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Malta
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# Statistics and analysis of licensed providers

## in Malta based on European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) Indicators

**REFERENCE ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/2021**

August 2023

# Introduction.

This report is based on the recommendation of the European Council for a European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) Reference Framework [1]. It presents data in the form of indicators, giving insight into the status of vocational education and training (VET) in Malta.

All indicators were computed with reference to academic year 2020/2021. Indicators 1, 2, 9 and 11 deal with the data pertaining to the VET institutions. Indicator 1 deals with the quality of VET institutions in Malta, considering the presence of an internal quality assurance (IQA) policy and licensing. Indicator 2 considers the teaching staff complement, their continuing professional development and the VET institution's financial investment towards this end. Indicator 9 refers to the techniques used by VET institutions for identifying the training needs in the labour market, while indicator 11 describes the relationship between VET institutions, the participation in mobility programs and the extent to which these are made available as well as the amount of funding available for this scope.

Indicators 3, 4 and 8 present data on the number of enrollments and graduations in VET. Indicators 3 and 4 describe the rate of participation and completion in both initial vocational education and training (IVET) and continuing vocational education and training (CVET), along with a number of demographics. Indicator 8 gauges the prevalence of certain groups in both IVET and CVET.

Indicators 5 and 6 deal with the workplace and the role of industry in VET. Indicators 5 and 6 report the level of collaboration between VET institutions and industry stakeholders. These deal with the collection of information from both students and industry stakeholders to determine the quality of VET and the impact it is having on the students and their search for employment, as well as the employer and their search for competent employees.

Indicators 7 and 10 present facts about the rate of employment and the availability of schemes which may promote or facilitate access to VET.

The final section gives an overview of the methodological aspect underpinning this report. It provides details on the data sources and methods used, the limitations and a number of emerging conclusions.

# Table of Contents.

# Indicator 1:

## Relevance of quality assurance systems for VET providers

## Sub-indicator 1a: Share of providers applying internal quality assurance systems defined either by law or at their own initiative

**All licensed VET providers have an internal quality assurance policy and apply an IQA system.The majority of VET providers (95%) incorporate the EQAVET framework in their IQA system.**

In Malta, the license to operate as an education institution is issued by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA) subject to a number of criteria, which include the drawing up of an IQA policy. During the vetting process, the MFHEA ensures that the IQA is based on the mission statement of the institution and addresses all 11 standards outlined in the National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education [2].

While all licensed VET providers apply an IQA system, the vast majority (95%) incorporate the EQAVET framework in their IQA system (95%) (Chart 1) [3]. These findings were derived from a survey which was conducted among VET providers in Malta by the MFHEA. The licensed VET providers who do not incorporate the EQAVET framework in their IQA system are newly founded institutions who are still in their initial start-up phase.

# Sub-indicator 1b: Share of accredited VET providers

**All VET providers operating in or from Malta are licensed.**

In Malta, accreditation is referred to as licensing. According to the Subsidiary Legislation 607.03 on Licensing, Accreditation and Quality Assurance, all education institutions offering further or higher education in or from Malta require a license issued by the MFHEA to operate [4].

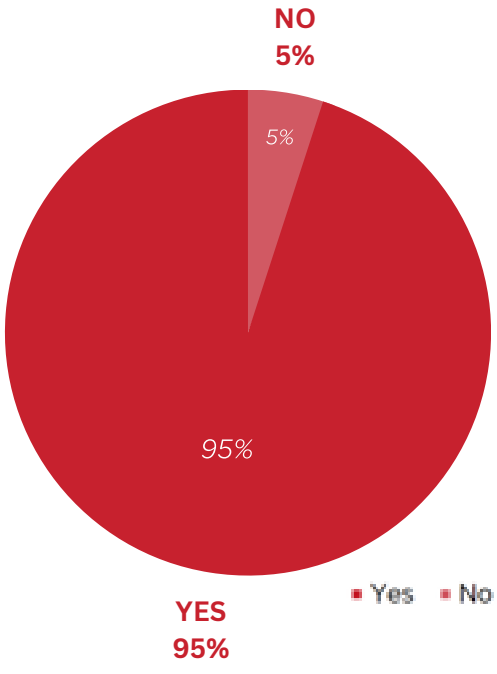



*Chart 1: Share of VET providers incorporating the EQAVET framework in their IQA system*

# Indicator 2:

## Investment in training of teachers and trainers

## Sub-indicator 2a: Share of teachers and trainers participating in education or training

**The overall share of VET teachers and trainers participating in education or training is 96%.More specifically, this implies that the proportion of teachers and trainers participating in education or training reaches 99% and 95% for full-timers and part-timers, respectively.**

Within state funded VET institutions, all teachers and trainers working on a full-time basis (100%) and the majority of those working on a part-time basis (98%) participate in education or training. Independently funded VET institutions contribute to a smaller share, with 80% of the full-time teachers and trainers and just over three quarters of the part-time teachers and trainers (78%) participating in education or training (Chart 2).

These findings were deduced from a survey which was carried out by the MFHEA among VET providers.For the purposes of this survey, education and training include all forms of continuing education and training related to the job. Reference is made to the Sources and Methods section.

In Malta, state funded institutions offer in-service training to all teachers and trainers. Such training is mandatory for full-time staff but optional for part-time staff and serves the purpose of ensuring the continuing professional development of all teachers and trainers in state educational institutions.Being in-service training, this is undertaken during working hours, incurring no additional burden on teaching staff during their own personal time.

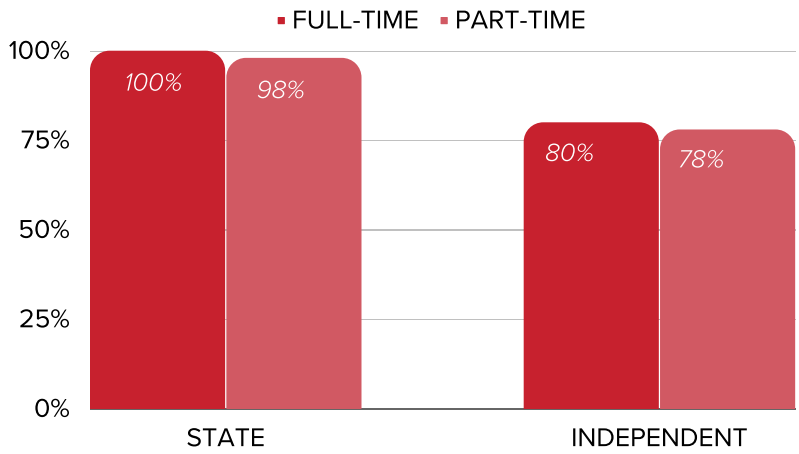



*Chart 2: Share of teachers and trainers participating in further training by type of institution funding and work basis*

# Sub-indicator 2b: Funds invested in the education or training of teachers and trainers

**More than two thirds of VET providers (69%) allocate a portion of the institution's annual budget towards the provision of education or training for teachers and trainers. Half of the VET providers invest up to 10% of their annual budget in education or training (Chart 3).**

All state funded VET institutions dedicate up to 10% of the institution's annual budget towards the education or training of their teaching staff. By contrast, the largest portion of independently funded VET institutions (31%) do not invest in education or training, while the second largest portion invests up to 10% of the institution's annual budget towards education or training of their teaching staff (Chart 3).

Centralised state funding leads to a harmonised approach towards budget allocation for continuing professional development of teachers and trainers within state funded VET institutions. Conversely, within independently funded VET institutions, the level of investment in the education or training of teachers and trainers is subject to significant variation since it depends on the priorities of the respective institutions.This gives rise to differences across otherwise similar VET institutions.

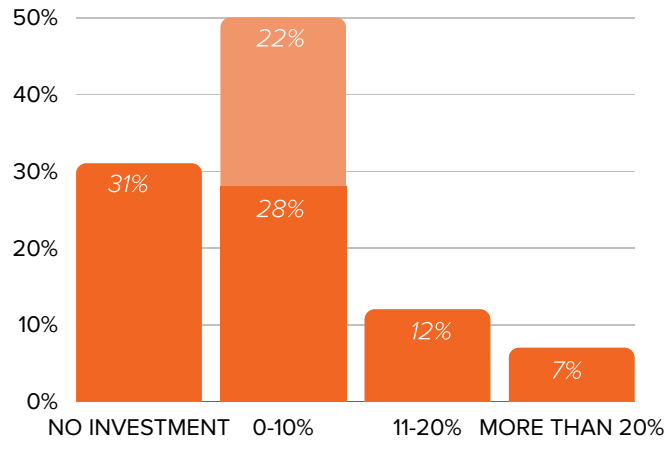



*Chart 3: Share of the institution's annual budget invested in further training of teaching staff by type of institution funding*

# Indicator 3:

## Participation rate in VET programmes

## Sub-indicator 3a: Share of the enrolled cohort participating in IVET programmes

**During academic year 2020/2021, the total number of enrollments stood at 63,005, of which 15,463 (25%) were in IVET programmes (Chart 4).**

The number of enrollments represents the number of registrations in education or training programmes, including both VET and non-VET programmes, in a given academic year. This figure may differ from the total number of students in a given academic year, since a single person may be enrolled in more than one programme during a single academic year. For the purposes of this report, the enrolled cohort shall be represented by all student registrations in education or training programmes during academic year 2020/2021. Reference is made to the Sources and Methods section.

Cumulatively, over 60% of the IVET enrollments attended a programme in the field of Business, administration and law (28%), Services (19%) or Health and welfare (14%).These were the three most popular fields of study among IVET enrollments. The fields of study having the smallest shares of IVET enrollments were Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics (0.4%), Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary (0.4%) and Social sciences, journalism and information (0.2%) (Chart 5).

The largest portions of IVET enrollments were recorded at MQF level 6 (27%), MQF level 4 (26%) and MQF level 3 (21%). The smallest shares of IVET enrollments were recorded at MQF level 1 (3%) and MQF level 7 (1%). There were no IVET enrollments at MQF level 8 (Chart 6).

Over three fifths of the IVET enrollments (63%) reside in the Northern Harbour district (26%), Southern Harbour district (19%) and the Southeastern district (18%). The district with the smallest contribution towards IVET enrollments was the district of Gozo and Comino (8%) (Chart 7).

IVET enrollments were equally distributed between males and females in the Southern Harbour and Western districts. The share of male IVET enrollments exceeded the share of female enrollments in the Northern Harbour, Southeastern and Gozo and Comino districts (Chart 8).

The majority of IVET enrollments (77%) were Maltese nationals, whereas other EU and non-EU nationalities accounted for 19% and 9% of the IVET enrollments, respectively (Chart 9). IVET enrollments of non-EU nationalities recorded a difference of 14% between males and females, with males having the higher share of IVET enrollments. The share of male EU nationals enrolled in IVET programmes exceeded the share of female enrollments by 4%, while the share of Maltese IVET enrollments was equally distributed across males and females (Chart 10).

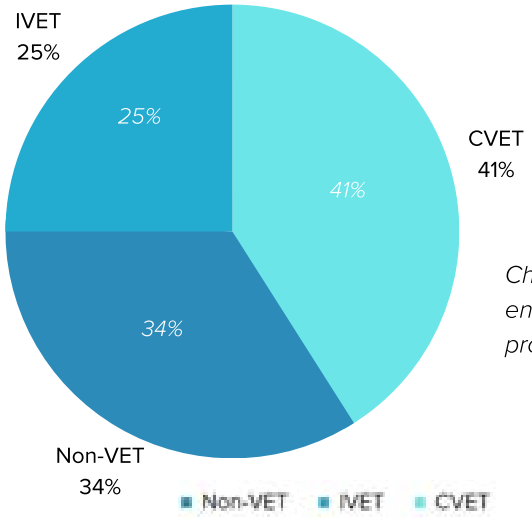
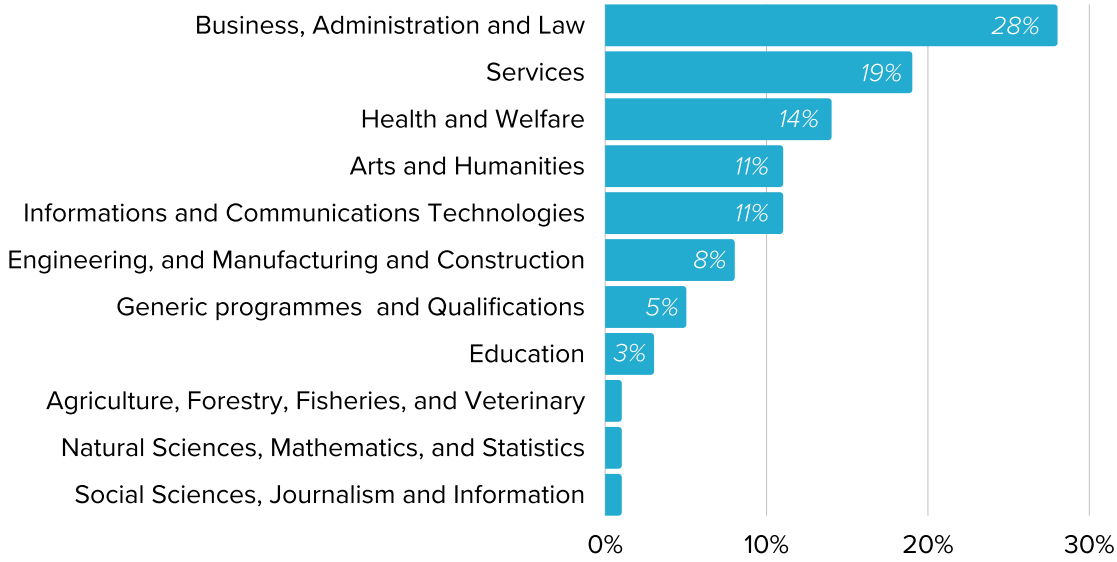



