2021 and the action plan for its implementation for 2017-2018 identified the Chui and Jalal-Abad regions as pilot regions. Further, it required establishing new management mechanisms in the form of working groups, which included representatives of the Office of Plenipotentiaries of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic in the regions, local administrations, and educational institutions of primary vocational and secondary vocational education. Regional coordinators were appointed by the relevant Plenipotentiary representatives of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic to coordinate the activities of educational institutions in the region.

This made it possible to develop in the pilot Jalal-Abad and Chui regions more coordinated regional rationalization plans until 2021 (in coordination with local administrations), which include career guidance in the schools in districts and cities, as well as involving educational institutions in various activities at the regional level. Monitoring the implementation of these plans should show whether the decision was effective. Further support for the implementation of the rationalization program was included in the action plan of the third ADB project "Sector Development Program: Skills for Inclusive Growth".





The National Skills Development Council

At the national level, the National Skills Development Council (NSDC), chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic, operates as a dialogue platform for training professionals for the Kyrgyz economy. The NSDC includes deputy ministers of key line ministries, heads of agencies and employers 'associations. The Council is an advisory body. The decisions of the Council are made official through the meeting minutes, which are signed by the Chairman and sent to the relevant ministries, administrative departments, local state administrations, local self-governance bodies, public and other organizations.

The main tasks of the Council include: - development of proposals for the main areas of training, which are priorities for the economy of the Kyrgyz Republic; - development of basic requirements and qualifications of employees depending on different levels of training; - ensuring the participation of employers in improving the quality of training and retraining; - planning and forecasting the needs of the labour market; - development of mechanisms for the implementation of independent certification and public accreditation of educational programs in accordance with international standards; - participation of state bodies, professional associations and employers in improving training, developing occupational standards, assessment of specialists' qualifications. Thus, it seems that the NSDC will play a special role in the formation of national and sectoral qualification frameworks, in the development and application of occupational standards by industry.

E. 1. 2. Accountability, leadership and control

According to the management scheme of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic-the educational institutions of primary vocational education is subordinated to the Agency for primary vocational education, which, in turn, reports to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic (through the supervising Deputy Minister). The network of secondary vocational education institutions reports directly to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic (through by the Deputy Minister in charge of the Directorate of Vocational Education). The management process on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic relates to the educational process and is regulated by the common norms of the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Education". According to this Law, it is assumed that state authorities and local governments, legal entities and individuals complying with state educational standards, foreign states, international organizations under the international treaties can be the founders, also influencing the management process of educational organizations and responsible for establishing and developing the school infrastructure.

According to the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Normative Legal Acts of the Kyrgyz Republic" the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is a standard setting body, therefore, in case the Agency of Primary Vocational Education requires the adoption of a normative legal act, it is the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic as a member of the Government, forwards a draft paper for the endorsement by ministries, departments, public discussion and to the Government Office for approval. In case of secondary vocational education, it is the branch division of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic represented by the Directorate of Vocational Education that is responsible for ensuring the issuing of normative legal acts. This also applies to the initiation of new programs. If the program is a state strategic document, it must be developed and adopted in compliance with the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Regulatory Legal Acts of the Kyrgyz Republic". That is, the state strategic document is approved by the decision of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, for which there is a procedure of mandatory interdepartmental coordination, even if the draft decision does not address the issues of all ministries and departments. Thus, all ministries and departments are familiar with the problems and needs of the education system and can influence the education policy.

With regard to various activities, cooperation agreements with interested parties (professional associations, unions, public organizations, etc.) - the educational institutions do not need to coordinate these actions with the governing bodies, because according to the law, the relationship of educational organizations with public organizations, whose activities correspond to the main activities of educational organizations, are regulated through the contract.





At the school level, opening of new fields of training is the main innovation in the systems of primary and secondary vocational education. In this case, the educational institution of primary vocational education prepares documents that are submitted for examination to the Republican Scientific and Methodological Centre (RSMC). RSMC, in turn, having endorsed the training programs, submits them for consideration to the Scientific and Methodological Council. After the decision of this Council, the decision is made by the PVET Agency. Next, there is a planned process of submitting documents for licensing, after which the decision to issue a license is made by the Licensing Board. In the case of secondary vocational education, the Directorate of Vocational Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic assumes the functions of the RSMC. At the same time, experts note a significant lack of human resources and unsatisfactory remuneration of specialists both in the RSMC and in the state body governing the education.

With regard to secondary vocational education institutions, the legislation provides for compensation for damage caused by poor quality education. Thus, individuals and legal entities of the Kyrgyz Republic in the case of poor-quality training of graduates by a secondary vocational education school have the right to sue it for compensation of additional costs for retraining of these graduates in other educational organizations. However, so far there was no such precedents in the legal practice.

Accreditation

Accreditation is one of the new mechanisms that strengthen the responsibility of educational institutions for providing educational services because, according to the law, accreditation is a guarantee of quality education. The vocational lyceums and colleges that offer a school curriculum at the level of 10-11 grades and issue a certificate of secondary general education are accredited by the state every five years. Educational institutions of primary vocational and secondary vocational education, implementing professional educational programs, pass through independent accreditation every five years.

If earlier there was a quantitative assessment of the educational environment, now it is a qualitative assessment by seven minimum requirements.

Thus, accreditation helps educational organizations to audit their activities, assessing the results and achievements through the effectiveness of their work in the interests of stakeholders, that is, how the results and achievements of the educational organization meet the requirements of educational service consumers, how consumers receive exactly the skills that will help them find a job on the labour market.

If the educational institution is accredited two years in a row conditionally (for 1 year), the founder of the educational organization on representation of authorized body considers a question of conformity of the head of the educational organization to the post in the order established by the law. This means that the head of the educational organization is personally responsible to the Ministry of Education and Science / Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic / Ministry of Culture, Information and Tourism of KR etc. (in the case of secondary vocational education), and to the Agency of Primary Vocational education (in the case of vocational lyceums) for the results of accreditation.

The decision to switch to modular competence-based training in primary and secondary vocational education institutions of the Kyrgyz Republic was made after approval of the results of piloting conducted under the second project of the Asian development Bank "Vocational Education and Skills Development" and the order issued by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Accordingly, two governing bodies (the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic through the Directorate of Vocational Education and the Agency of Primary Vocational Education) had, to jointly develop a plan for a ste-by-step introduction of a modular competency-based training system in educational institutions of primary and secondary professional education, to bring to completion the testing of competence-oriented curricula in the experimental groups with a three-year period of training in the pilot schools, and use the resources of the Third ADB project, "Sector Development Programme:





Skills For Inclusive Growth". This is an example of a positive practice of interaction between management structures and the non-governmental sector with donor participation for enhancing reforms in the education content.

E. 1. 3. Governance reform

As part of the implementation of the Education Development Strategy (EDS) for 2018-2020, a very important task was set of developing a national qualification system for all the levels of vocational education. In this regard, necessary amendments were made in the legislation, to introduce the concepts of "national qualifications system", "occupational standard".

The international experience of developing the methodology of national and sectoral qualifications frameworks was studied, Kyrgyz experts participated in the corresponding training webinars of the European Training Foundation, the Central Asian Education Platform, the Erasmus+program.

In this regard, a national qualifications framework was drafted.

All these processes directly relate to the provision of new relevant skills and to the change in the education content. At the same time, they aim at changing the institutional and governance provisions for the delivery of primary and secondary vocational education.

Within the "Sector Development Programme: Skills For Inclusive Growth", with the support of the ADB project, SVSs were selected for piloting in the period from 2018 to 2023 as centres of excellence and centres of training and advanced training. In these centres, a space for alighnment of institutional and governance conditions of primary vocational and secondary vocational education will be established.

New systems of electronic management information – MIS (management information system) in primary vocational education and EMIS (education management information system) in secondary vocational education have been introduced in secondary vocational education, as well as an electronic document flow system - AVN.