*Chart 4: Distribution of the enrolled cohort by type of programme*

*Chart 5: Distribution of the IVET enrollments by field of study*



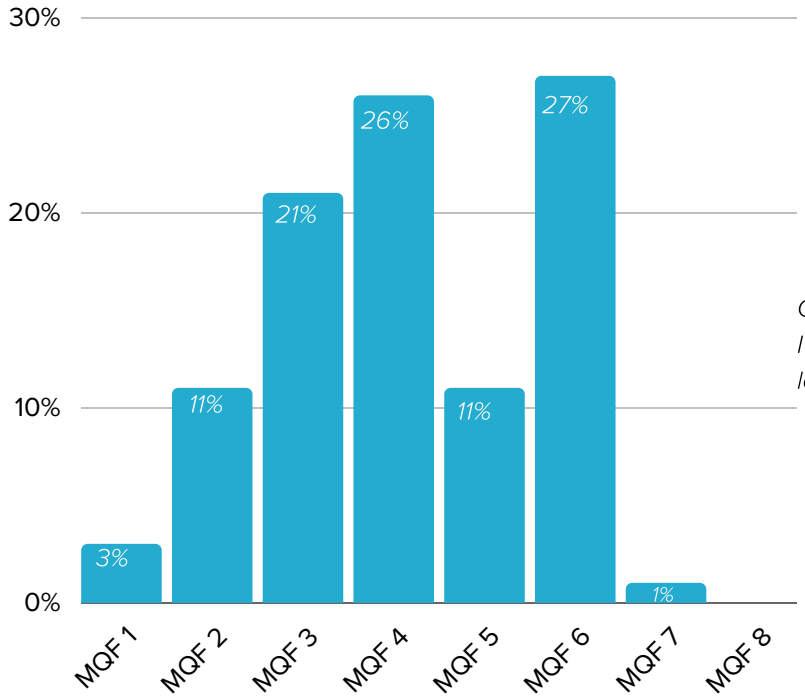




*Chart 6: Distribution of the IVET enrollments by MQF level*

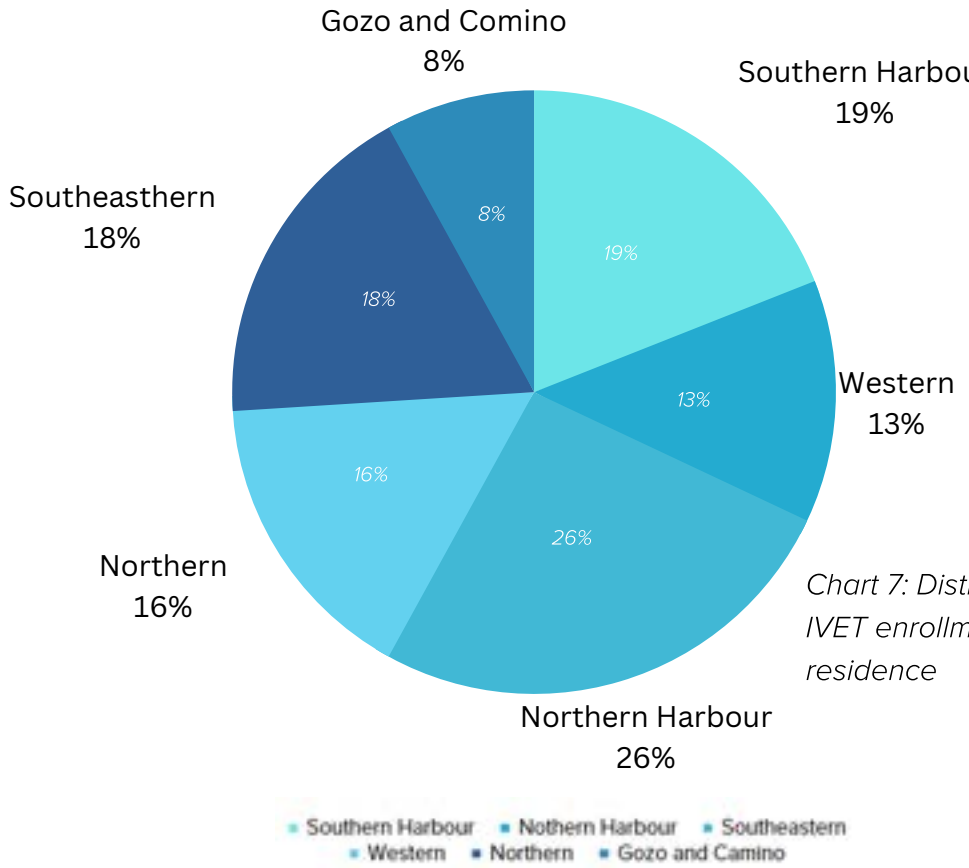



*Chart 7: Distribution of the IVET enrollments by district of residence*

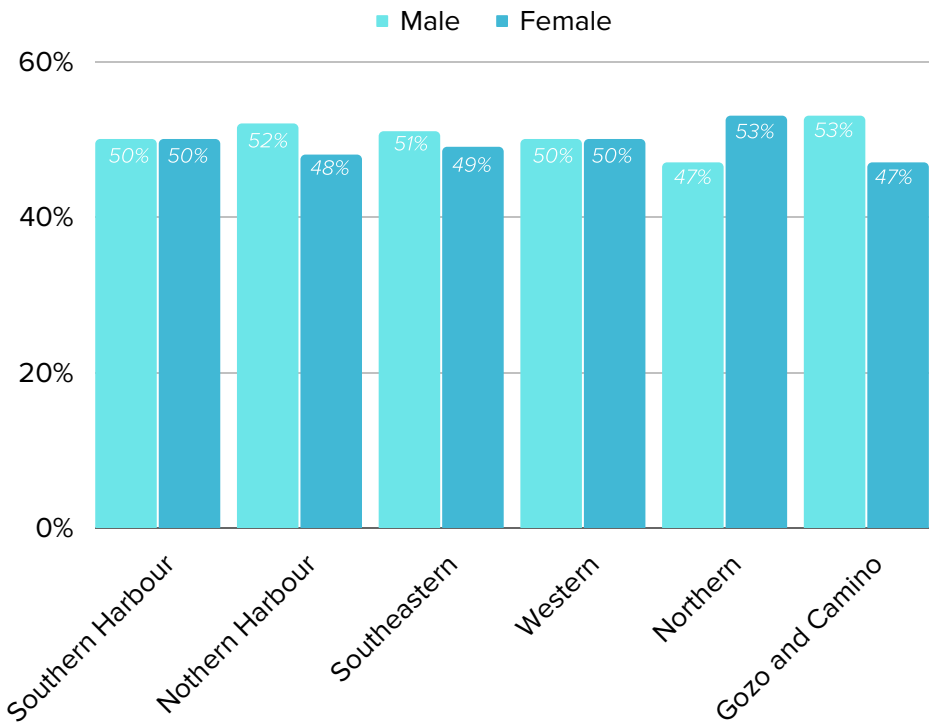



*Chart 8: Distribution of the IVET enrollments by sex per district of residence*

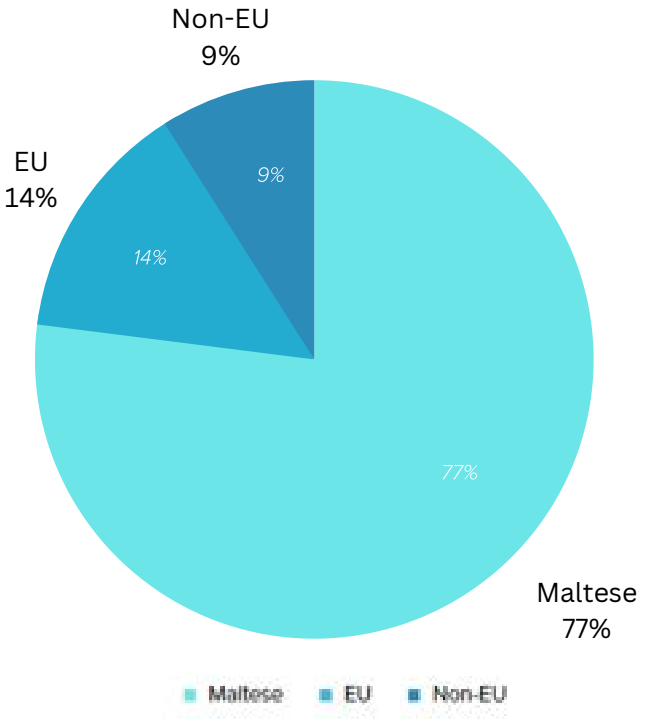



*Chart 9: Distribution of the IVET enrollments by nationality group*

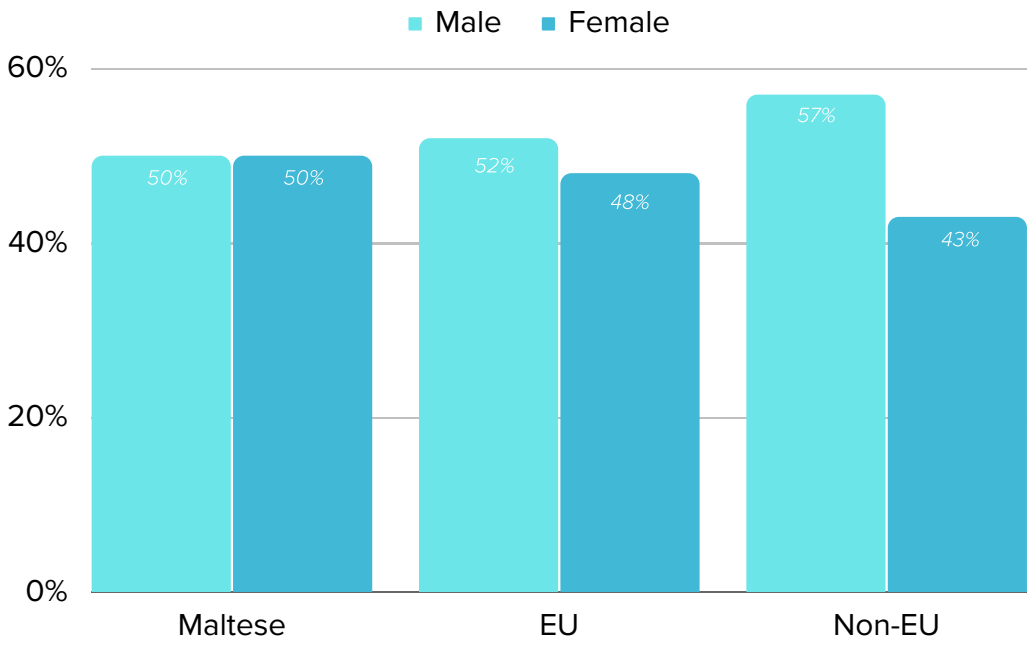



*Chart 10: Distribution of the IVET enrollments by sex per nationality group*

# Sub-indicator 3b: Share of the enrolled cohort participating in CVET programmes

**During academic year 2020/2021, the number of CVET enrollments was 25,919 (41%) of the enrolled cohort (Chart 4).**

Over two thirds of the CVET enrollments attended a programme in the field of Business, administration and law (30%), Arts and humanities (22%) or Services (16%). These were the fields of study contributing to the highest three shares of CVET enrollments. The fields of study having the smallest shares of CVET enrollments were Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary (0.4%), Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics (0.36%) and Social sciences, journalism and information (0.35%) (Chart 11). These three fields of study reported the smallest shares of enrollments in both IVET and CVET programmes.

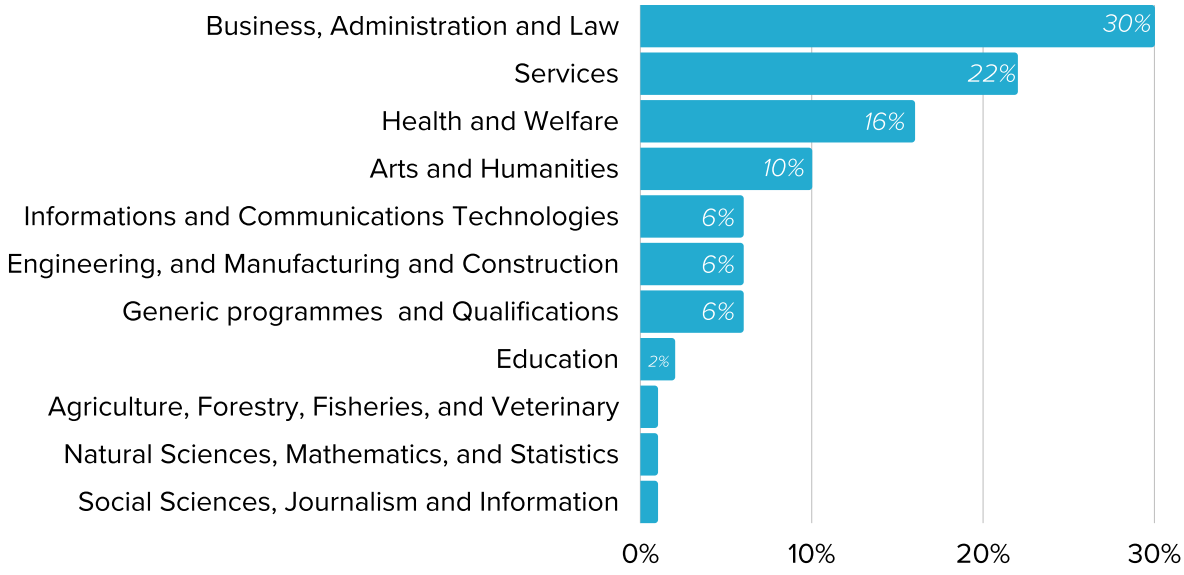
Over two thirds of the CVET enrollments (65%) reside in the Northern Harbour district (31%), Northern district (18%) and the Southeastern district (16%). The district with the smallest contribution towards IVET enrollments was the district of Gozo and Comino (7%) (Chart 13). The Northern Harbour district contributed the largest share of both IVET and CVET enrollments, while the district of Gozo and Comino contributed the smallest share of both IVET and CVET enrollments.

The largest portions of CVET enrollments were recorded at MQF level 3 (22%), MQF level 5 (18%) and MQF level 1 (17%). The smallest shares of CVET enrollments were recorded at MQF level 6 (6%) and MQF level 7 (2%). There were no CVET enrollments at MQF level 8 (Chart 12).

CVET enrollments were generally unequally distributed between males and females, with the share of female enrollments exceeding the share of male enrollments. The Southeastern district contributed the largest discrepancy between male and female CVET enrollments (30%), while the district of Gozo and Comino contributed the smallest discrepancy (4%) (Chart 14).

The majority of CVET enrollments (69%) were Maltese nationals, whereas other EU and non-EU nationalities accounted for 12% and 19% of the CVET enrollments, respectively (Chart 15). CVET enrollments were unequally distributed between males and females across all nationality groups, with the share of female enrollments exceeding the share of male enrollments. Female students had a higher predisposition towards CVET courses. Females outnumbered their male counterparts by 28%.CVET enrollments of EU and non-EU nationalities also showed a similar disparity between sexes, recording a difference of 20% and 18% between male and female enrollments, respectively (Chart 16).

*Chart 11: Distribution of the CVET enrollments by field of study*



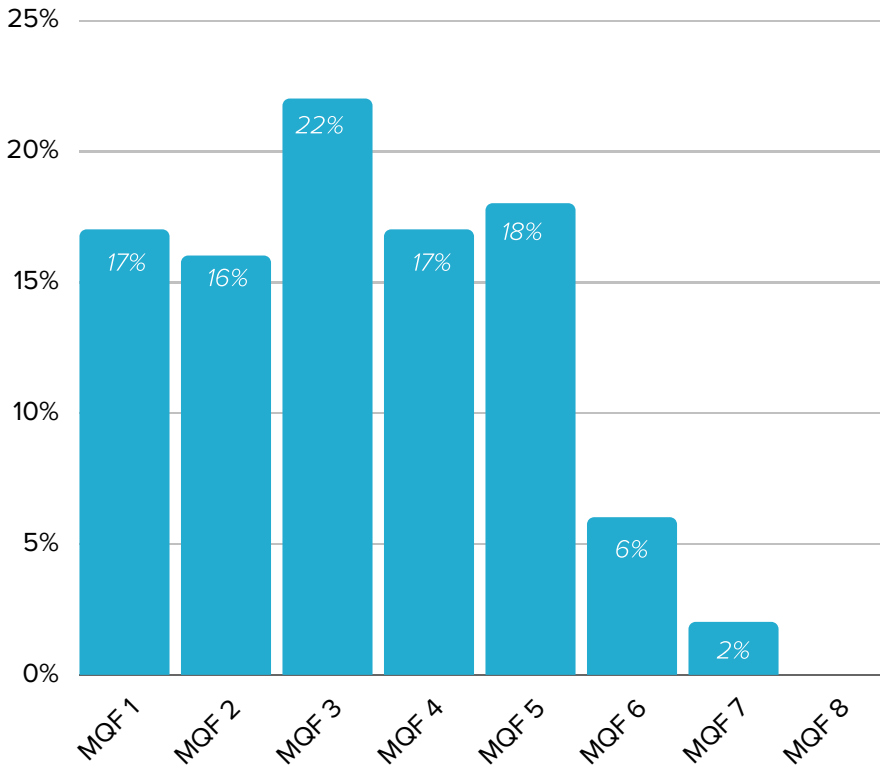




*Chart 12: Distribution of the CVET enrollments by MQF level*

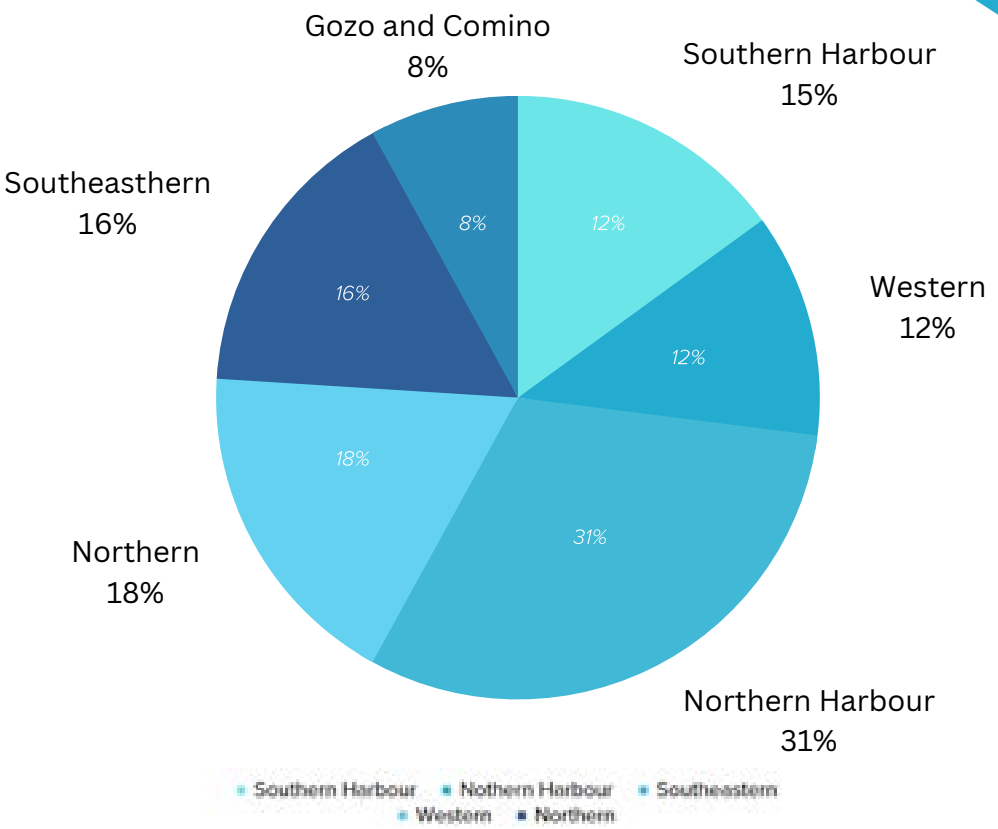



*Chart 13: Distribution of the CVET enrollments by district of residence*

*Chart 14: Distribution of the CVET enrollments by sex per district of residence*

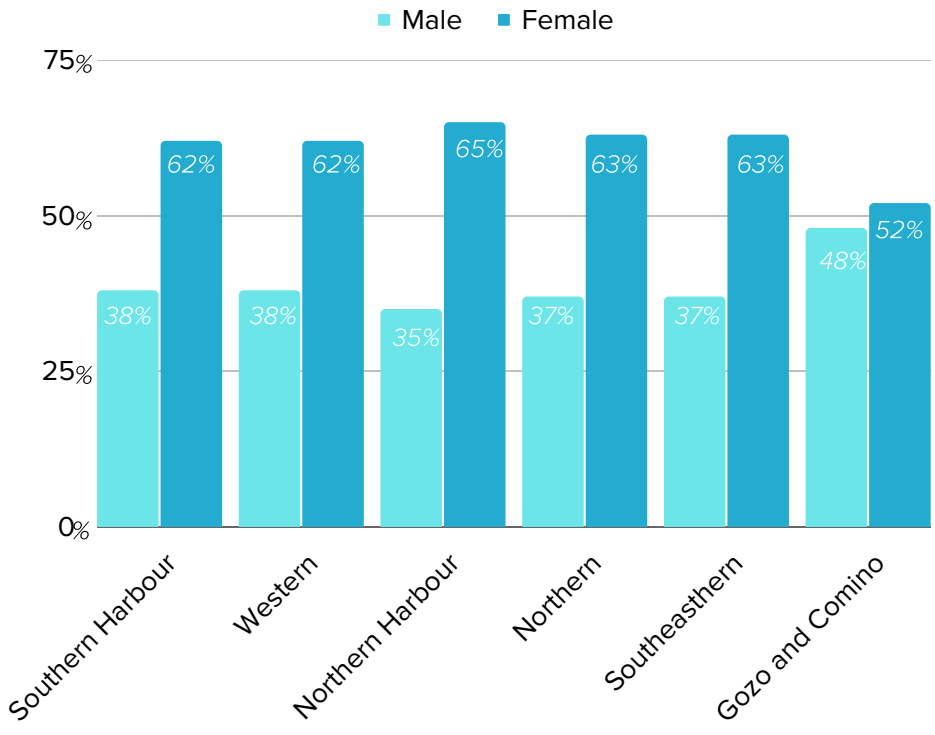


*Chart 15: Distribution of the CVET enrollments by nationality group*

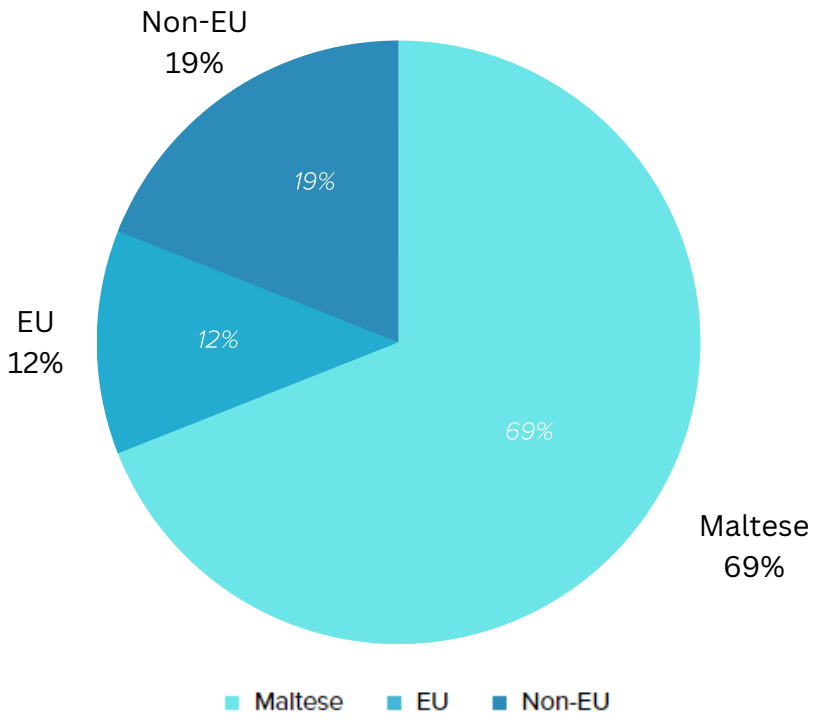
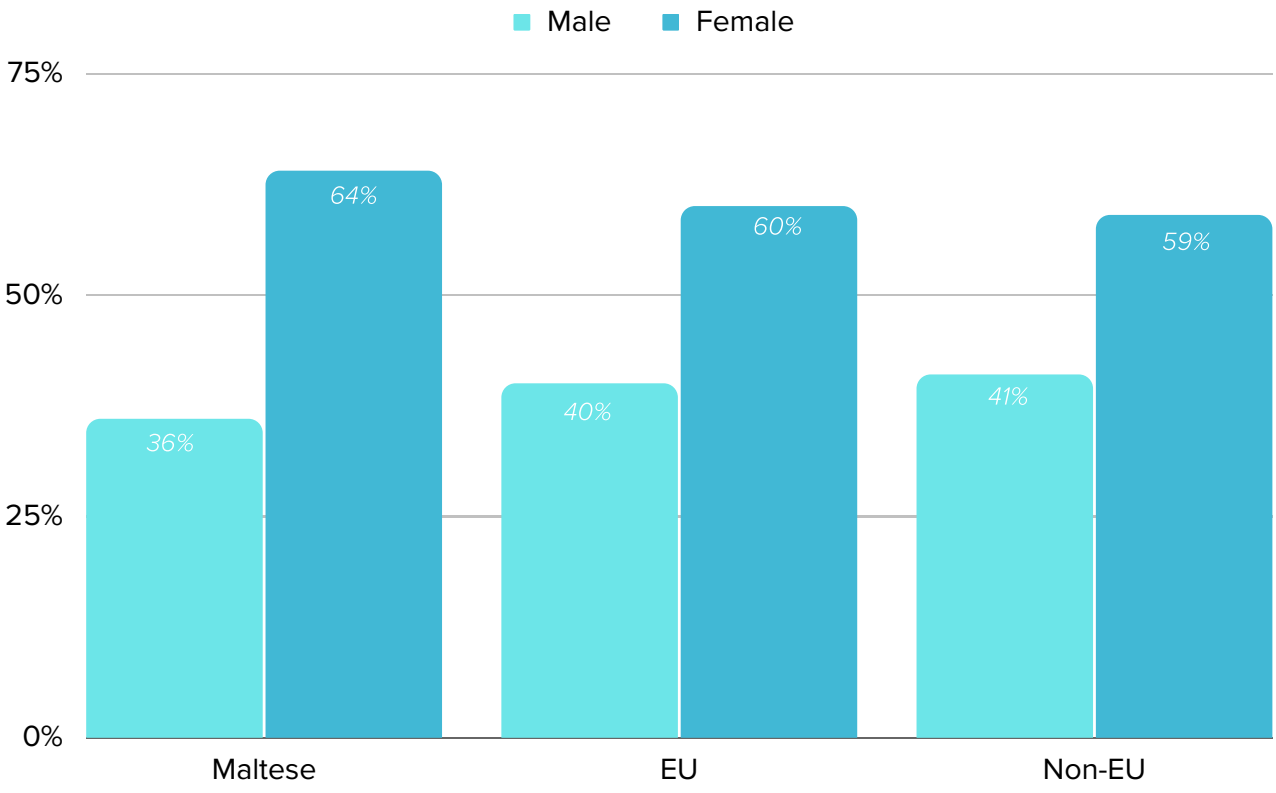



*Chart 16: Distribution of the CVET enrollments by sex per nationality group*



# Sub-indicator 3c: Share of the enrollments in CVET programmes forming part of the active population

**During academic year 2020/2021, the number of CVET enrollments forming part of the active population was 25,671, 99% of the total number of CVET enrollments.**

For the scope of this report, the active population is regarded as the total number of persons aged between 15 and 74 years, inclusively. This is the subset of the population considered to be of working age. Reference is made to the Sources and Methods section.