E. 2: Involvement of non-state actors

E. 2. 1. Distribution of responsibilities between state and non-state actors in VET

According to the tasks set by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic in the strategic documents, the employers are involved in cooperation with secondary vocational education institutions on a permanent basis (coordination of curricula, participation in final state certification).

In the primary vocational education system, cooperation with major employers 'associations was established (Memorandums of cooperation have been signed).

All types of students' practices in idustry is provided through the contracts with manufactuing enterprises (58% of colleges have concluded contracts with employers on the organization of industrial practice). Contracts, according to the legislation, are concluded by educational institutions directly with employers, without intervention of public governance bodies.

Educational institutions confirm that it is easier to find social partners from employers for primary than for secondary vocational education. This is because primary vocational education has shorter training periods and the graduates enter the labour market soon, which is more beneficial for employers than waiting for a graduate for several years.





In the monitoring reports on the EDS implementation, there are cases of the cooperation of educational institutions with employers in the form of providing skills upgrading for masters of industrial training.

Within the ADB project, expert councils and technical groups will be formed in 2019-2020 to involve employers in cooperation with educational institutions, as well as to developing NQS, NQF and SQFs.

Work is underway on coordinating with employers, making adjustments and amendments to 20 draft state educational standards of PVET (in agriculture, metalworking, transport, services, mining, light industry, construction and catering).

E. 2. 2. Policies in support of participation of non-state actors

According to the legislation, public-private partnership (PPP) is a long-term (up to 50 years) cooperation of public and private partners on the design, financing, construction, rehabilitation, reconstruction and management of existing or newly established objects, including the infrastructure ones.

As practice shows, with such norms in the legislation, the relationship of educational institutions with the non-state sector is generally built around agreements, contracts, memorandums, etc., and not in the framework of PPP projects.

According to the ILO study, despite some achievements, there are challenges in ensuring the full participation of social partners (trade unions, employers associations) in the democratisation of governance. Both trade unions and employers associations represent only a small share of labour market participants.

The main reasons remain as follows:

- the process of formation of employers associations as a party to partnership relations is not active enough;
- existing employers associations do not use contracts and agreements as an agreed by the parties program of actions on income generation, employment, social protection, labour protection and vocational training.

Cooperation with employers

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic sets sectoral objectives in the development programs for the interaction of key ministries, sectoral professional associations of employers.

The Second ADB "Vocational Education and Skills Development" project was assigned a task of supporting the NSDC by strengthening the capacity of the Agency for Primary Vocational Education under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic (APVE) as its Secretariat, and by establishing sectoral councils (SCs) representing employers in seven priority sectors of the economy. For each SC, experts were to be hired to support the SCs throughout the project period in involvving them in the VET system, informing them about the activities (standards, curricula, teacher training, employment, on-the-job training, etc.) and acting as a liaison between the project, the Government and the industrial sector.

To strengthen the APVE capacity as a Secretariat, the project prepared a methodology for analysing and monitoring the NSDC decisions, the rules for the Secretariat work, which was approved by the NSDC decision on August 4, 2017, and trained the APVE staff responsible for the work of the Secretariat. In 2014-2018, the NSDC meetings were held, which addressed the issues of training for organic agriculture; setting up the SDF; introducting dual training; the needs of the economy in personnel, with the account of investment programs; the development of the skills validation system; occupational standards developed within the Project were approved. In October 2017, the NSDC composition was amended to strengthen the role of public-private partnership in vocational education (the International Business Council, the National Alliance of Business Associations, the Association of Young Entrepreneurs JIA, BioKG were additionally included).





The Second ADB, "Vocational Education and Skills Development" project, noted in its reports that despite the project's efforts to develop the capacity of the SCs and involve them in its activities, employers did show interest in participating in the SCs without financial support and registration of their legal status. For example, the surveyed Chairs and the majority of the SC members proposed dissolving the councils. The tourism, textiles and services SC voted to dissolve itself. In June 2017, the project presented a new concept of social partnership through cooperation with employers ' associations active in the country. As a result, in October 2017, during the National conference "Innovations and development of the PVET system ", APVE has signed 15 memorandums of cooperation with associations/employers ' unions (with the International Business Council, the Business Association of JIA, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of KR, Union of Builders of the KR, Association of Small Hydropower, Association Legprom, the Kyrgyz Association of Tour Operators (KATO), the Association of Catering Companies, Association of Producers, Suppliers and Distributors, Cook Guild, etc.). The project helped to establish cooperation links based on mutual interests, which formed the annual work plans for the implementation of Memorandums.

The memorandums cover the following areas of cooperation:

- Training, retraining, upskilling of workers in line with the labour market requirements;
- Monitoring industry skills needs;
- Joint development of occupational standards;
- Organization of independent certification of skills of graduates of primary and secondary vocational education;
- Introduction of new forms of education, including dual education;
- Organization of upskilling courses and internships at enterprises/organizations of employers;
- Organization of practical training of primary and secondary vocational education students in enterprises/organizations of employers;
- Joint awareness-raising activities to promote the prestige of working occupations.

In 2018, a number of joint activities were organised, such as a survey of employers on occupations and skills in demand, a field master class in the Naryn region, skills fairs/competitions, round tables, etc.One should note recently strengthened cooperation the APVE with the Legprom Association, KATO and the Association of Public Catering, which participate in the dual training of students of vocational schools, and other events.

Four model centres established in vocational schools with the ADB funds as training and production complexes will be able to cooperate with the non-governmental sector on the principles of self-financing for the development of income-generating activities and entrepreneurship in educational institutions.

As a result, the progress in linking the VET system with the business community is obvious, but there is a need of further support of joint activities for the sustainability of social partnerships, possibly also in the form of incentives for employers.

E. 3: VET Budget

E. 3. 1. Expenditure planning, VET budget formation and execution

Under the law, education is one of the expenditure obligations of the Government, when expenses for the activities of national importance, the responsibility for which fully rests with the Government, are covered by the national budget, through the corresponding state authorities – ministries and agencies. The financial planning and maintenance of municipal educational institutions relate to the expenditure obligations of the local governments.

The Ministry of Finance on a quarterly basis carries out budget allocation.





When forming the budget, the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic draws on the budget resources indicators. In addition, the Budget Code provides for such a mechanism as sequestration - reduction in the established share of budget expenditure items, subject to the expected decrease in budget revenues.

The Treasury controls the funds allocated to the educational organization from the national budget. The School Board of Trustees and public institutions control all other funds earned by the educational organization.

The volume of state-supported student enrolment is determined as a separate item of the national budget. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic specifies the list of specialties.

Prior to the transition of the primary vocational education system to the normative (per capita) principle of financing (01.01.2019), this sphere received itemised resource support. Thus, out of the total budget expenditures of primary vocational education, 75.7 % of the funds were spent on wages and contributions to the Social Fund, 12.1 % - to food for students, 3.7 % - to scholarships, 7.5 % - to cover utility costs. Thus, predominanatly the costs of maintaining the existing network of organizations were mainly financed. The state practically did not finance the costs of updating equipment, appliances, providing organizations of primary vocational education with educational materials and manuals, etc.

Due to inefficient use of educational buildings and dormitories, funds were spent on for the maintenance of empty buildings and there was a shortage of funds for other important for training cost items to ensure the educational and production process.

Because of this, a decision was made to transfer the system of primary vocational education to such a principle of financing, when the standards of budget financing are defined for one student by occupation, duration and courses of study (except for 12 remote vocational lyceums).

Currently the state vocational lyceum submits the overall needs for funding from the national budget to ensure the standard of expenditure for the coming year, to the Agency of Primary Vocational Education under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic by main areas of expenditure on: the salaries of the staff; training supplies; professional development of teachers and masters of industrial training; student meals; scholarships; severance; minor repairs; utilities.