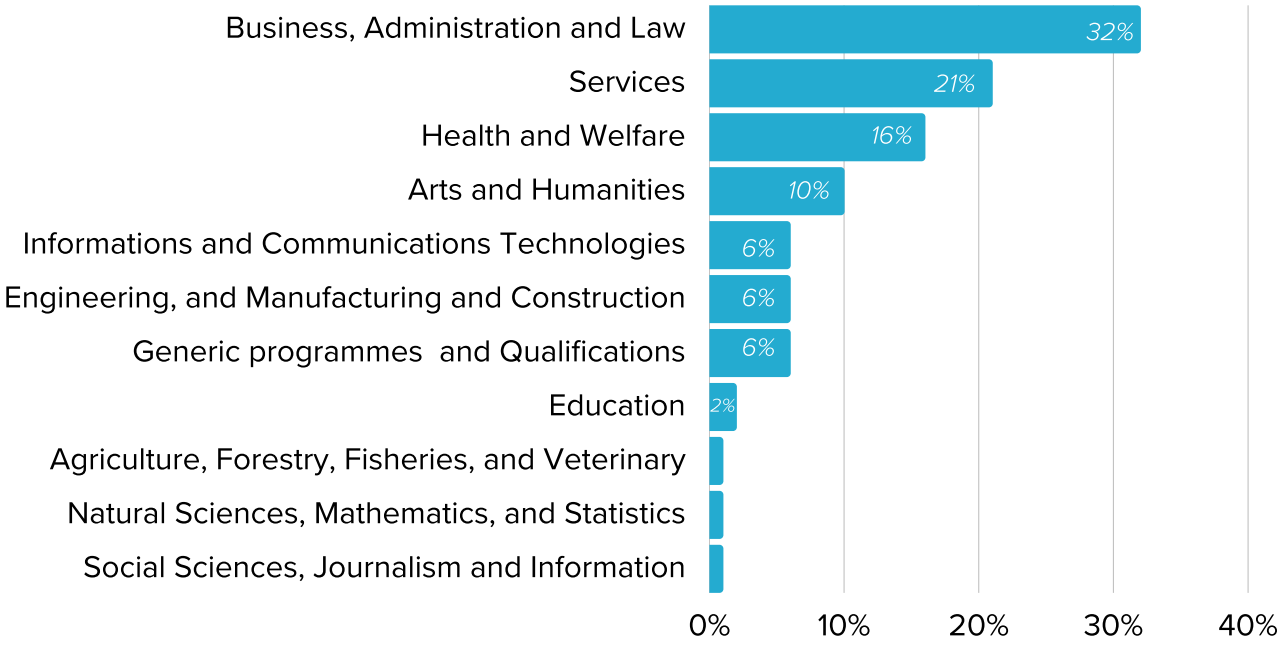
The fields of study with the highest shares of CVET enrollments from among the active population were Business, administration and law (32%), Arts and humanities (21%) and Services (16%). The fields of study with the lowest shares of CVET enrollments from among the active population were Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary (0.4%), Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics (0.36%) and Social sciences, journalism and information (0.35%) (Chart 17).

The largest portions of CVET enrollments from among the active population were recorded at MQF level 3 (23%), MQF level 5 (19%) and MQF level 1 (17%). The smallest shares of CVET enrollments were recorded at MQF level 6 (7%) and MQF level 7 (2%). There were no CVET enrollments at MQF level 8 (Chart 18).

The majority of CVET enrollments from among the active population are female. The share of female CVET enrollments from among the active population exceeds the share of male enrollments by 18% (Chart 19).

The percentage of CVET enrollments from among the active population of Maltese nationality was 69%, while the percentage of other EU and non-EU nationalities reached 12% and 19%, respectively (Chart 20).

*Chart 17: Distribution of the CVET enrollments forming part of the active population by field of study*



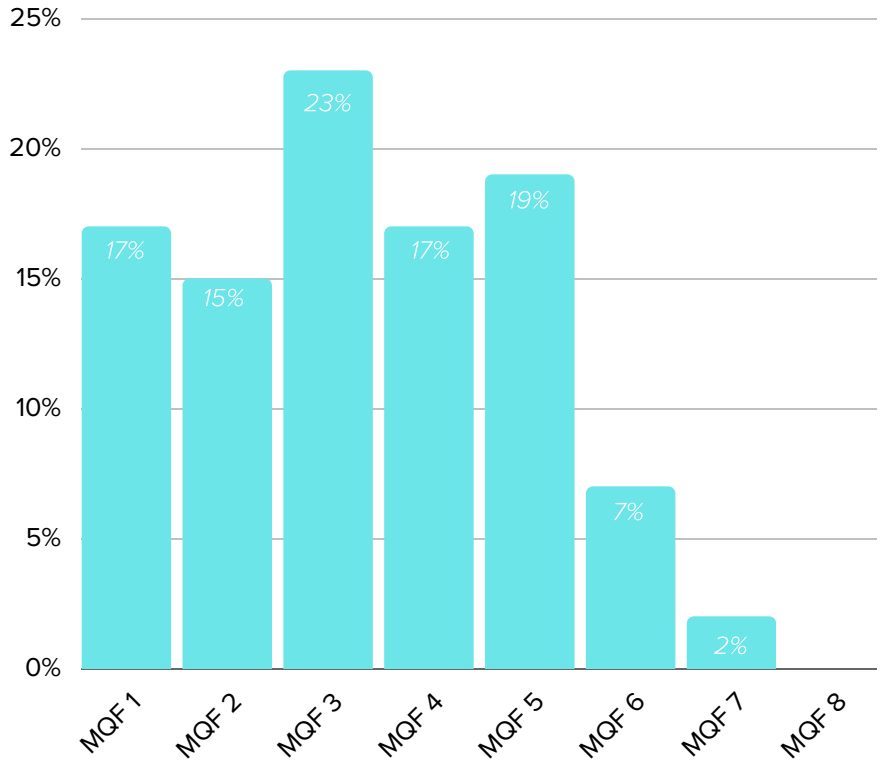




*Chart 18: Distribution of the CVET enrollments forming part of the active population by MQF level*

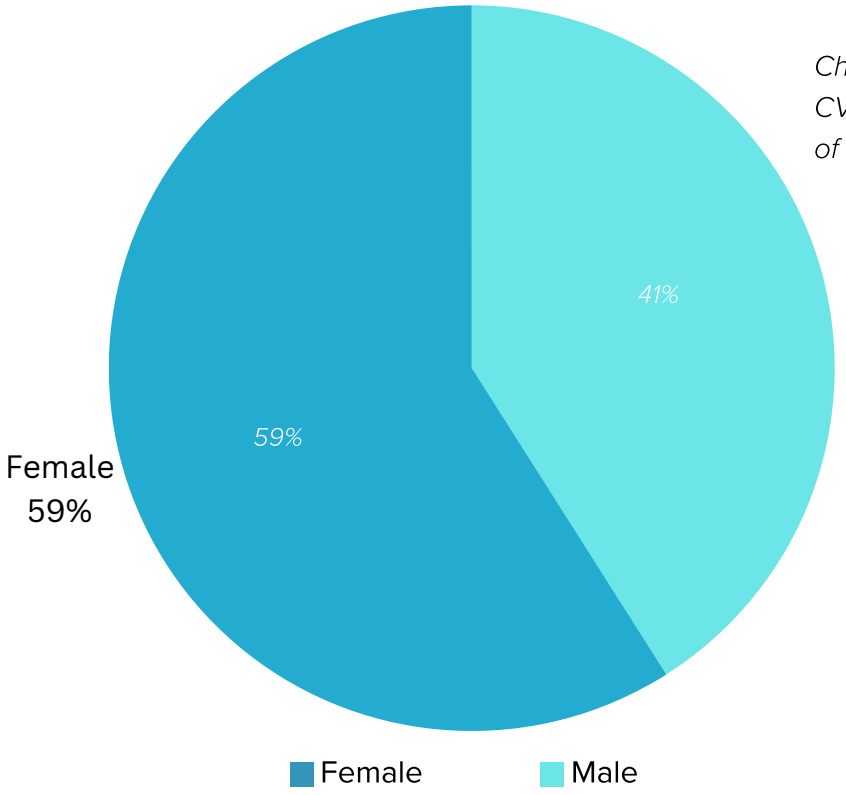
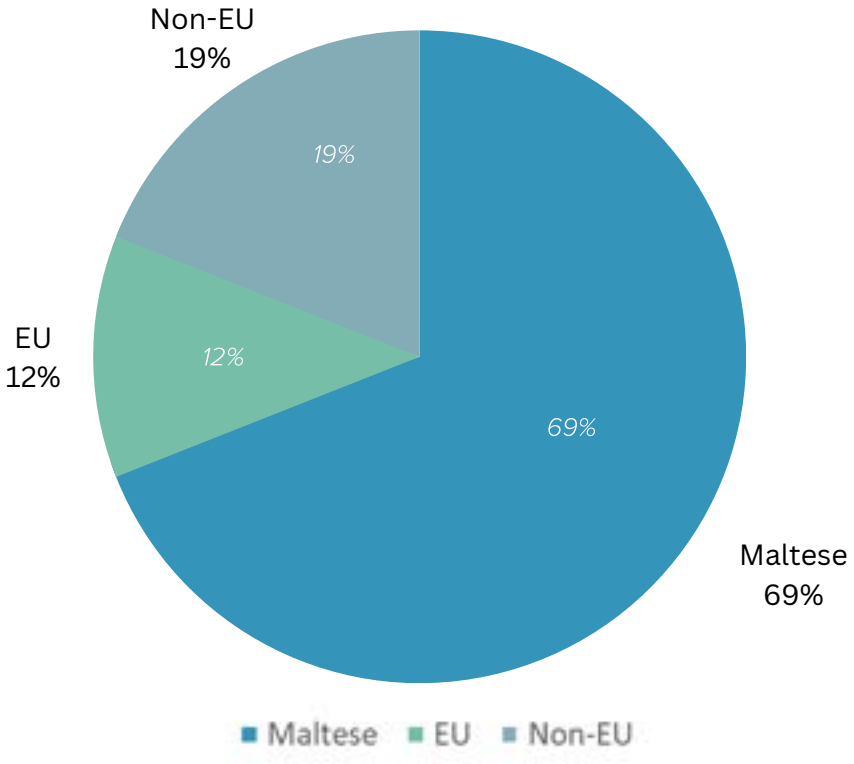



*Chart 19: Distribution of the CVET enrollments forming part of the active population by sex*

*Chart 20: Distribution of the CVET enrollments forming part of the active population by nationality group*



# Indicator 4:

## Completion rate in VET programmes

## Sub-indicator 4a: Share of the graduate cohort successfully completing IVET programmes

**During academic year 2020/2021, the total number of programme completions stood at 23,191, of which 7,009 were in IVET programmes. IVET programme completions amount to 30% of the graduate cohort (Chart 21).**

The number of programme completions includes both VET and non-VET programmes in education or training in a given academic year. Note that this is not necessarily equivalent to the number of students graduating in a given academic year since a single person may complete more than one programme in a given academic year. For the purposes of this report, the graduate cohort shall represent all education or training programme completions, including both VET and non-VET programmes, during academic year 2020/2021. Reference is made to the Sources and Methods section.

The fields of study with the highest shares of IVET programme completions were Services (24%), Business, administration and law (17%) and Information and communication technologies (ICTs) (12%).The fields of study with the lowest shares of IVET programme completions were Generic programmes and qualifications (2%), Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary (0.2%) and Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics (0.1%) (Chart 22).

The largest shares of IVET programme completions were recorded at MQF level 2 (28%), MQF level 3 (28%) and MQF level 4 (21%). The smallest shares of IVET programme completions were recorded at MQF level 7 (2%) and MQF level 1 (2%). There were no IVET programme completions at MQF level 8 (Chart 23).

Over three quarters of the IVET programme completions were linked to residents in the Northern Harbour district (23%), Southeastern district (21%), Southern Harbour district (18%), and the Northern district (17%). The district of residence contributing the smallest share of IVET programme completions was the Gozo and Comino district (9%) (Chart 24).

IVET programme completions were equally distributed between the male and female sexes in the Southeastern district. The share of females who successfully completed an IVET programme exceeded the share of males in all other districts, with the exception of the Southern Harbour district where the males outnumbered the females (Chart 25).

Eighty-eight percent of all IVET programme completions were linked to Maltese nationals. IVET programme completions linked to other EU and non-EU nationalities reached 4% and 8%, respectively (Chart 26). The percentage of female IVET programme completions exceeded their male counterparts by 8% and 6% among Maltese and other EU nationalities, respectively. By contrast, male IVET programme completions prevailed by 16% among non-EU nationalities (Chart 27).

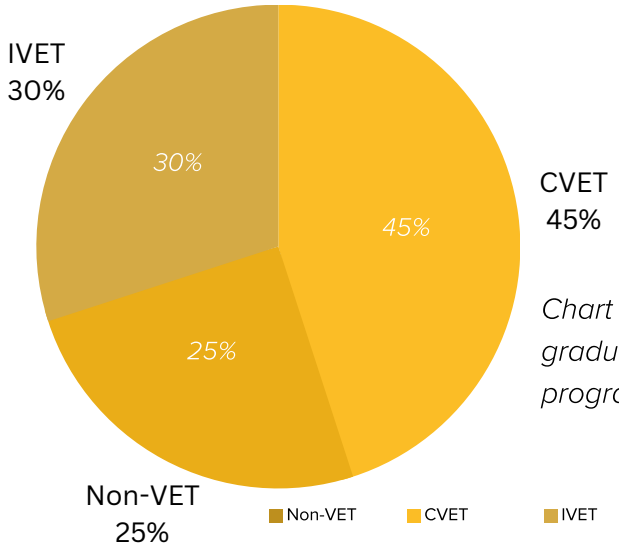



*Chart 21: Distribution of the graduate cohort by type of programme*

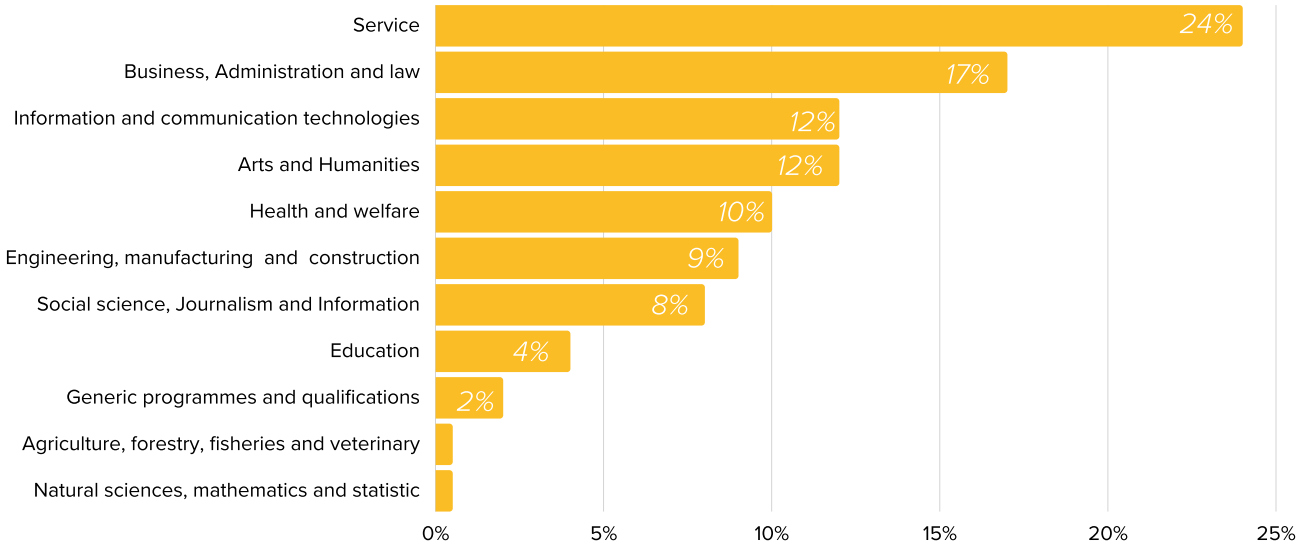



*Chart 22: Distribution of the IVET programmes completions by field of study*

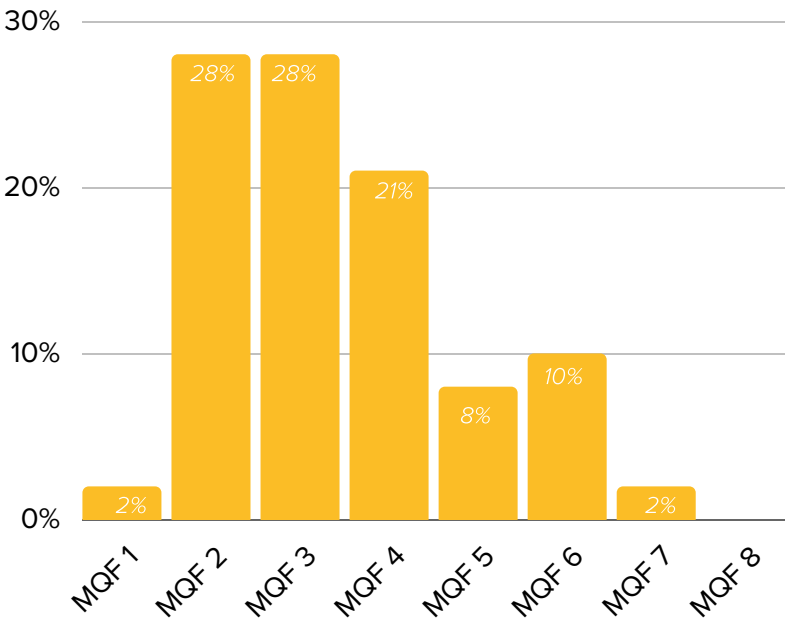



*Chart 23: Distribution of the IVET programme completions by MQF level*

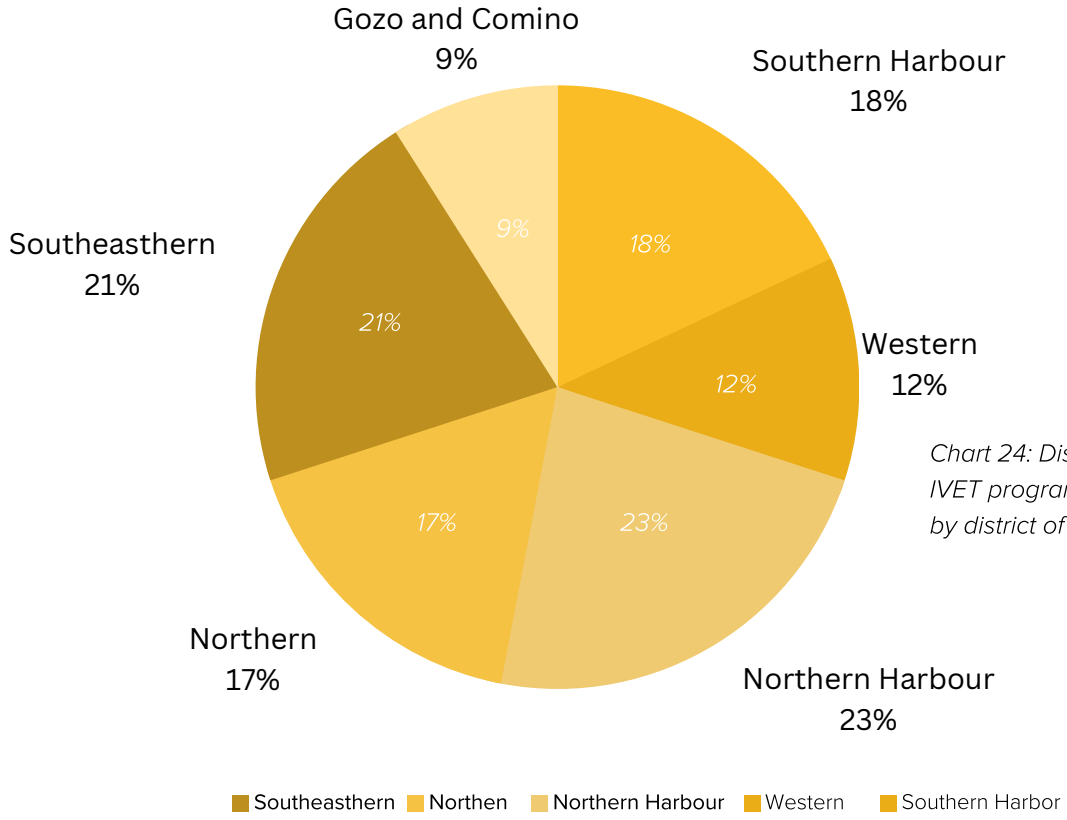
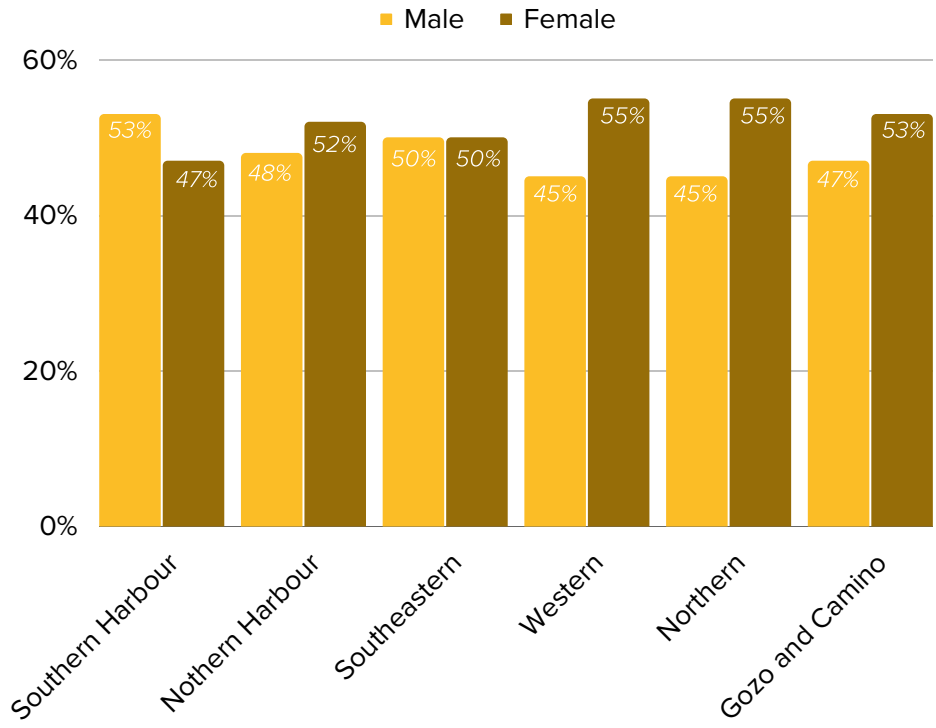