At the same time, the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic does not fully cover the minimum expenses for normative financing in primary vocational education: by 85% (as planned) and by 70% (de facto).

The secondary vocational education is still financed according to the traditional itemised principle.

As with other education programs, the primary costs are the costs of maintaining the network itself, namely 88.1 % of the funds are spent on wages and contributions to the Social Fund, 0.5 % - on student meals, 4.2 % - on scholarships, 5.5 % - to pay utility costs. The budget does not adequately finance the costs of updating equipment, appliances, provision of secondary vocational education institutions with training materials and manuals, etc.

The system of primary vocational education (each educational institution) forms student enrolment through the information management system for the Agency of Primary Vocational Education, after which the Agency makes the necessary calculations on the need for funding.

The system of secondary vocational education (also each educational institution) provides a draft budget to the Directorate of budget policy and financial analysis of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic.

In both cases, the state governing bodies (the Ministry and the Agency) forward the draft budget to the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic, which responds with the so-called control limits. Accordingly,





the state bodies form the budget within these limits. This results in non-provision of 100 per cent of the funding requirement due to the budget deficit in the country as a whole.

Under special accounts, the systems of primary vocational and secondary vocational education provide the state authorities with indicative figures, which they intend to collect for training.

In the systems of secondary vocational and primary vocational education, savings are spent by relocation between the articles, which, at the request of the educational institution, is provided by the state governing body.

E. 3. 2. Policies to improve expenditure planning and budgeting in VET

In order to improve the efficient use of financial resources in the system of primary vocational education, the normative principle of financing was tested in 20 vocational lyceums (from March 2017 to February 2018) in the Chui, Naryn regions and Bishkek.

This was an important measure in the implementation of the Education Development Strategy in the Kyrgyz Republic. Already the first monitoring demonstrated positive results.

Thus, the expenses of pilot lyceums in 2017 increased by 5071.6 thousand soms (about 74 thousand dollars at the exchange rate of 69 soms to 1 US dollar) as compared to 2016. This allowed an increase in the cost of educational supplies, for improved quality of training, by 4139.6 thousand soms, which is 3.5 times higher than in the preceding years. Enrolment in 2017 increased against 2016 by 243 students or 103.5%. Group occupancy rates have improved.

A new system of remuneration has been introduced that focused on masters' and teachers' work outcomes and quality. As a result, solely at the expense of internal reserves and cost optimization, wages in pilot lyceums increased by an average of 7%, including by 10-15% in every third lyceum, by 8-10% in every second and remained at the level of previous year in 15% of lyceums.

Expanded independence in allocation of funds allowed increasing the efficiency of the network and organizational structure of lyceums while maintaining the budget. In the course of the optimization, 32 staff units or 3% of the planned staffing units were reduced.

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion of the testing results, the Agency of Primary Vocational Education under the Ministry of Education and Sience of the Kyrgyz Republic drafted a legal act, on introducting the per-capita financing in public PVET schools, which was adopted.

In addition, training seminars were organised. In 2019, 80% of the primary vocational education schools shifted to per capita funding. Those vocational schools that do not fully meet the requirements of normative financing (educational institutions in border areas) have not changed the funding mode.

The second "Vocational Education and Skills Development" project assisted the Agency of Primary Vocational Education under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic in forming the 2019 budget under the per capita funding.

As the monitoring reports on the implementation of the Education Development Strategy until 2020 in the Kyrgyz Republic show, that in order to improve accounting and with the 1C program introduced, the "Policy on Accounting and Financial Reporting" was approved. The policy aimes at forming a common approach to accounting and reporting, which would contribute to the safety of funds and assets, the correct management of the budgetary and special funds.

Hundred per cent of primary vocational education schools shifted to the electronic format of quarterly reports through the 1C program, and to non-cash payments of salaries, scholarships.





Only part of secondary vocational education schools use 1C.

E. 4: Mobilisation of resources for VET

E. 4. 1. Sources and mechanisms of funding for VET

The Overview of the Education Sector for 2007-2017 contain analytical data of the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic, which show that in the structure of consolidated expenditures on education, the system of primary vocational education accounts for 3.7%, and the system of secondary vocational education accounts for 3.1%.

In addition, while 91.6% of the expenditures on primary vocational education are budget funds, the share of funds from the state budget in secondary vocational education is 57.1% and 42.9% are mainly private tuition funds.

Focus-group discussion participants indicate private funds for contract training, donor funds, sponsorship funds as the main non-state sources of funding. Renting the premises of educational institutions does not bring income to the educational institutions themselves - since 2015, the State Property Fund (FGI) appropriates these funds to the national budget.

An example of new sources of financing based on new mechanisms, is provision by the educational institutions of paid services to the population in a pilot mode in four model centres for the occupations of repair and maintenance of trucks and agricultural machinery, and repair and maintenance of passenger cars.

The second ADB Project supported four vocational schools in conducting market research of customers and competitors, and defining the list of services and products. The Centres used the research results to develop business plans for 2018-2020 with forecast indicators for the growth of the student enrolment (by 30%), income from the provision of services (by 30%) and costs for the development of infrastructure (43 people trained).

The centres were created as self-financing legal entities in the form of "institutions" with their own Charter, seal, bank accounts, with the transfer for operational use of premises of vocational schools and property. The collection of developed materials was published, and should be tested, and approved in the form of normative documents for the entire system of vocational education and training.

As for the extrabudgetary funding of secondary vocational education, according to the law, secondary vocational schools can train and retrain skilled workers (workers and employees) and specialists of the corresponding level of education on top of training funded by the founder, within the license limits, under the contracts with physical and (or) legal persons, with payment of their cost.

In addition, according to the legislation, public secondary vocational schools have the right to determine independently the area and procedure for the use of their funds, including the share, allocated to wages and incentives for employees of educational organizations, with the consent of the School Boards.

E. 4. 2. Diversification and mobilisation of funding for VET

The current regulatory framework and practice show how legislation and policies can influence the funding sources for educational institutions.

The needed diversification of activities of primary and secondary vocational schools resulted in the expansion of educational services and turned the educational institutions towards responding to the





market. All this aimed at new or modernized professions for improving the efficiency of training and staffing the labour market for the economic benefits.

In condition of budget deficit, the state made strategic decisions aimed at creating regulatory legal documents aimed at mobilising funding for educational institutions.

The mobilization also infuenced both state and non-state expenditures.

A clear identification of spendings per one student and successful piloting in primary vocational education convinced the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic in the possibility of mobilising the funds needed to finance all vocational lyceums on a per capita basis, as it would be more effective than it was before. On the other hand, the regulatory framework, which makes it possible to create training and production centres in vocational schools on income-generating principles, enhances investment from private customers of the services that students of vocational schools can produce.

At the level of secondary vocational education, developing a formula for normative financing is still being considered, and educational institutions are financed on the traditional basis. At the same time, the normative legal base is formed in such a way that gives the right to secondary professional educational institutions for training and retraining of personnel at the expense of the population and enterprises. This is freedom of activity, for example, in organising short and medium-term training in the form additional professional education (courses, etc.). In addition, secondary vocational schools are independednt in managing their own funds and in deciding how much money to spend on wages and motivation of their employees, which also allows attracting more qualified teaching personnel.

With regard to attracting funds from employers, it seems necessary to expand the regulatory legal basis in order to increase the cooperation benefits for employers and educational institutions. This may be, as already mentioned above, reducing the tax burden instead of infrastructure and financial investments in the development of the institution. However, this step requires serious considerations and calculations.

The ADB-funded Skills Development Fund, which provides short-term training at the request of the customer, with higher payment for teachers – specialists and practitioners from the labour market, is an example of successful resource mobilization by donor organizations. At present, in the framework of the third ADB project, there are extensive discussions on how to institutionalise this experience without ADB financial support.