*Chart 24: Distribution of the IVET programme completions by district of residence*

*Chart 25: Distribution of the IVET programme completions by sex per district of residence*



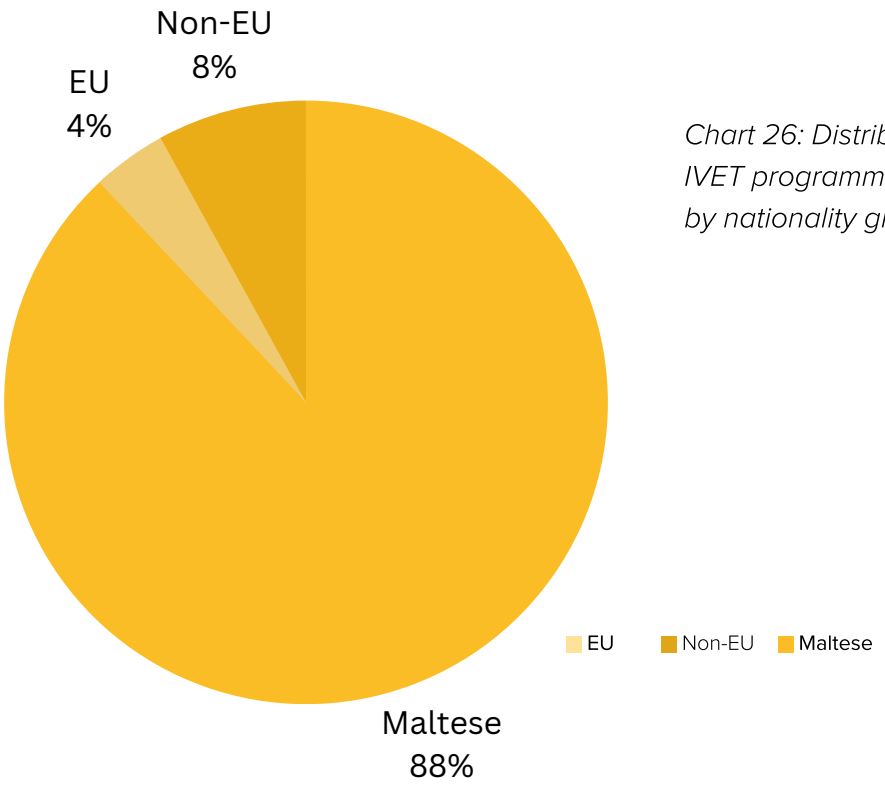
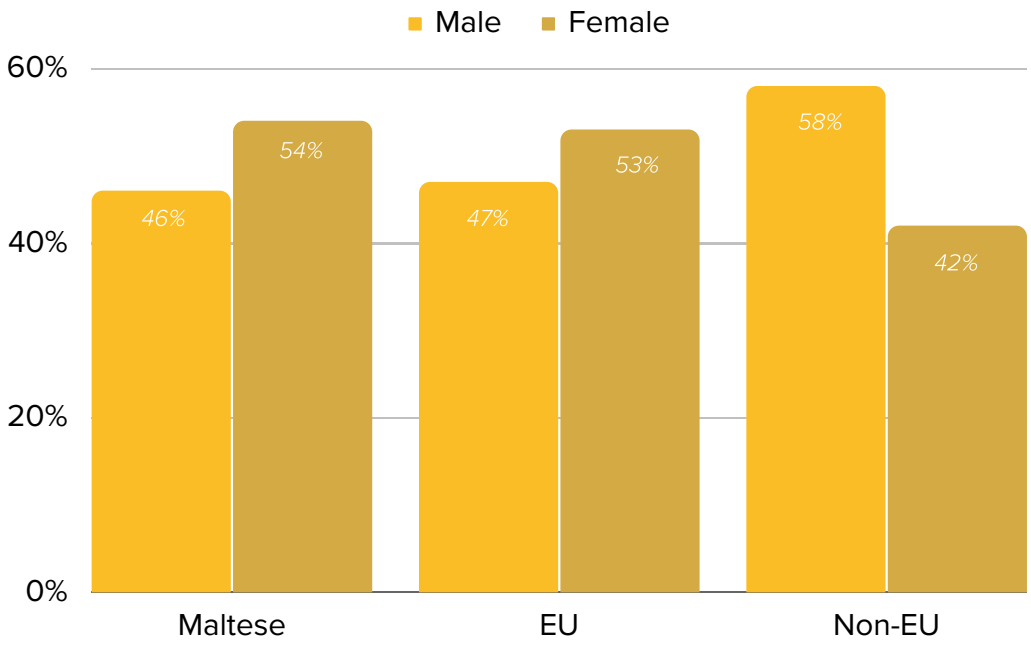



*Chart 26: Distribution of the IVET programme completions by nationality group*

*Chart 27: Distribution of the IVET programme completions by sex and nationality group*



# Sub-indicator 4b: Share of the graduate cohort successfully completing CVET programmes

**During academic year 2020/2021, the number of CVET programme completions was 10,498 (45%) of the graduate cohort (Chart 21).**

The fields of study with the highest shares of CVET programme completions were Services (27%), Business, administration and law (26%) and Health and welfare (13%). The fields of study with the lowest shares of CVET programme completions were Generic programmes and qualifications (0.8%), Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics (0.3%) and Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary (0.1%) (Chart 28).

The largest shares of CVET programme completions were recorded at MQF level 5 (25%), MQF level 3 (22%) and MQF level 4 (21%). There were no CVET programme completions at MQF level 8 (Chart 29).

More than 60% of the CVET programme completions were linked to residents of the Northern Harbour district (28%), Northern district (19%) and the Southern Harbour district (17%).The district with the smallest percentage of CVET programme completions was the Gozo and Comino district (10%) (Chart 30). The district of Gozo and Comino contributed the smallest share of both IVET and CVET programme completions.

The share of female CVET programme completions was higher than that of male CVET programme completions across all districts, with the exception of the Gozo and Comino district where the share of male CVET programme completions prevailed by 4%.The district with the highest discrepancy in favour of female CVET programme completers was the Western district (34%) and the lowest discrepancy was recorded in the Southern Harbour district (12%) (Chart 31).

Maltese nationals accounted for 74% of the CVET programme completions. Non-EU nationalities prevailed among the remainder, with 19% of the CVET programme completions (Chart 32). The proportion of CVET programme completions linked to females exceeded the proportion linked to males in all nationality groups, with the difference being the largest for EU nationalities (26%) and the smallest for Maltese nationals (20%) (Chart 33).

*Chart 28: Distribution of the CVET programme completions by field of study*

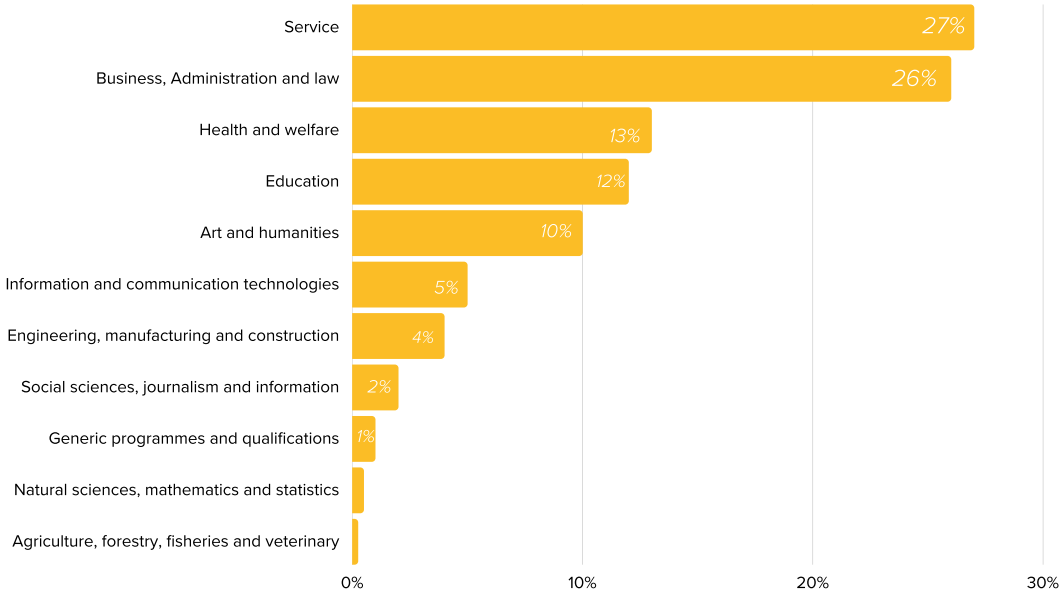



*Chart 29: Distribution of the CVET programme completions by MQF level*

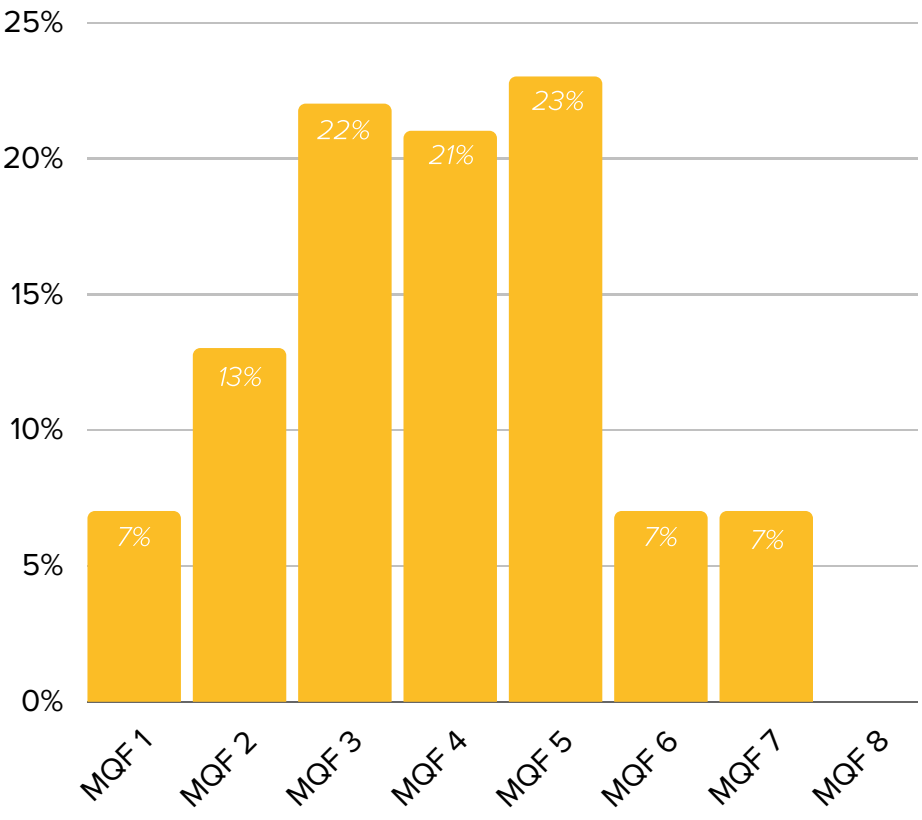


*Chart 30: Distribution of the CVET programme completions by district of residence*

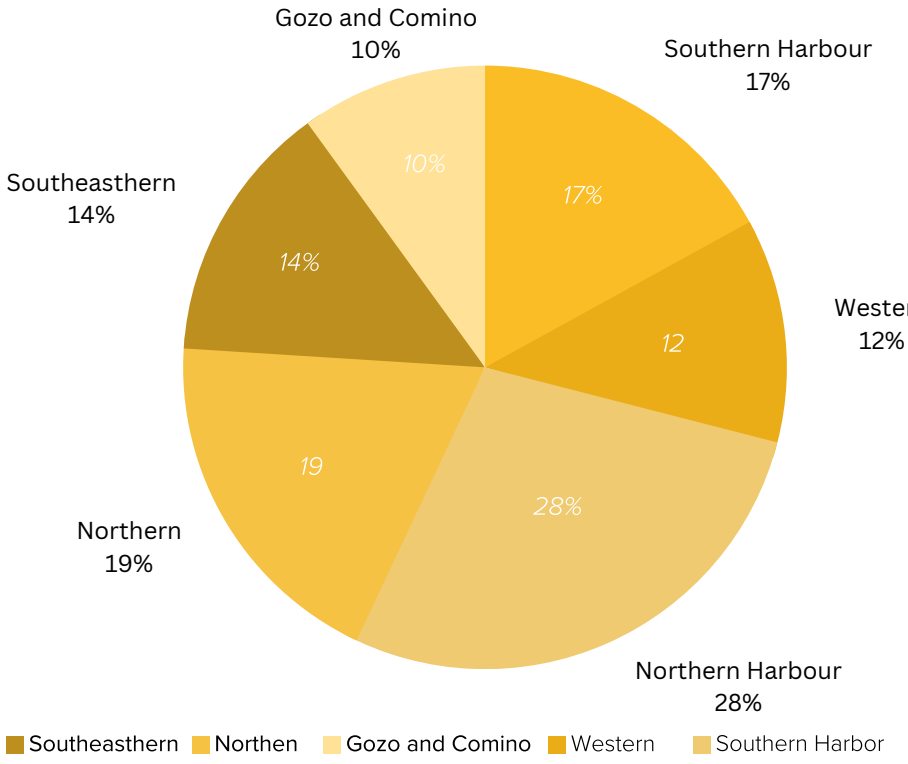



*Chart 31: Distribution of the CVET programme completions by sex per district of residence*

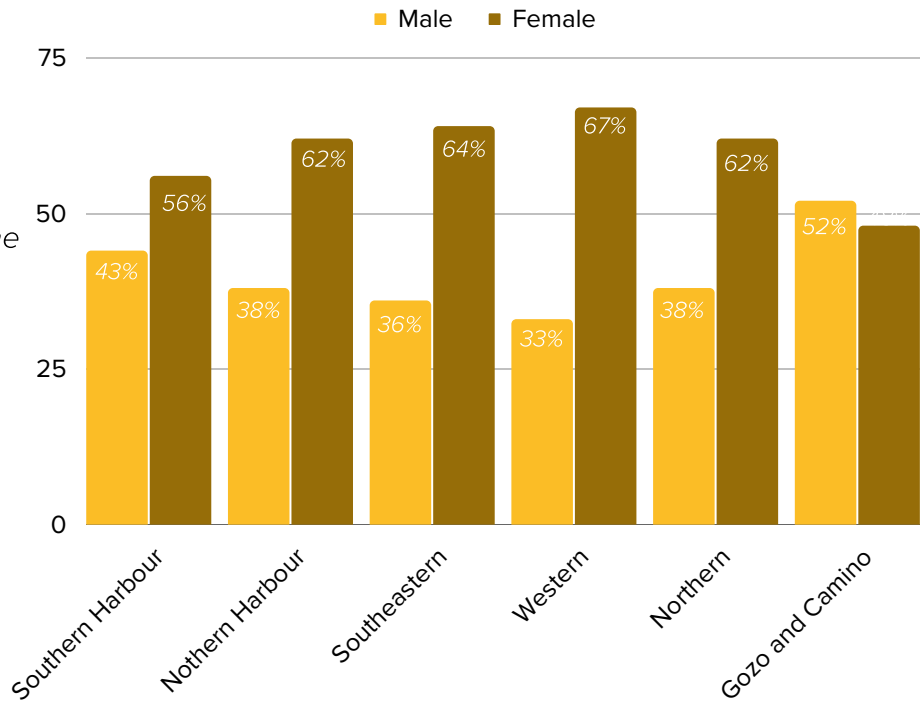
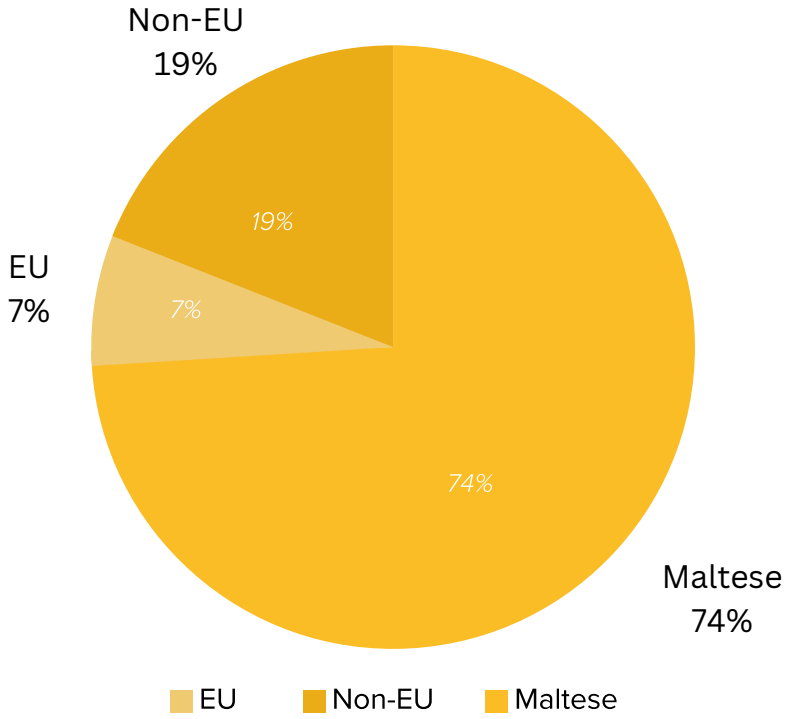


*Chart 32: Distribution of the CVET programme completions by nationality group*



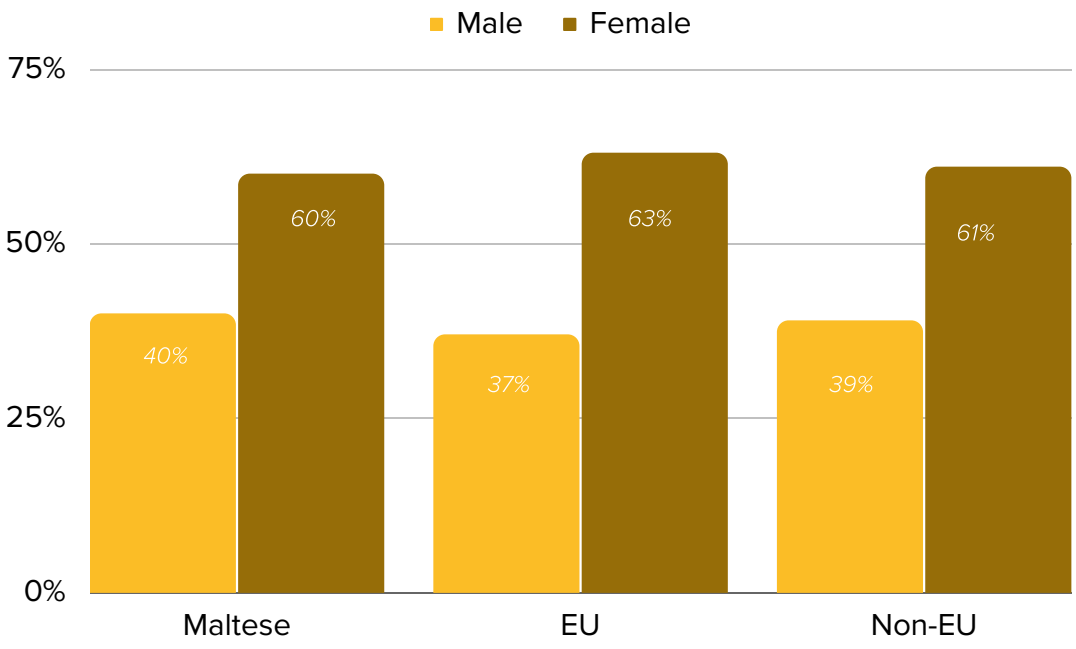




*Chart 33: Distribution of the CVET programme completions by sex per nationality group*

# Sub-indicator 4c: Share of the graduates from CVET programmes forming part of the active population

**During academic year 2020/2021, the number of CVET programme completions forming part of the active population was 10,484, 99.9% of the total number of CVET programme completions.**

The fields of study with the highest shares of CVET programme completions from among the active population were Services (27%), Business, administration and law (26%) and Health and welfare (13%).The fields of study with the lowest shares of CVET programme completions from among the active population were Generic programmes and qualifications (0.8%), Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics (0.3%) and Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary (0.1%) (Chart 34).