E. 5: Allocation and use of resources in VET

E. 5. 1. Patterns of resource allocation

In fact, there are currently two models of resource allocation for primary and secondary vocational education.

In primary vocational education, the public vocational lyceum calculates the need for funds from the national budget proceeding from the number of students by occupation, durection and courses of study and the expenditure standard through to a defined formula.

This formula considers the indicators for the coming year on the needs for funding from the national budget to ensure the standard of the payroll costs, including deductions to the Social Fund of the Kyrgyz Republic. The costs are calculated according to the formula, including various rates and allowances established by legislation; for scholarships; for meals of students; the educational supplies, the training duration and the course for the coming year; for teachers' and masters' of industrial training upskilling, for maintenance; for utilities (electricity, heating, coal, water consumption and communication).





This model is as detailed as possible and takes into account most of the needed for the training resources at the level of primary vocational education.

According to the law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Education", financing of public secondary vocational schools is based on standard limits per group, based on the principle of consistent increase in actual costs per student.

Attraction of additional sources does not lead to the reduction of standards or absolute sizes of financing from the national budget.

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic establishes model standards per group.

The use of various methods of the educational process and educational technologies, including distance-learning technologies by educational organizations in delivering educational programs, does not entail an increase in the standards of their financing.

Financing standards for private educational organisations cannot be lower than those for the public educational organizations.

According to the regulatory framework, the model of financing of secondary vocational educational institutions is as follows.

- the owner of property (his authorized body) allocates buildings, constructions, equipment, and other necessary consumer, social, cultural and other property, in the school operational management.
- land plots are assigned to the SVS for unlimited free use.
- SVS in accordance with the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Charter has the right to act as a tenant and (or) lessor of property.
- the sources of formation of property and financing of the SVS activity are as follows:
- a) funds of budgets of various levels allocated for the delivery of educational programs, maintenance and development of infrastructure:
- b) in-kind and monetary contributions of the founder:
- C) funds received from educational, entrepreneurial and other activities stipulated by the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic;
- d) voluntary donations and targeted contributions of legal entities and individuals, including the foreign ones, and other sources in accordance with the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic.
- the payment for fee-based educational services is established in accordance with the approved cost estimates and the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic.
- SVS may provide additional paid educational services in addition to the corresponding educational programs and the state educational standard through the contracts with individuals and legal entities, including the state- subsidised students (on a voluntary basis).
- SVS has the right for business activities stipulated by its Charter, in accordance with the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic.
- SVS independently solves the issues related to the conclusion of contracts, definition of obligations and other conditions which are not contradicting the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic and the school Charter.
- SVS independently, in the order established by the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic, defines the types and the size of allowances, surcharges and other payments of stimulating character within the funds allocated for remuneration.

A sample cost estimate for the government funding of a college in Bishkek shows that it comprises the following six funding items: 87.2% of the funds are salaries and contributions to the Social Fund, 1.6% - the purchase of food, 6.6% - the cost of utilities, 4.2% - the cost of scholarships and 0.1% - communication costs. The income and expenses estimate for the accounting of funds in special accounts comprises five items, of which 68% will be allocated to wages, 11.7% are deductions for social needs, 4.7% - for the use of goods and services, 8.8% - for the purchase of goods and services, 6.5% - for utility





costs. As the comparison between the budget and extra-budgetary estimates shows, articles on the use and purchase of goods and services for the college needs apeears only in the extra-budgetary estimates.

E. 5. 2. Policies to ensure adequacy of resources for VET and equity in their allocation

Comparing the models of financing for primary vocational and secondary vocational schools, makes it obvious that the traditional model in secondary vocational education does not provide for such a range of different wage increase factors, the cost of training supplies, of the teachers training. Accordingly, the educational institution has to mobilise other funding sources to cover the costs - private funds for training, donor and sponsorship investments.