The largest portions of CVET programme completions from among the active population were recorded at MQF level 5 (23%), MQF level 3 (22%) and MQF level 4 (21%). No CVET programme completions were recorded at MQF level 8 (Chart 35).

The majority of CVET programme completions from among the active population are female. The share of CVET programme completions linked to females from among the active population exceeds the share linked to males by 20% (Chart 36).

From among the active population, the percentage of CVET programme completions linked to Maltese nationality was 74%, while the percentages linked to EU and non-EU nationalities reached 7% and 19%, respectively (Chart 37).

*Chart 34: Distribution of the CVET programme completions forming part of the active population by field of study*

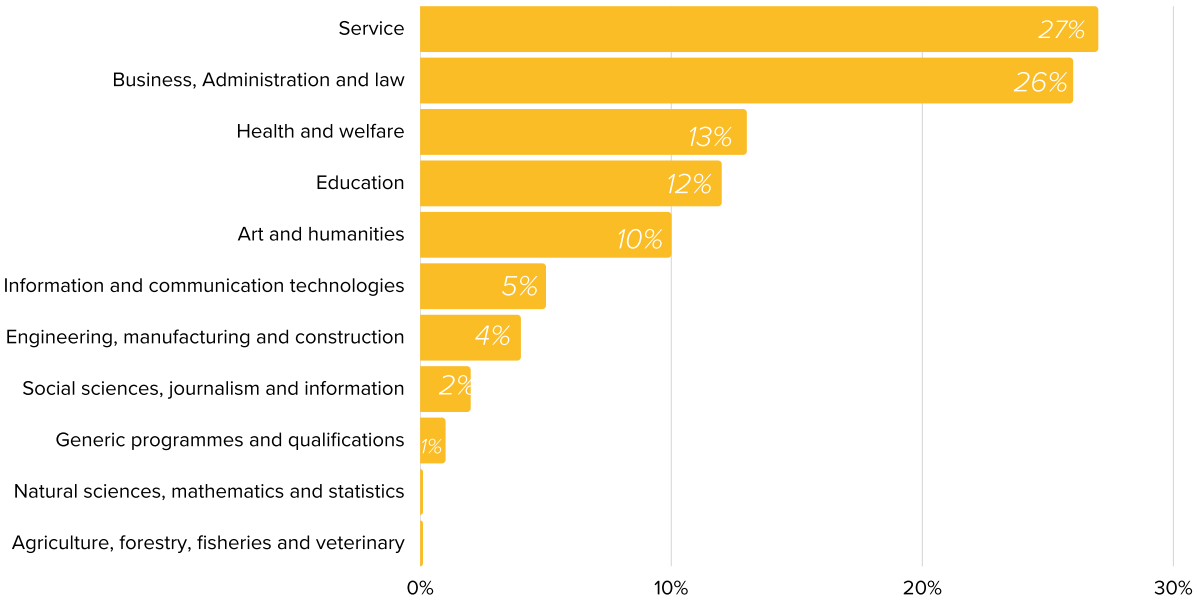
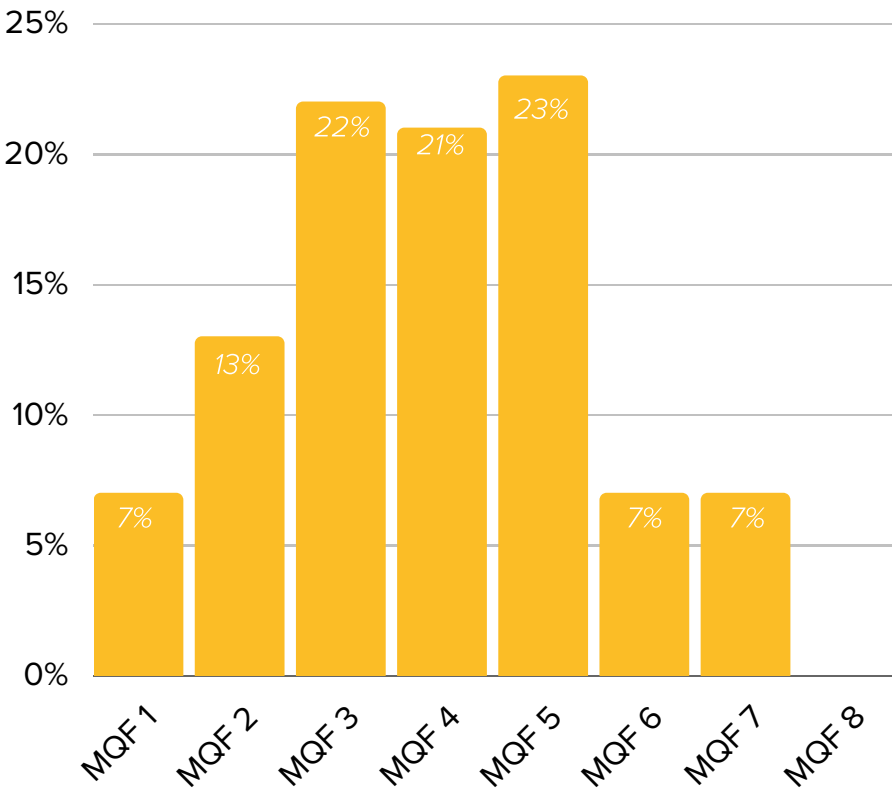



*Chart 35: Distribution of the CVET programme completions forming part of the active population by MQF level*



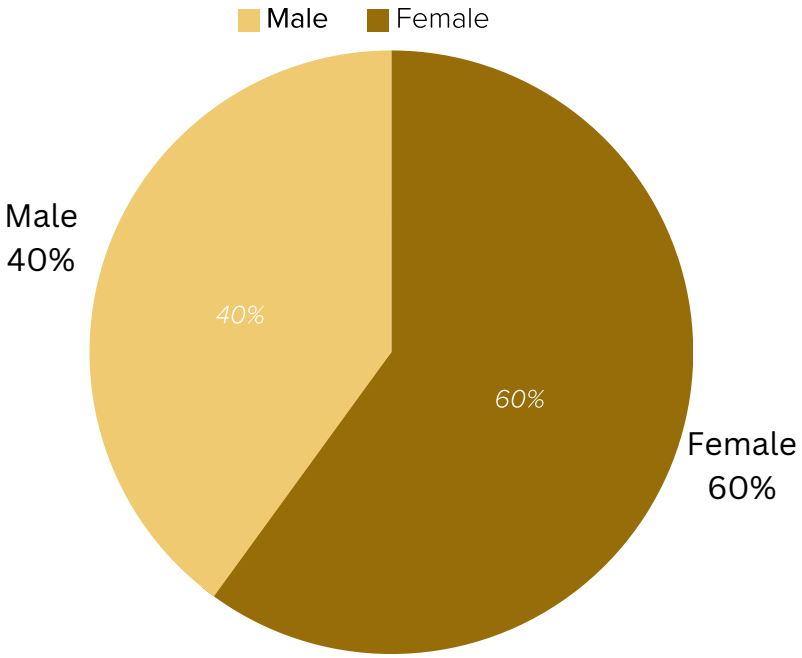



*Chart 36: Distribution of the CVET programme completions forming part of the active population by sex*

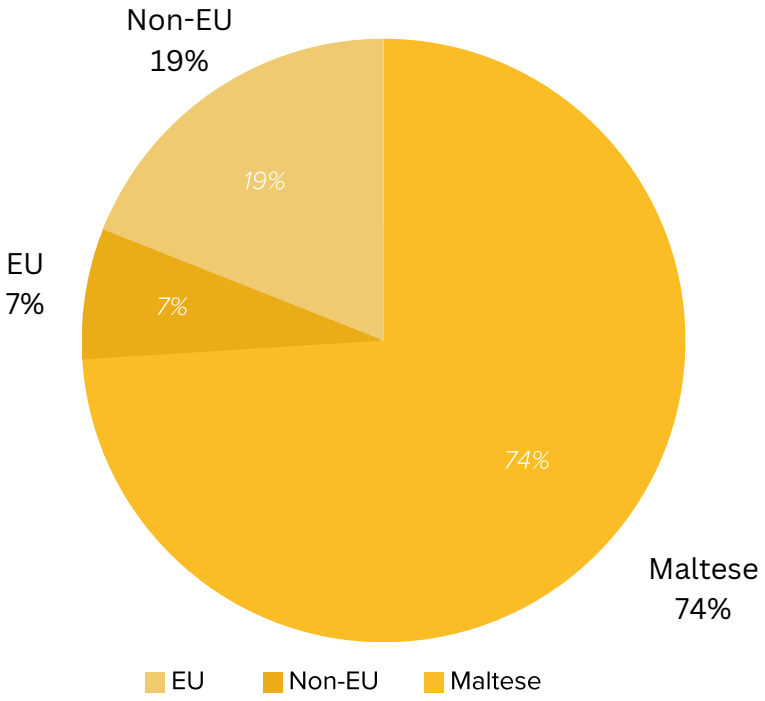



*Chart 37: Distribution of the CVET programme completions forming part of the active population by nationality group*

# Indicator 5:

## Placement rate in VET programmes

## Sub-indicator 5a: Share of VET institutions collecting data about programme completion

**More than 90% of the VET institutions collect data about programme completion, while the remainder indicate that they would like to adopt this practice in the future (Chart 38).**

All VET institutions employing at least 10 teachers or trainers[1] and 87% of the smaller VET institutions employing less than 10 teachers, collect data about programme completion (Chart 39). For the scope of this report, VET institutions are classified into three different size classes: small, medium and large. These size classes are based on the full-time equivalent (FTE) number of teachers employed with the respective institutions. Reference is made to the Sources and Methods section. The majority of VET institutions (89%) collect data about programme completion on an annual basis (Chart 40).

*[1] VET institutions were categorised into the different size classes based on the full-time equivalent (FTE) number of teachers employed with the respective institutions.*

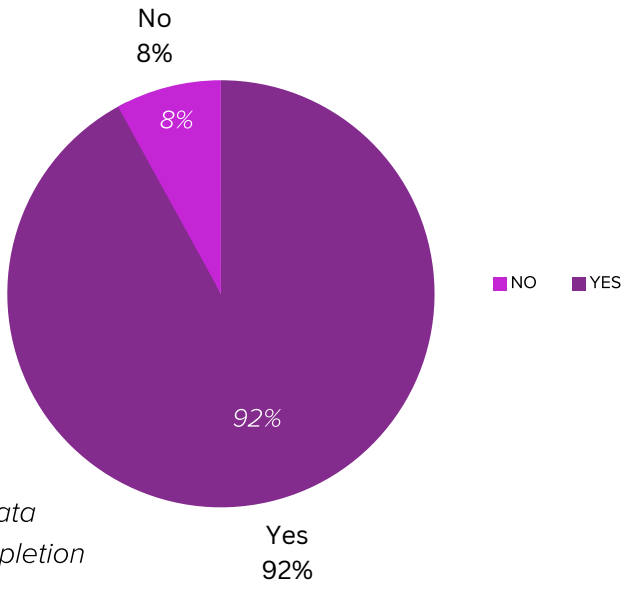



*Chart 38: Share of VET institutions collecting data about programme completion*

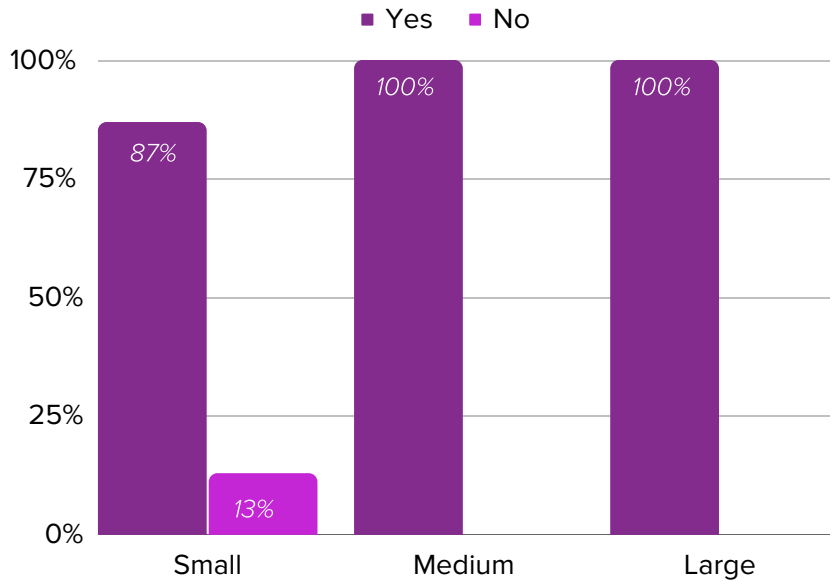



*Chart 39: Share of VET institutions collecting data about programme completion by size of institution*

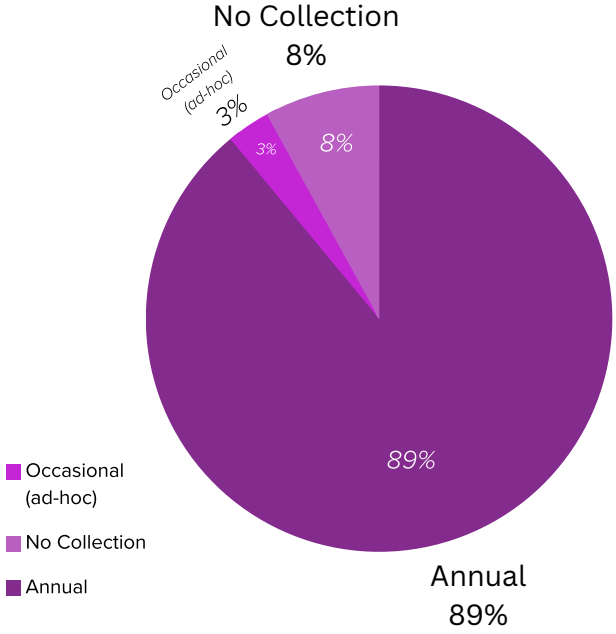



*Chart 40: Frequency of data collection on programme completion*

# Sub-indicator 5b: Share of VET institutions conducting graduate tracer surveys

**Less than half the VET institutions (45%) conduct tracer surveys among graduates, while 75% of the institutions not conducting such tracer surveys would consider adopting this approach in the future (Chart 41).**

The use of tracer surveys is widespread in both general and vocational education. Data obtained from graduate tracer surveys is considered as a valuable measure of effectiveness for programme providers. It is a useful tool to identify any skill gap and improve the student's transition from education to employment. Moreover, tracer surveys serve as the feedback loop between the graduates and the education provider, enabling improvement [5].

Periodic tracer surveys may be costly, hence their implementation, or lack thereof, is determined by the financial capability of the respective institution. While all large VET institutions conduct tracer surveys among graduates, medium-sized VET institutions are equally split between those which conduct such exercises and those which do not. On the other hand, more than half of the small VET institutions (67%) do not conduct tracer surveys among graduates (Chart 42).

The size of an institution may be considered a marker of the institution's financial standing. Based on this, small VET institutions have additional limitations compared with larger institutions, resulting in a diminished ability to conduct such studies.

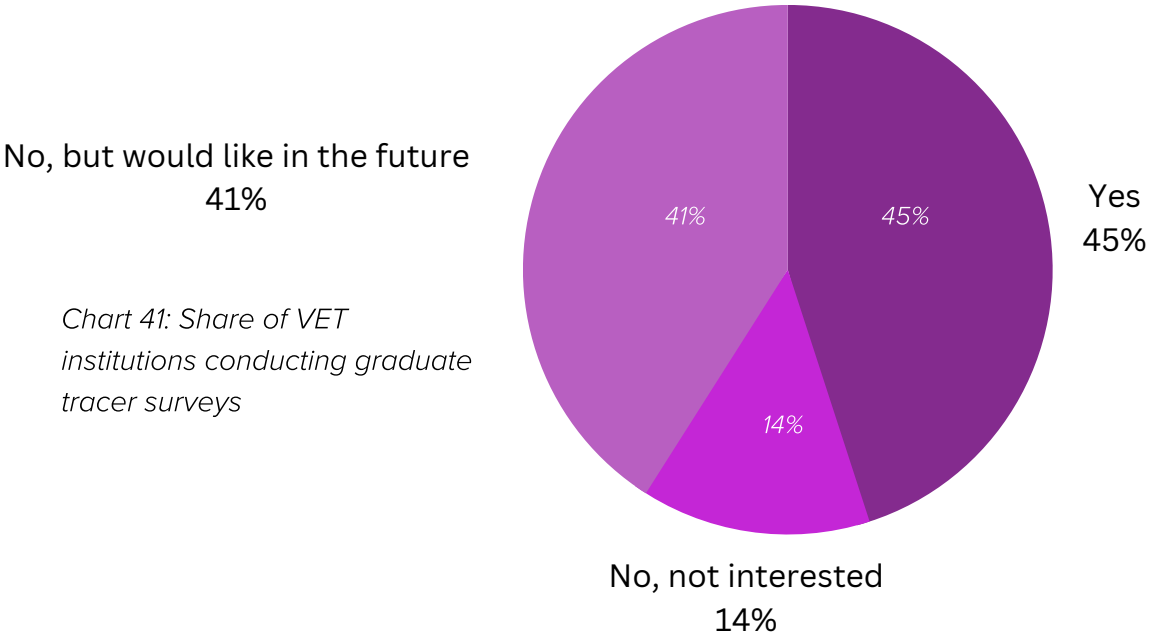
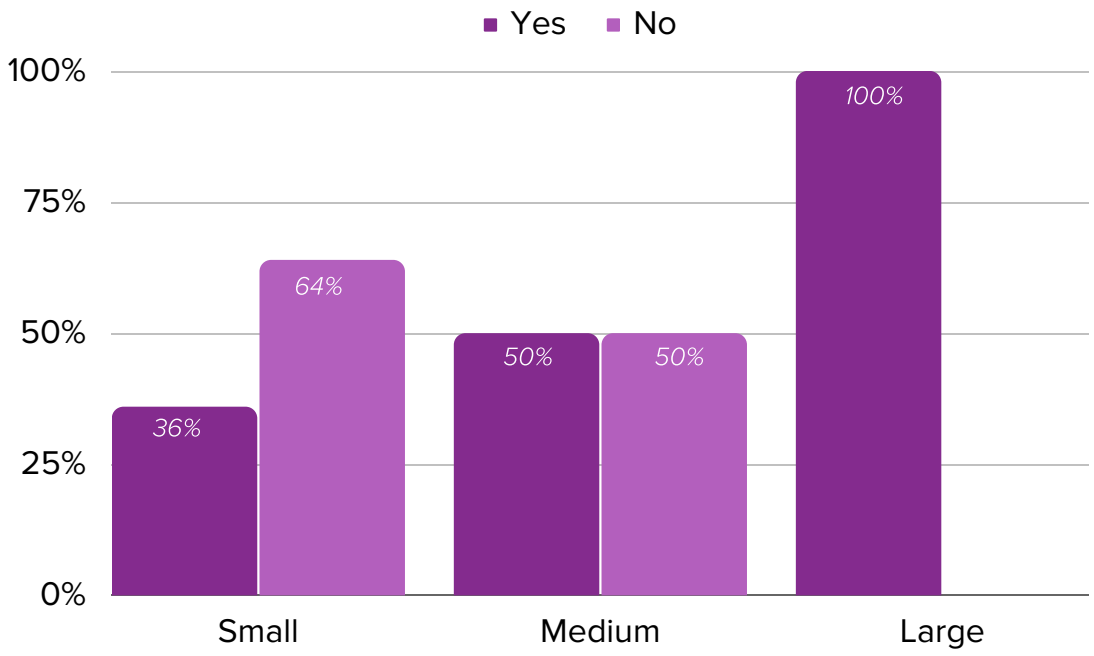



*Chart 41: Share of VET institutions conducting graduate tracer surveys*

*Chart 42: Share of VET institutions conducting graduate tracer surveys by size of institution*



# Sub-indicator 5c: Graduate tracer surveys by VET institutions: Timing and data collection

**The most frequently collected information in graduate tracer surveys comprises the:**

I. **Level of satisfaction with the skills acquired during the completed programme,**
II. **Relevance of the current occupation to the completed programme, and**
III. **Suggestions for programme improvement.**

**This data is collected by 42% of VET institutions conducting tracer studies. Data on graduates' Employment status and Education status is collected by 26% and 23% of VET institutions, respectively.**

**The least frequently collected information includes the students' Duration of unemployment and the Level of difficulty in finding employment, each included by 11% of the VET institutions (Chart 43).**

The Employment status is a requirement when estimating the job placement rate within VET programmes, while the Education status is a useful measure for estimating the frequency of continuing professional development among graduates from VET programmes. Moreover, the duration of unemployment, together with the level of difficulty in finding employment, can shed light on the demands of the labour market.

**The largest share of VET institutions (19%) conducts their graduate tracer survey 6 months after the students complete their programme (Chart 44).**

Despite the higher inclination towards the 6-month time point, the recommended timing for a graduate tracer survey is between 12- and 24-months following programme completion [5].