The system of normative financing of primary vocational education includes even the cost of utilities, the coal, and a stimulus fund. Only the costs of major repairs and furniture provision are not included in the standard and are financed in a different way.

Financing of secondary vocational education covers protected items - wages, contributions to the Social Fund and scholarships. No funds are allocated to the educational institutions for equipment, textbooks, consumables, etc., and they have to buy them from non-budgetary funds.

Summary and analytical conclusions for Block E

The main challenge in the governance, since 2017, is the so-called unification of primary vocational and secondary vocational education under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic.

This entails policies that aim to bringing the systems closer to respond more adequately to the labour market demands and to increase the employment rate of graduates.

Thus, the concept of rationalization revised towards the functional integration of primary vocational and secondary vocational education. This should also help building the educational pathways for students through all levels of vocational education.

Common accreditation standards were introduced to ensure quality control of education. The processes of integrating digitalization into management and financing are expanding.

The decision was made to switch to modular competence-based training.

Currently serious work is underway for developing effective national qualification system. Legal-normative framework is being developed; here significant practical steps were undertaken based on the integration of the efforts by the public organs, employers, trade unions, the education system.

The experience of establishing centres of excellence in primary vocational education was transformed to the level of secondary vocational education with the support of the Third ADB project.

The use of the management information system (MIS) in management and financing at the level of primary vocational education is increasingly motivating the secondary vocational education schools to use the potential of the education management information system (EMIS). This also relates to more experience of primary vocational education in cooperation with employers. The same requirements apply to the graduate tracer study for both systems of vocational education.

Focus groups showed that primary vocational and secondary vocational schools, as well as employers, feel the implementation of policy measures and try to promote their implementation.





Formation and coordination of the financing process for the systems of primary vocational and secondary vocational education draws on the same principle, though based yet on different models. At the same time, both systems are limited by the limit control of the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic and are there is no full coverage of the costs as demanded. In addition, the standard does not include the costs for purchase of equipment and capital repair.

Recommendations:

- 1. The system of primary vocational education demonstrated progress in implementing the equitable principle of per capita financing with more full coverage of the costs for required items and, accordingly, has a greater impact on the development of students' skills required on the labour market. The system of secondary vocational education was granted big rights to independently allocate the raised funds and form the staffing schedule. It is important to reform the system of financing primary vocational and secondary vocational education in a way, that would incorporate the above successful experience, aimed both at detailing the financing of the costs for each student, but also at the freedom to allocate the funds raised.
- 2. The autonomy of educational institutions needs to expand, as well as opportunities for incomegenerating activities, formation of a reserve of administrative personnel with employer involvement, the development of digital solutions, which will reduce bureaucratic procedures and increase transparency.
- 3. analysis of the experience of other countries in the integration of the systems of primary and secondary education, aimed at developing a multi-level, multi-functional educational institution that delivers various programs of vocational education, including lifelong learning.
- 4. The example of normative financing in primary vocational education allows considering positively the extension of such a mechanism to the level of secondary vocational education.
- 5. Effective management of primary vocational and secondary vocational education depends on numerous factors and cooperation betwee various ministries, agencies, employers and others. Measures need to be provided for improving this interaction, in particular in training and employment of people with disabilities. It is important to disseminate the experience of cooperation with employers in the framework of expert and other councils, agreements, memorandums, etc.





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Annex 1

Information on the implementation of the PVET and SVET budget for 2017 and 2018, including vocational schools and colleges subordinate to MES

	approved budget (annual)		
Title of the indicator	2017	2018	
	thousand som	thousand som	
Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz	191 399,100	207 249,800	
Republic (subordinate institutions of education and			
culture)			
1.1. Secondary vocational education	26 225,500	28 349,600	
1.2. Continuing secondary education	165 173,600	178 900,200	
Agency for Primary Vocational Education under	1 082 655,300	1 094 002,300	
the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz			
Republic (subordinate institutions)			
2.1. Primary vocational education	1 063 957,400	1 075 304,400	
2.2. Continuing secondary education	18 697,900	18 697,900	