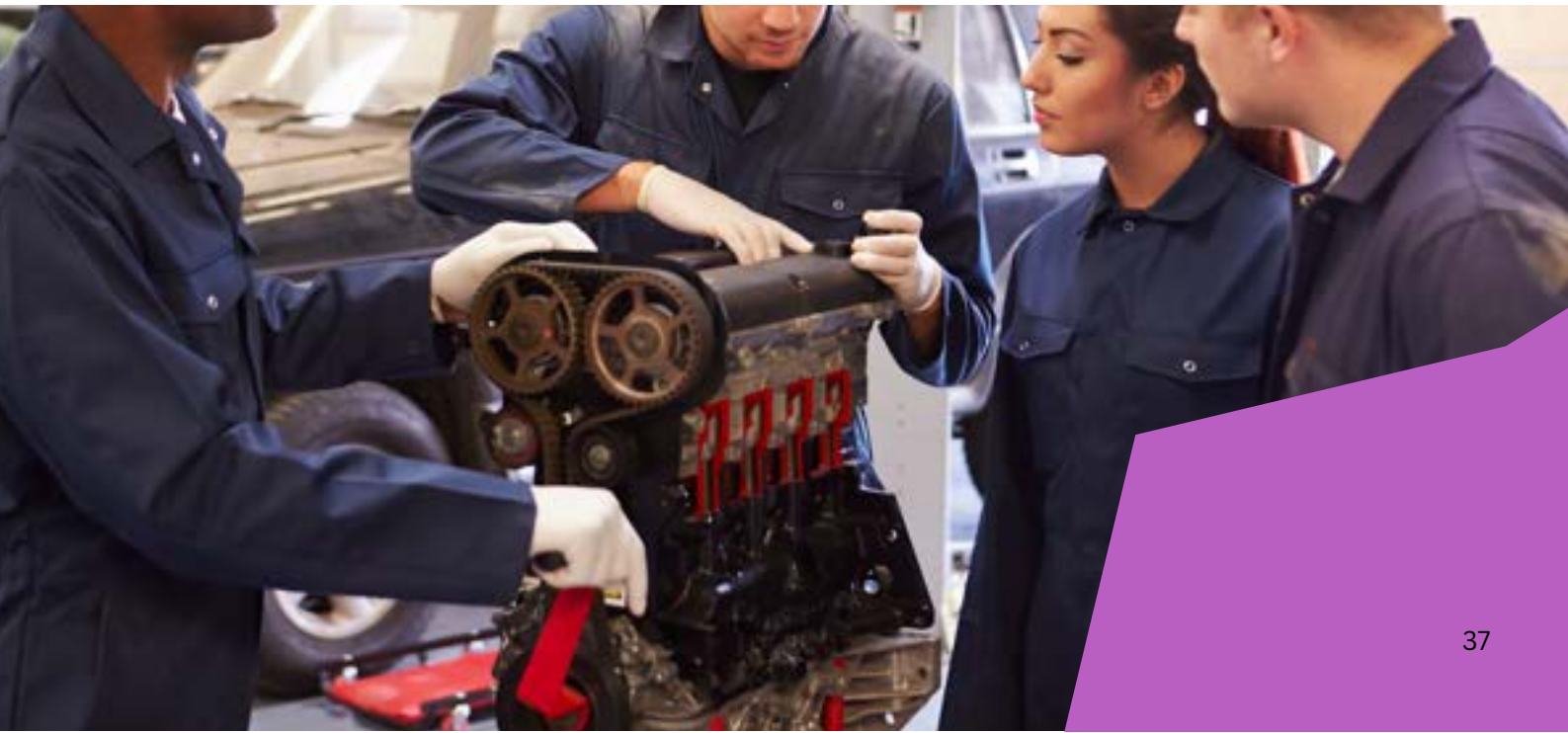


*Chart 43: Data collected by VET institutions in graduate tracer surveys*

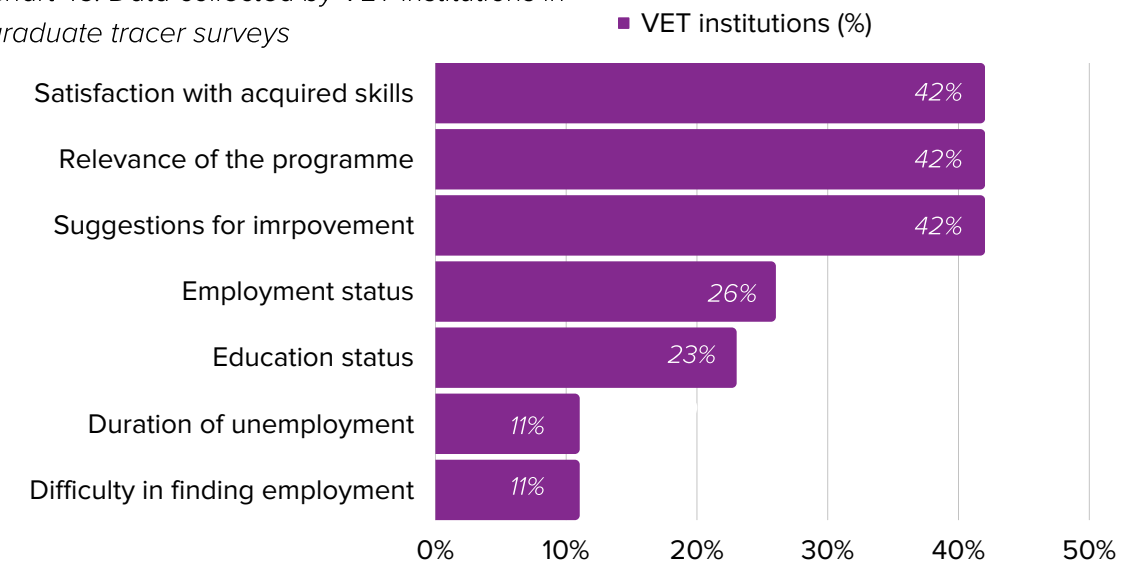
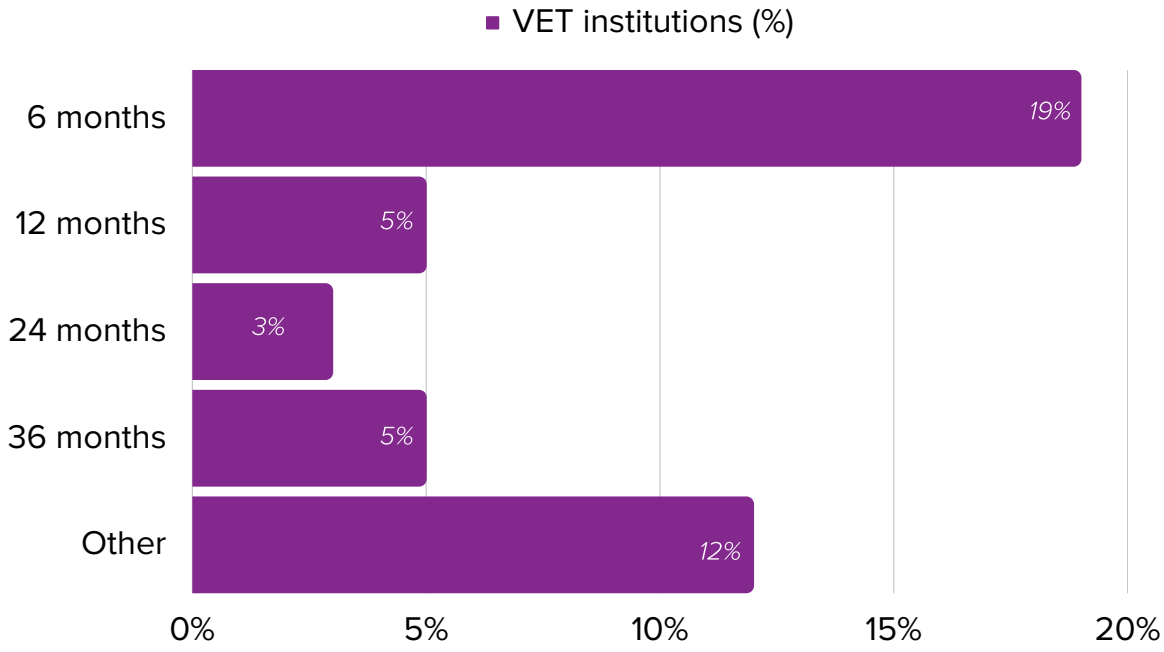



*Chart 44: Timing of graduate tracer surveys by VET institutions*



# Indicator 6:

## Indicator 6: Utilisation of acquired skills at the workplace

## Sub-indicator 6a: Share of VET institutions conducting surveys among employers

**More than half of the VET institutions (52%) conduct surveys among employers, while 67% of the VET institutions which do not conduct surveys among employers would like to initiate this practice in the future (Chart 45).**

The practice of collecting data from employers is intended to bridge education institutions with industry. Such a communication channel is ideal for establishing the extent to which the skills taught during VET programmes are utilised in the workplace. It is also a means through which the training needs of the labour market may be communicated and addressed by VET institutions.

# Sub-indicator 6b: Data collection by VET institutions in employer surveys

**Forty-six percent of VET institutions collect data about the relevance of the programmes offered by their institution to industrial stakeholders' requirements. This is the most common form of data collected in surveys among employers and is followed by the:**

- **Level of satisfaction with the competence of vocational graduates,**
- **Suggestions for improvement of current programmes,**
- **Skill gaps and training needs in the labour market,**
- **Requests for new vocational programmes, and**
- **Level of difficulty in recruiting competent vocational graduates (Chart 46).**

Based on such information, it is possible for VET institutions to keep their courses relevant to the current work environment while simultaneously providing a constant stream of competent VET graduates towards the current work force.

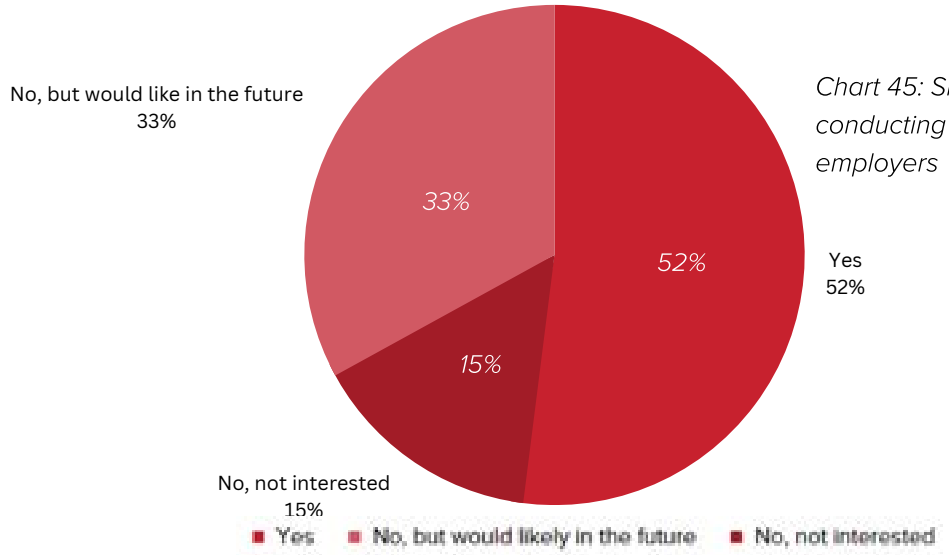



*Chart 45: Share of VET institutions conducting surveys among employers*

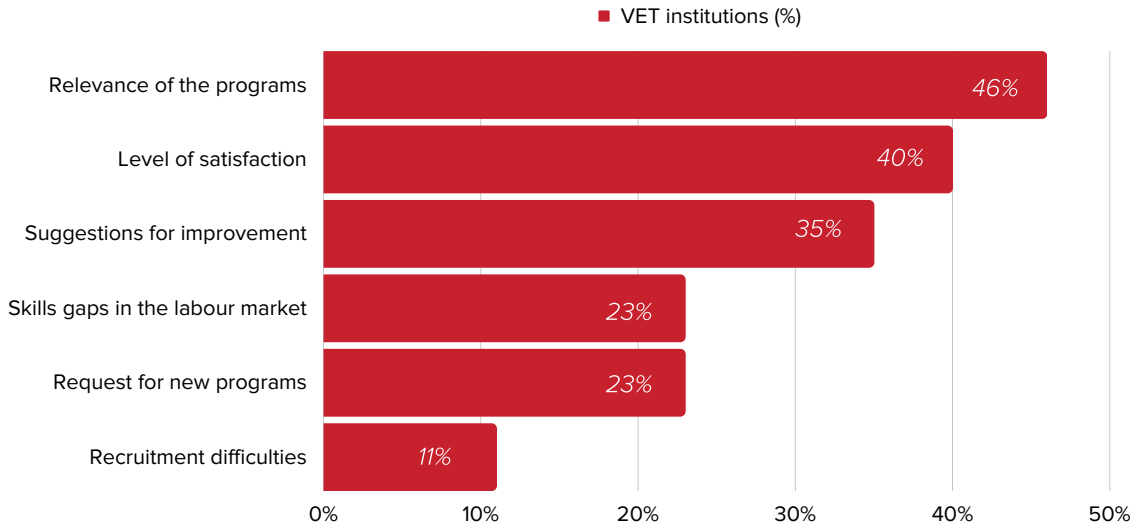



*Chart 46: Data collected by VET institutions in employer surveys*

# Sub-indicator 6c: Share of VET institutions maintaining partnerships with employers

**More than half the VET institutions (61%) have agreements with employers for the provision of internships or apprenticeships to students or graduates from selected programmes. Another 29% of the VET institutions are interested in setting up a similar partnership in the future (Chart 47).**

Through such partnerships, VET institutions ensure that they provide their students with the experience and skills required by the respective industries, increasing their students' and graduates' employability potential and competence levels.

**All VET institutions within the large size class maintain one or more partnerships with employers. The shares of VET institutions from the medium and small size classes are smaller, reaching 78% and 50%, respectively (Chart 48).**

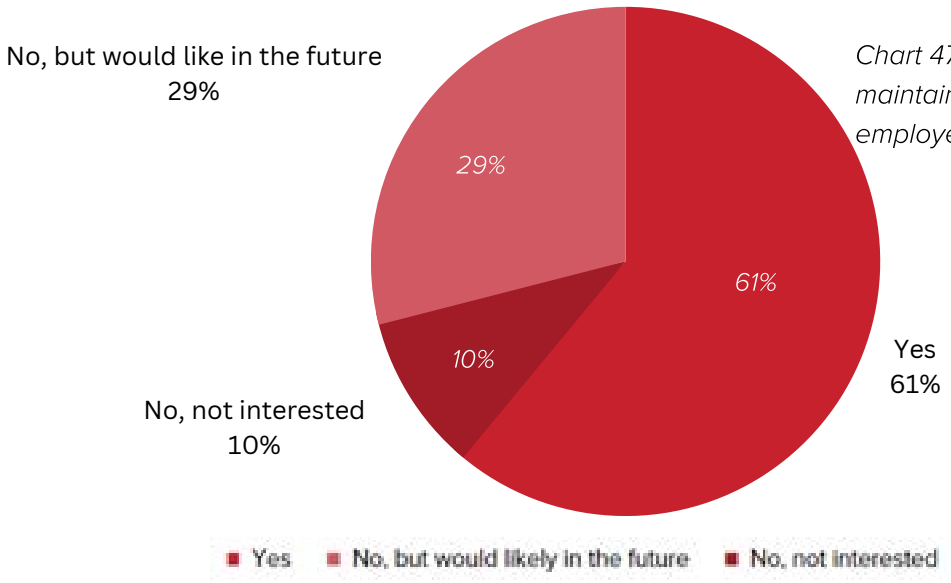



*Chart 47: Share of VET institutions maintaining partnerships with employers*

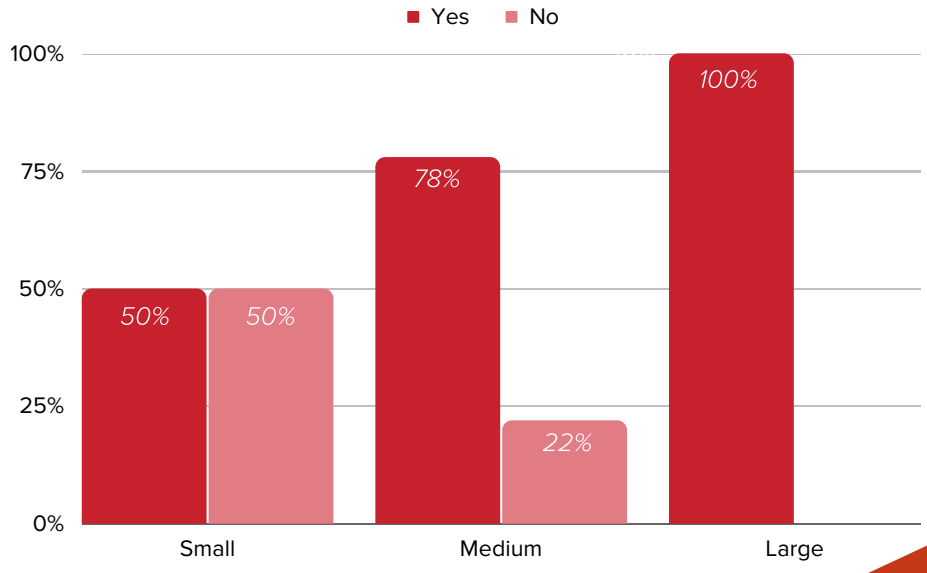



*Chart 48: Share of VET institutions maintaining partnerships with employers by size of institution*

# Indicator 7:
## Unemployment rate

## Sub-indicator 7: Unemployment rate by age group and by sex

**The average seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the period between January 2020 and December 2021 stood at 10% and 3% for persons aged 15-24 and 25-74, respectively (Chart 49). When analysed by sex, the average seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the same period amounts to 4% for both males and females (Chart 50) [6].**

The reported unemployment rates are quoted from the Unemployment Rate news releases published by the National Statistics Office and are based on the definition recommended by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) [6].

In line with these recommendations, the unemployment rate is defined as the number of unemployed persons aged between 15 and 74 years expressed as a percentage of the labour force. In turn, the labour force is regarded as the sum of persons aged between 15 and 74 years who are either employed or unemployed. The number of unemployed persons is the sum of persons aged between 15 and 74 years who are without work, actively seeking work and currently available to start working.

*Chart 49: Unemployment rate by age group*

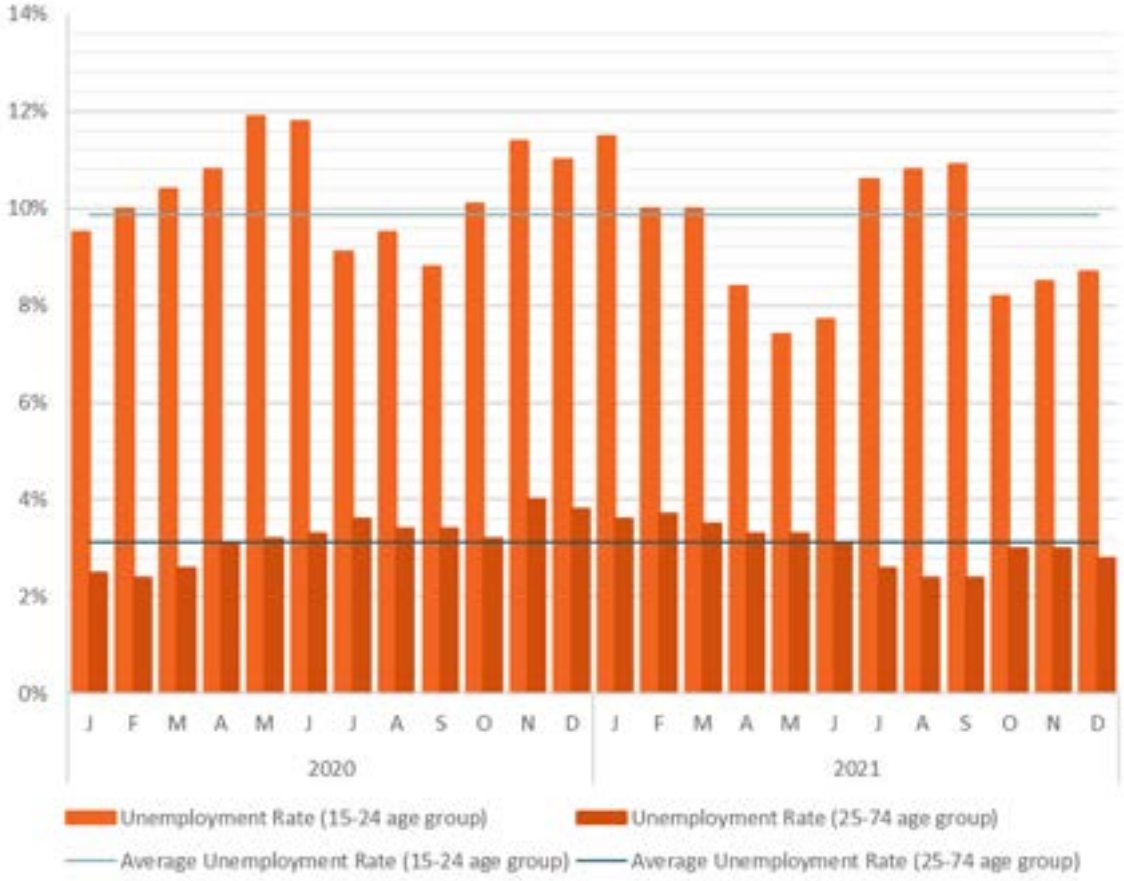
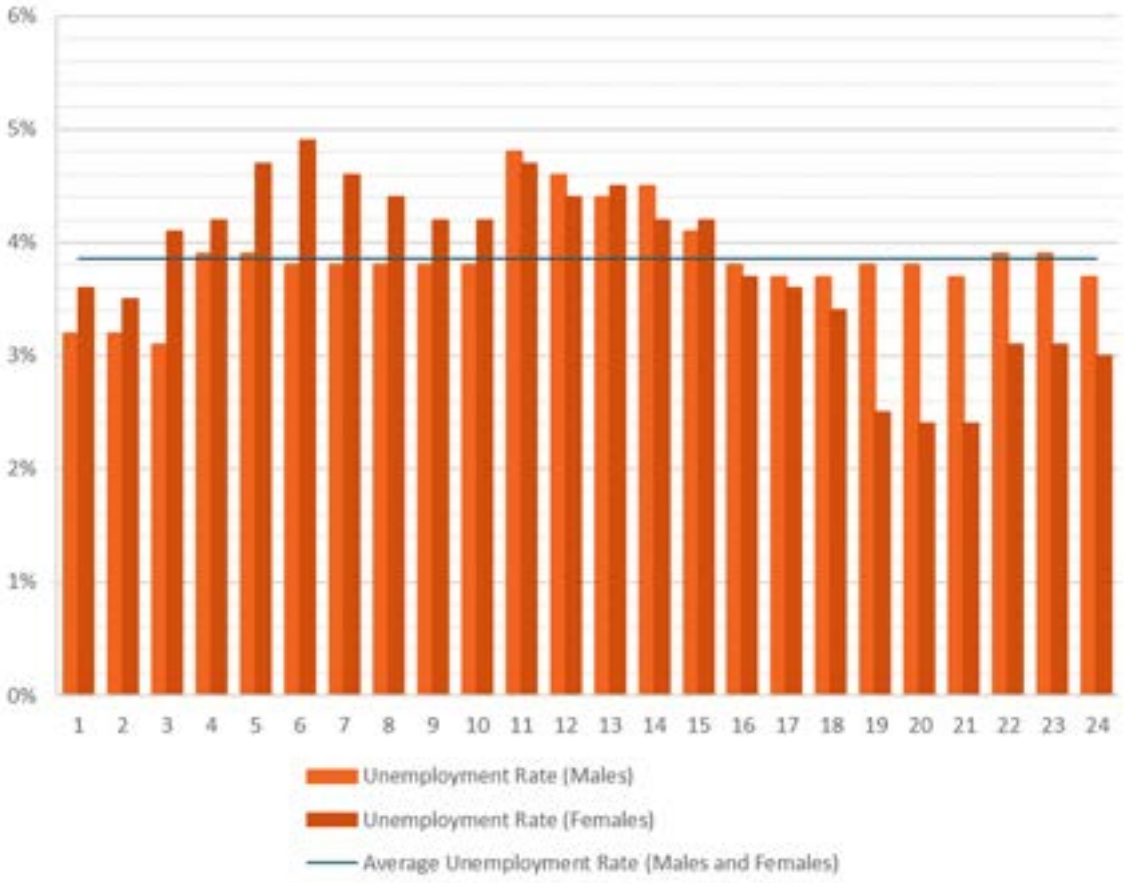



*Chart 50: Unemployment rate by sex*



# Indicator 8:
## Prevalence of vulnerable groups

## Sub-indicator 8a: Share of the enrolled cohort coming from disadvantaged groups

**Collectively, under a fifth of the enrolled cohort (19%) comes from disadvantaged groups. CVET programmes are more likely to host persons with special needs compared with IVET programmes (Chart 51).**

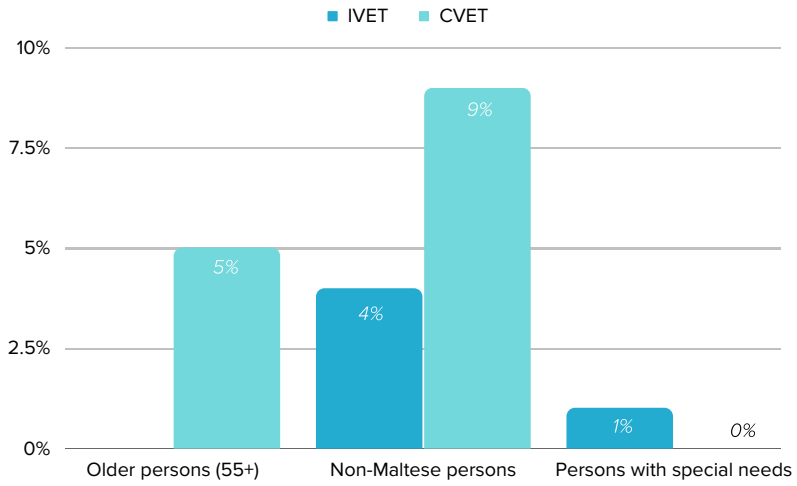
For the purposes of this report, the following groups are considered as disadvantaged groups:

- Older persons - Persons aged 55 years and over
- Non-Maltese persons - Persons with an EU or non-EU nationality (migrants)
- Persons with special needs

The largest disparity between Maltese and non-Maltese students exists within programmes at MQF level 5, with 88% of the VET enrollments being Maltese and 12% being non-Maltese. By contrast, VET enrollments are most equally distributed between Maltese and non-Maltese persons at MQF level 1, with 53% of the students at this level being non-Maltese and 47% being Maltese (Chart 52). VET enrollments include both IVET and CVET programmes.

VET programmes at MQF level 6 have the highest share of persons with special needs from among the enrolled students (6%), while programmes at MQF level 5 have the smallest share (1%) (Chart 53).

*Chart 51: Distribution of the enrolled cohort by vocational programme and disadvantaged group*



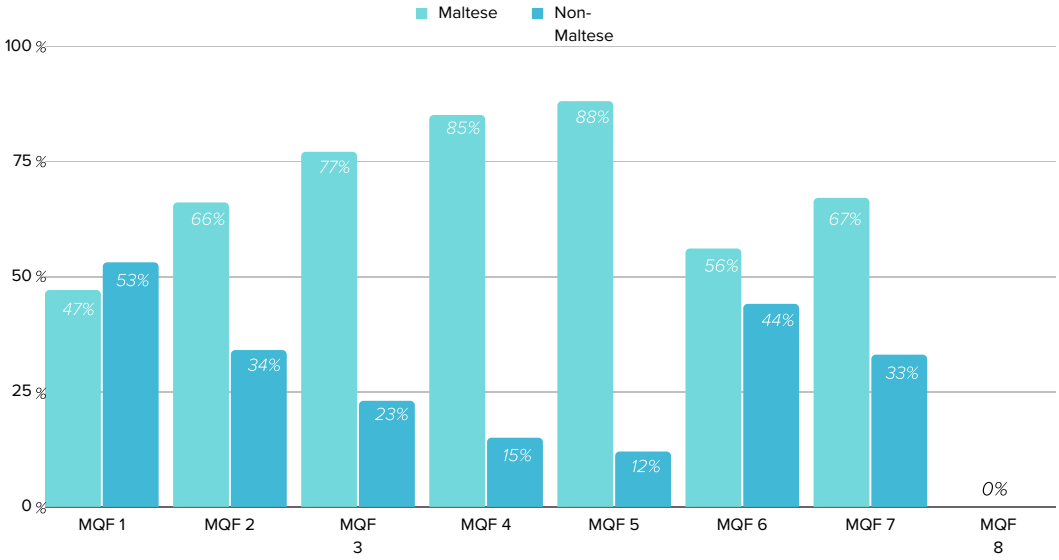




*Chart 52: Distribution of the enrolled VET cohort (IVET and CVET) by nationality group and MQF level*

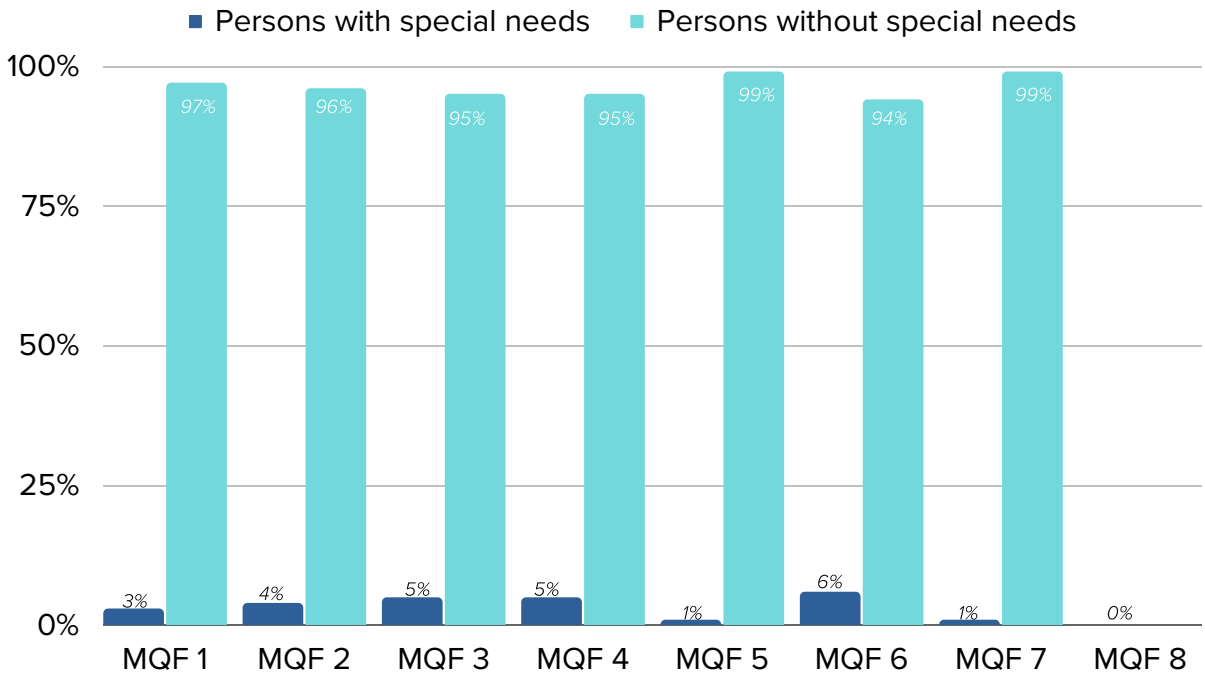



*Chart 53: Distribution of the enrolled VET cohort (IVET and CVET) by presence of special needs and MQF level*

# Sub-indicator 8b: Share of the graduate cohort coming from disadvantaged groups

**More than a third of the graduate cohort (35%) comes from disadvantaged groups. Persons from disadvantaged groups are more likely to prevail in CVET programmes than IVET programmes (Chart 54).**

The graduate cohort includes all persons having successfully completed an education or training programme during academic year 2020/2021, including both VET and non-VET programmes. Reference is made to the Sources and Methods section.

Non-Maltese persons hold the smallest share of VET graduates at MQF level 5 (9%). The highest share of non-Maltese VET graduates lies with MQF level 1 (43%) (Chart 55).

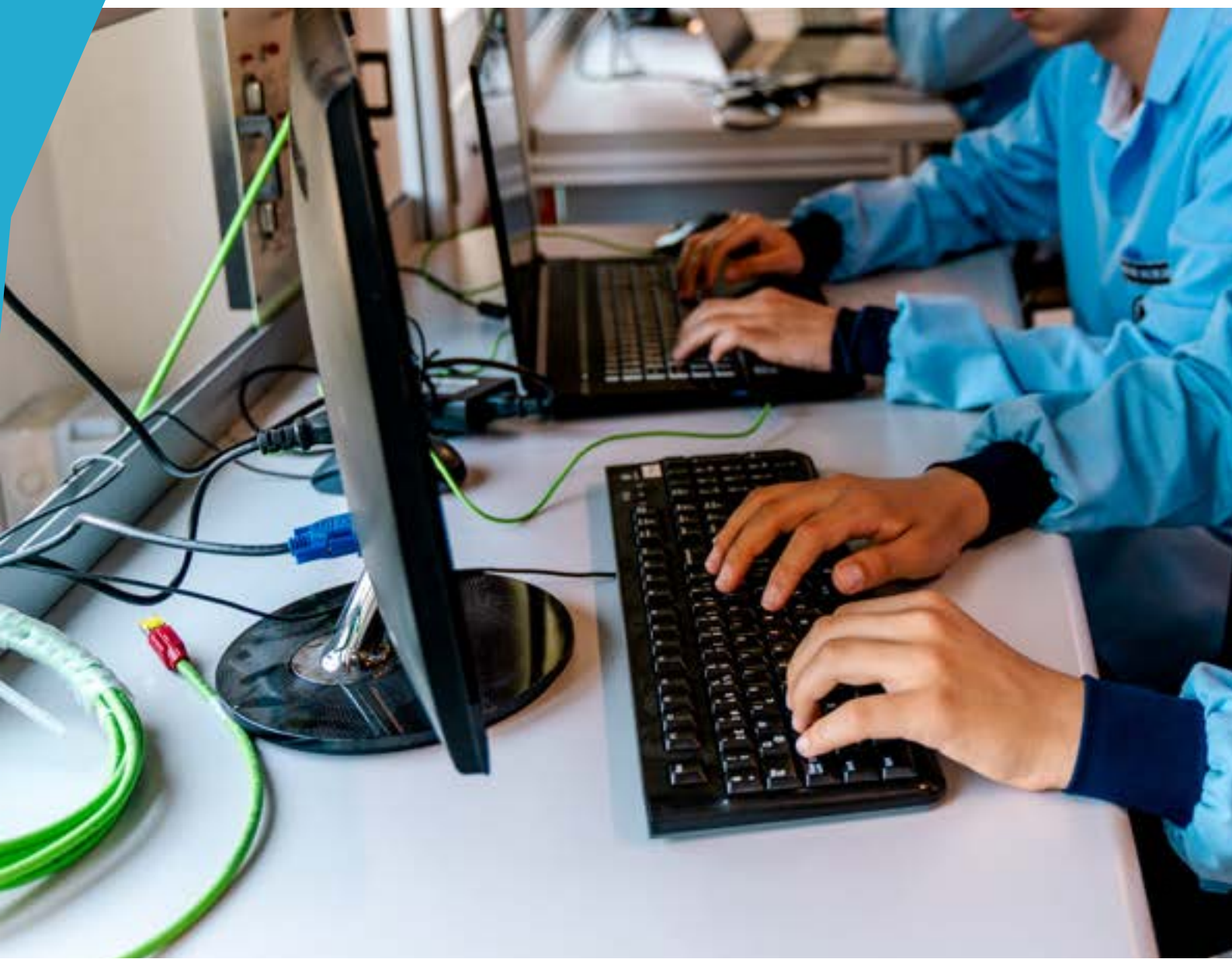
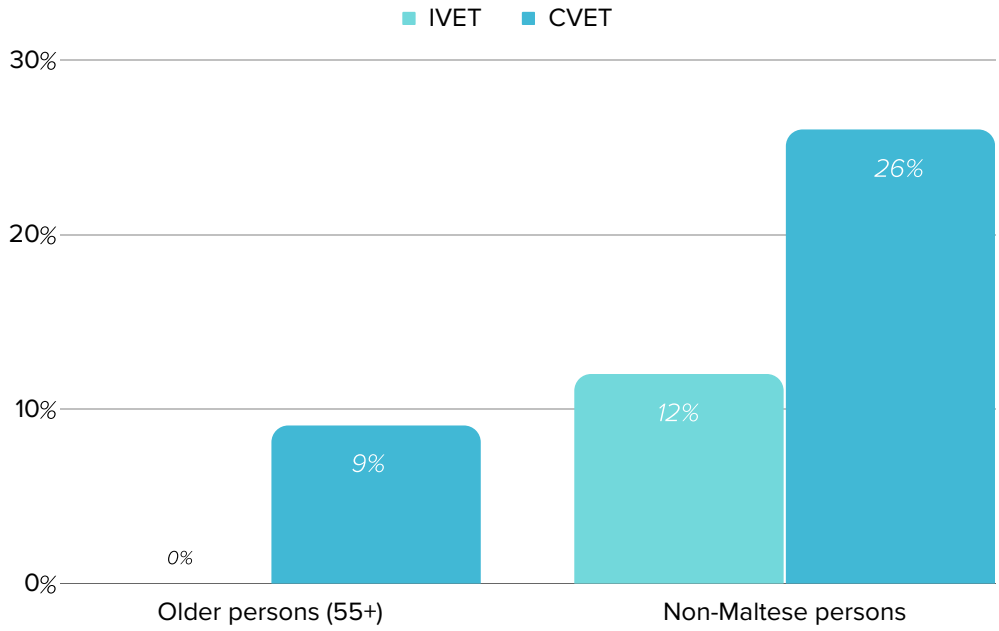


*Chart 54: Distribution of the graduate cohort by vocational programme and disadvantaged group*



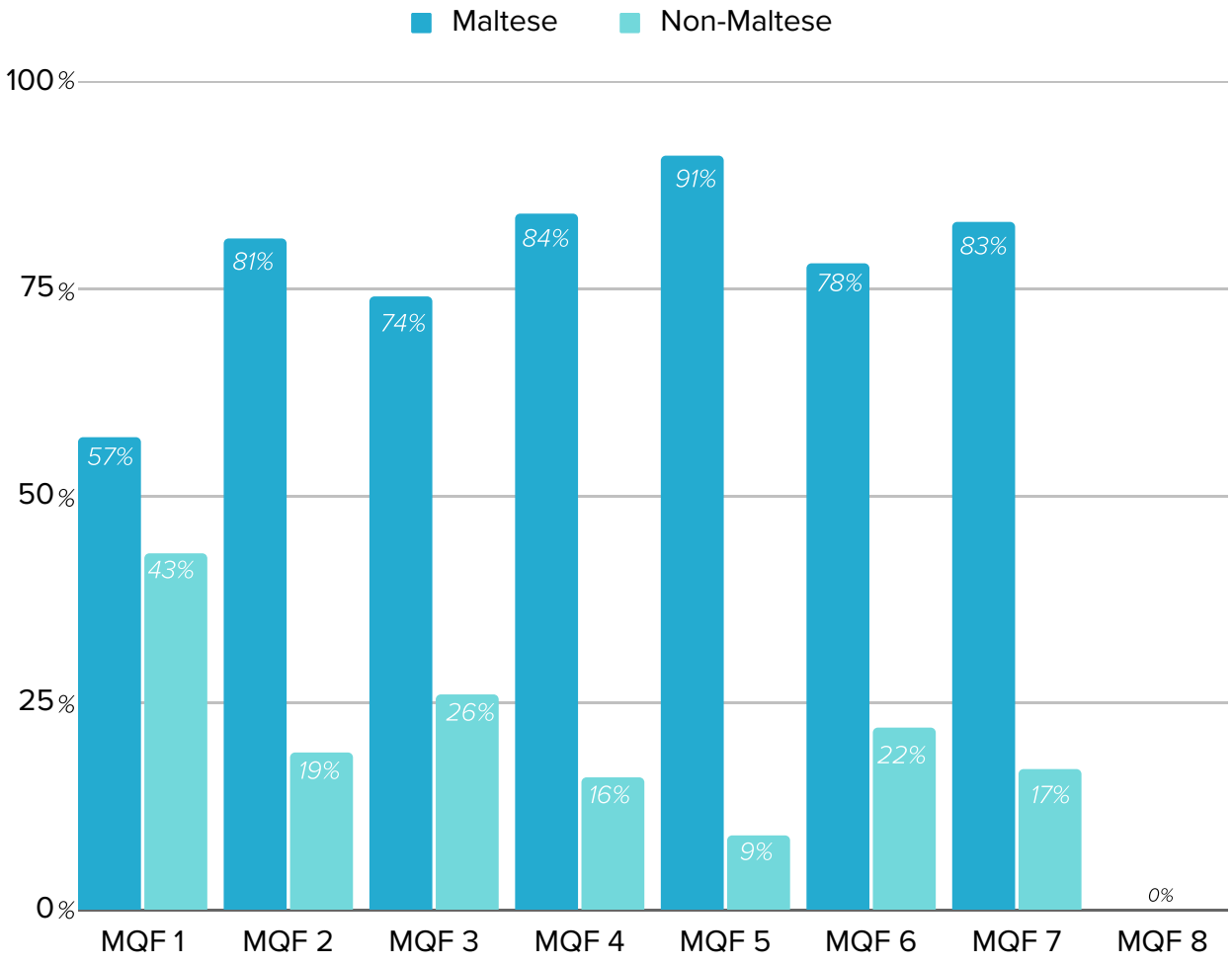



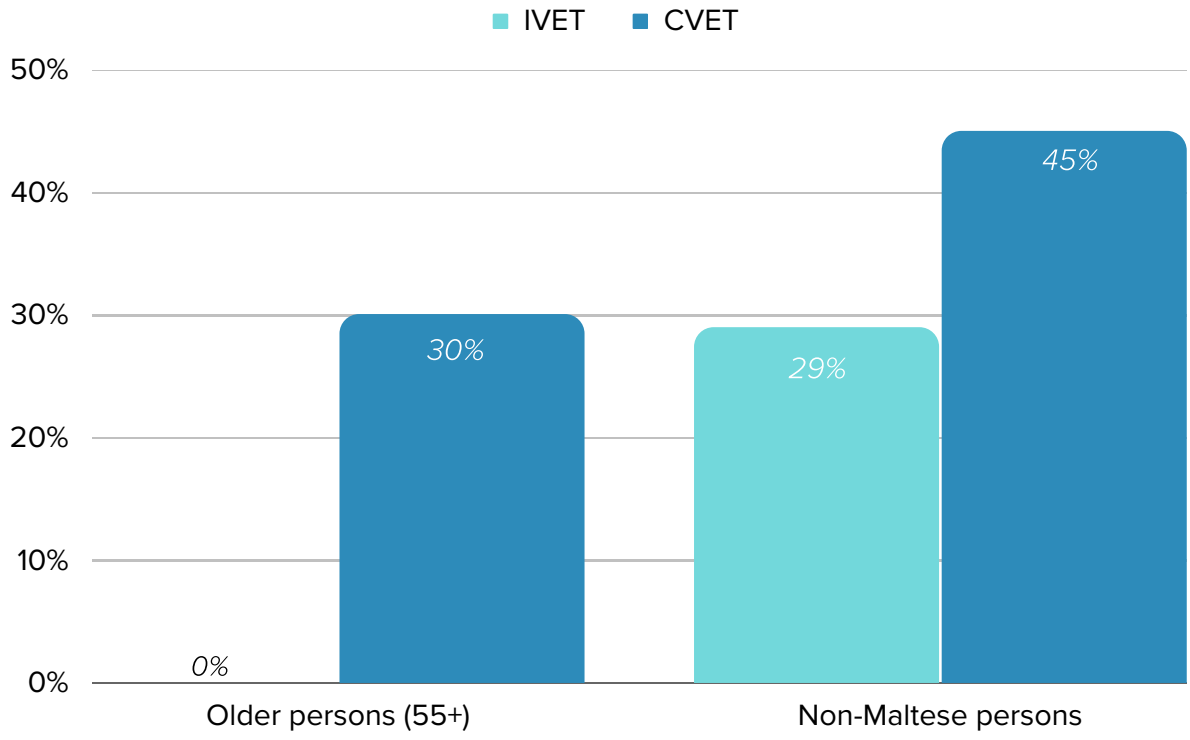

*Chart 55: Distribution of the graduate VET cohort by nationality group and MQF level*

# Sub-indicator 8c: Share of the enrolled cohort coming from disadvantaged groups and having successfully completed the programme

**From among the CVET enrollments, 45% of non-Maltese students and 30% of older persons have successfully completed the programme. From among the IVET enrollments, 29% of non-Maltese students have successfully completed the programme (Chart 56).**

The prevalence rate of persons with special needs is not available due to lack of data regarding the prevalence of special needs among programme completers.

*Chart 56: Share of the enrolled cohort successfully completing the programme by vocational programme and disadvantaged group*



# Indicator 9:

## Mechanisms to identify the training needs in the labour market

## Sub-indicator 9a: Mechanisms to identify the training needs in the labour market

**The three most common mechanisms to identify the training needs in the labour market are:**

- **Communication with industry stakeholders,**
- **Work-based learning**
- **Market research and keeping up with new techniques.**

**Over a quarter of the VET institutions (27%) believe that communicating with industry stakeholders helps them to identify the current skills gaps in the labour market.VET institutions address this need later via the offered courses (Chart 57).**

Holding meetings with various industry stakeholders helps institutions gain insight into the requirements of the industry. Feedback from industry gives the VET institutions perspective regarding the techniques and technologies which are most in demand within a given industry at that time. Based on such information, institutions may tailor their programmes to ensure that they cover the aspects which are in highest demand in industry. This serves a two-fold purpose; ensuring that VET graduates are well-trained and highly employable, while also satisfying the training needs of the labour market.

**Less than a fifth of the VET institutions (17%) believe that taking a work-based learning approach is key to identifying the needs of the labour market (Chart 57).**

A work-based learning approach is one which includes a practical component such as hands-on training or apprenticeship. This form of learning is similar to on-the-job training.

Here, the learner is exposed to industry practices and experiences, emerging trends and demands in industry which are not being met by the curriculum.The value of such experiences is reaped when the feedback is either relayed back to the VET institutions or acted upon by the learner.

**Over a tenth of the VET institutions (11%) believe that conducting market research helps them to identify the needs of the labour market. The act of keeping up with new techniques is deemed equally important in identifying the needs of the labour market (Chart 57).**

Market research involves gaining insight into consumer behaviour or economic trends and using this information to steer a business in the direction which is likely to be most profitable. In doing so, a VET institution may seek to identify any training gaps in the market. Similarly, VET institutions which remain informed on new techniques gain insight into the type of training which is likely to be in demand.

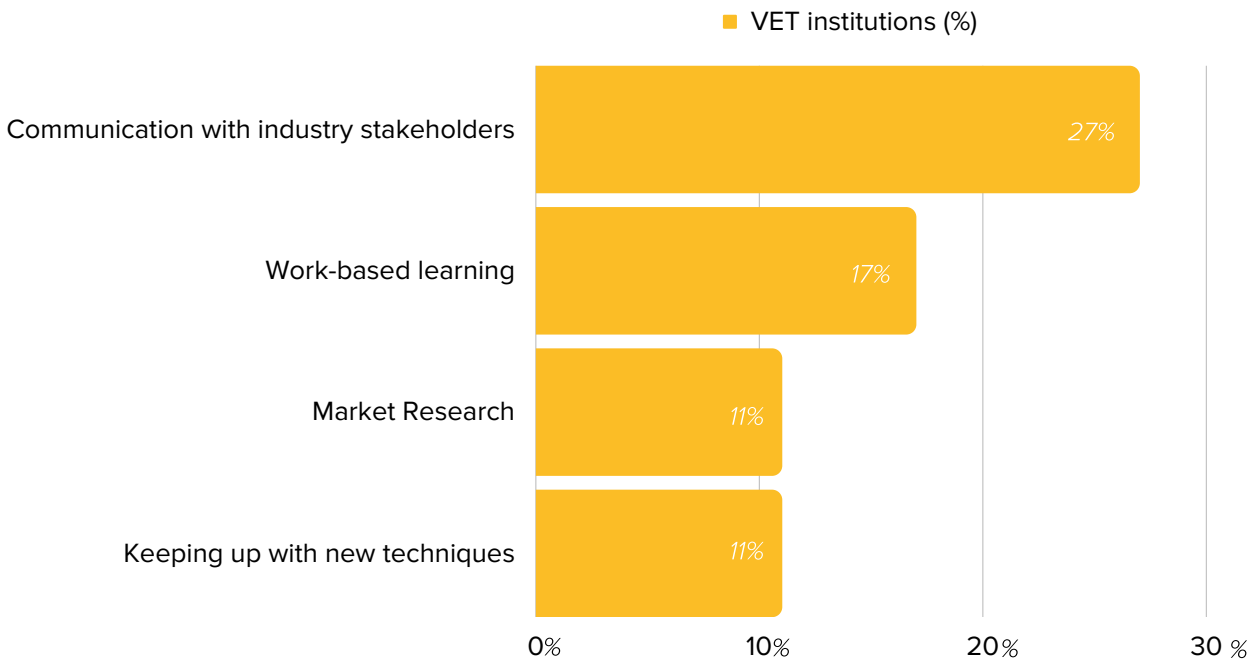



*Chart 57: Mechanisms to identify the training needs in the labour market*

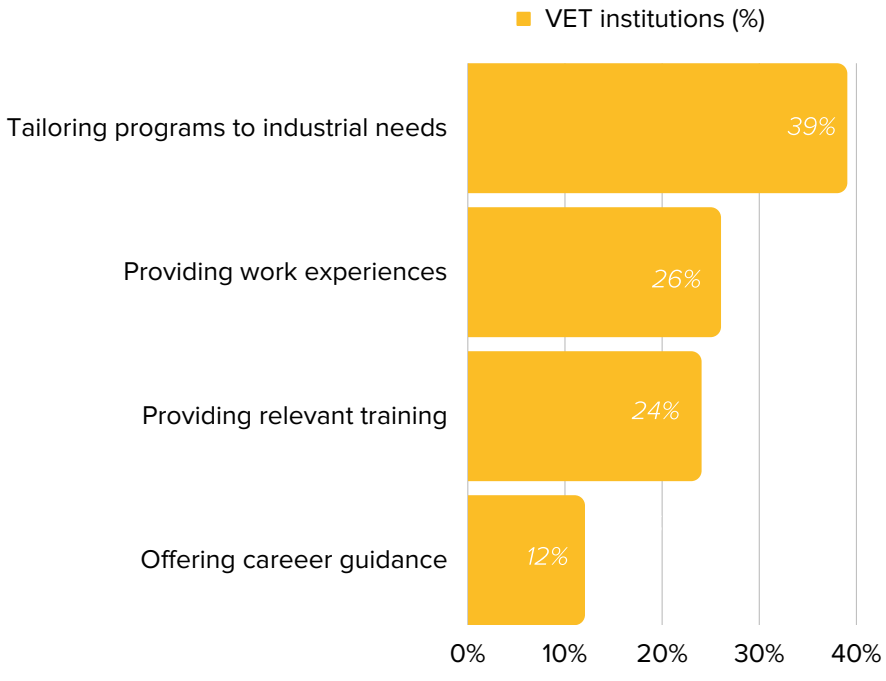
# Sub-indicator 9b: Facilitating the learner's career pathway from education into employment

**Sub-indicator 9b: Facilitating the learner's career pathway from education into employment**

**Around two fifths of all VET institutions (39%) tailor their programmes to cater for the needs of the industry, while around a fourth (26% and 24%) provide work experiences and relevant training, respectively, in order to facilitate the learner's transition from education into employment. Professional career guidance is offered by 12% of all VET institutions in an effort to facilitate the learner's career pathway from education into employment (Chart 58).**

By tailoring their programmes to cater for the needs of the industry, VET institutions believe that they will produce better-prepared VET graduates who will have better employment potential. In addition, VET institutions believe that work experiences such as internships, work placements and apprenticeships, together with the relevant training, will facilitate the job search for VET graduates due to the gained work experience.Finally, VET institutions view career guidance as additional professional help to VET graduates by showcasing different career pathways along with their requirements, trending jobs and beneficial contacts to start the job search.

*Chart 58: Facilitating the learner's career pathway from education into employment*



# Indicator 10:

## Schemes used to promote better access to VET

## Sub-indicator 10a: Existing schemes promoting better access to VET

Several financial incentives have been created by the Maltese government to promote VET, including the:

I. Re-introduction of elective vocational programmes at MQF level 3 in the final three years of compulsory education,

II. The establishment of partnerships with industry sectors for the provision of training at the workplace for compulsory education students,

III. Financial remuneration for staff providing training and monthly stipends for further and higher education students,

IV. Compulsory work-based learning components in further and higher vocational education programmes,

V. Legal recognition of apprentices as paid employees with the right to an income at the national minimum wage,

VI. Eligibility for tax incentives for sponsors signing training agreements with learners and training providers, and

VII. Tax credits covering 70% of the expenses involved upon attainment of qualifications and certifications of vocational programmes [7].

**1. Training Pays Scheme**

The Training Pays Scheme offered by Jobsplus forms part of the Training for Employment ESF project and offers financial assistance to individuals seeking to develop or improve their skills in off-the-job training. Upon successful completion of training, beneficiaries receive a refund covering the training-related costs incurred which measure facilitates access to VET [8].

**2. Get Qualified Scheme**

Get Qualified is an initiative supporting individuals following a course of studies leading to a certification, diploma, degree or post-graduate degree required by industry. Upon successful completion, students benefit from a tax credit enabling them to recover up to 70% of the costs incurred by their studies. This lessens the financial burden of further education and training, thereby improving access to VET [9].

**3. Malta Arts Scholarships Scheme**

The Malta Arts Scholarships Scheme aims to provide financial support to individuals talented in theatre, music, dance, design, creative writing, film, photography, architecture, fashion and fine arts. This scheme facilitates and enables access to VET in the expressive arts [10].

**4. Free Childcare Scheme**

With this initiative, the Maltese government helps promote access to VET by providing free childcare services to parents or guardians in education or employment [11].

**5. Job Bridge Programme**

The Job Bridge Programme targets youths with a disability who have completed compulsory education. This is a pre-employment programme bridging the gap between education and employment. It provides a structured programme which introduces the participants to VET through several job experiences and enables them to acquire employability, social and independent living skills [12].

**6. VASTE Programme**

Part-financed by the ESF under Operational Programme II (2014-2020), the VASTE Programme brings vulnerable persons closer to the labour market through training and job exposure opportunities, thereby making VET more accessible. The project offers assessment services and work placements and aims to increase employment retention of vulnerable individuals, such as persons with a disability, former inmates, former substance abusers and other socially challenged individuals [13].

**7. Sheltered Employment Training**

As part of the VASTE programme, this initiative supports the transition into supported employment and eventually open employment through hands-on training, monitoring and assessment by a job coach. Participants receive training on different tasks such as back-office work, assembly of products, packaging of material and labelling of items, among others, and are assessed based on improvement and productivity. The scheme also offers recommendations on available training options, hence encouraging participation in VET [14].

**8. Youth Guarantee Programme – NEET Activation Scheme II**

This scheme targets persons aged between 16 and 25 years who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). This offers professional training, mentoring and support, thereby introducing participants to VET and assisting them in the transition from education to gainful employment. This programme is split into two phases: an 80-hour training phase on soft skills and industry-based modules, followed by a 240-hour work placement or 240 hours of further education within a VET institution such as MCAST or ITS, at the option of the participant. Subject to their attendance rate, participants are paid an allowance after the completion of each phase [15].

**9. Work Programme Initiative**

In collaboration with the private sector, the Work Programme Initiative assists long-term unemployed individuals in re-entering the labour market by providing VET. The target participants are individuals aged 25 years and over who are seeking full-time or part-time employment. During the programme, participants benefit from profiling, training and work placements [16].

**10. Intercept**

Intercept is an ongoing project aimed at persons aged between 25 and 29 years who are not in education, employment or training which provides VET and paid internships within the green sector [17].

**11. Investing in Skills Scheme**

Investing in Skills is a scheme promoting the training of persons forming part of the Maltese labour market. It is aimed at upskilling, enhancing adaptability and increasing productivity [18].

**12. Work Exposure Scheme**

Forming part of the ESF.01.001 – Training for Employment project, the Work Exposure Scheme provides practical training to job seekers in line with labour market demands in order to improve the participants' employability [19].

**13. Tax Incentive – Apprenticeship and Work Placement**

Through legal notice 179 of 2014, the Maltese government created a tax incentive scheme for employers to offer hands-on-training, apprenticeship or work placement. Employers can benefit from a €600 deduction from taxable income for each offered training experience with a minimum duration of 26 weeks and, in return, help make VET more accessible [20].

**14. Erasmus+ Funding**

Through Erasmus+, institutions may apply for funding for the mobility of learners and staff in VET as well as for cooperations among organisations and institutions, thereby indirectly promoting better access to VET. The aim is to contribute towards quality education and training and the development, transfer and implementation of innovative practices [21].

# Sub-indicator 10b: Evidence of the effectiveness of schemes promoting better access to VET

**In 2021, Jobsplus, the Maltese public employment service, registered 6,692 job placements, of which 54 were granted to long-term unemployed persons. More than half of the job placements generated (52%) were granted to females, while 88% were granted to persons aged between 16 and 24 years [22].**

**A similar pattern followed in 2022, with the number of job placements increasing to 7,895, 24% of which were granted to long-term unemployed persons. The share of job placements granted to females reaches 58%, the share granted to persons aged between 16 and 24 years amounts to 45%, while the share granted to persons with a disability is 4% [23].**

Job placements offer the opportunity of practical VET, while persons with a disability, long-term unemployed persons, individuals under 25 years of age, and females are perceived as disadvantaged subgroups. The increase in job placements among these subgroups indicates improved access to VET by vulnerable groups.

**Jobsplus Training Courses**

Between 2019 and 2022, an average of 3,605 trainees successfully completed a Jobsplus course each year [22] [23] (Table 1). Jobsplus courses are classified as VET courses.

**Youth Guarantee Scheme**

On average, 895 persons benefited from the Youth Guarantee Scheme each year between 2016 and 2022 [23] (Table 2).

**Training Pays Scheme**

Between 2019 and 2022, Jobsplus received an average of 1,880 applications per year for the Training Pays Scheme, marking an average annual increase of 734 applications per year [23] (Table 2).

| Year | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of trainees who started a Jobsplus course | 5,459 | 3,257 | 4,804 | 5,766 |
| Number of trainees who successfully completed a Jobsplus course | 4,749 | 1,563 | 3,548 | 4,559 |
| Jobsplus course completion rate | 87% | 48% | 74% | 79% |

*Table 1: Statistics on Jobsplus training courses (Source: Jobsplus Annual Reports 2021 and 2022)*

**Free Childcare Scheme**

In 2022, the number of children enrolled in childcare under the Free Childcare Scheme stood at 8,437.Between 2016 and 2022, Jobsplus reported an average annual increase of 517 enrollments per year for the Free Childcare Scheme [23] (Table 2).

**Investing in Skills Scheme**

In 2022, a total of 933 grants were given as part of the Investing in Skills Scheme. Over the five years between 2016 and 2022, the number of grants signed by Jobsplus increased by an average of 139 grants [23] (Table 2).

*Table 2: Statistics on schemes offered by Jobsplus (Source: Jobsplus Annual Report 2022)*

| Year | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Number of participants** Youth Guarantee Scheme | 986 | 910 | 900 | 843 | 836 | 942 | 847 |
| **Number of applications** Training Pays Scheme | | | | 605 | 2,249 | 1,859 | 2,806 |
| **Total number of enrollments** Free Childcare Scheme | 5,335 | 5,939 | 6,737 | 7,341 | 6,702 | 7,509 | 8,437 |
| **Number of grants signed** Investing in Skills Scheme | | 238 | 511 | 890 | 732 | 1,147 | 933 |

# Indicator 11:

## Trans-institutional relations

## Sub-indicator 11a: Share of VET institutions maintaining a networking relationship with other VET institutions

**Over half of the VET institutions (53%) maintain a networking relationship with other VET institutions (Chart 59).**

All the large VET institutions, employing at least 50 teachers and trainers, have a networking relationship with other VET institutions. By contrast, the shares of small- and medium-sized VET institutions having a networking relationship with other VET institutions amount to 42% and 44%, respectively (Chart 60). More than half the large institutions (63%) maintain networking relationships with both local and foreign institutions, while 37% of the large institutions network only with foreign institutions. Medium-sized institutions are equally split between those which have networking relationships only with foreign institutions and those which have networking relationships with both local and foreign institutions. The small institutions tend to prefer maintaining networking relationships with foreign institutions (57%) compared with local institutions (43%).None of the small institutions maintain relationships with both local and foreign institutions (Chart 61).

There is a positive correlation between the size of the institution and both the existence of a networking relationship with another VET institution and the type of institution with which networking is carried out. The larger the institution, the more likely it is to have a networking relationship with another VET institution and the more likely it is to have networking relationships with both local and foreign VET institutions.

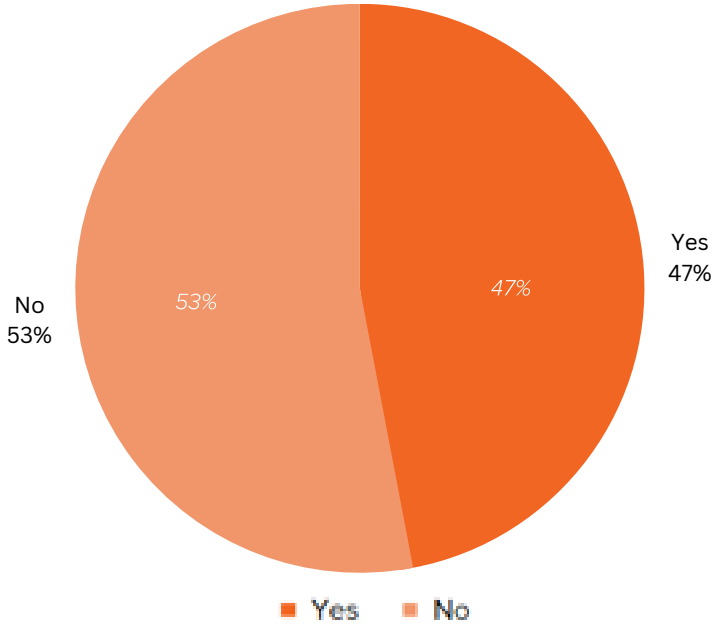
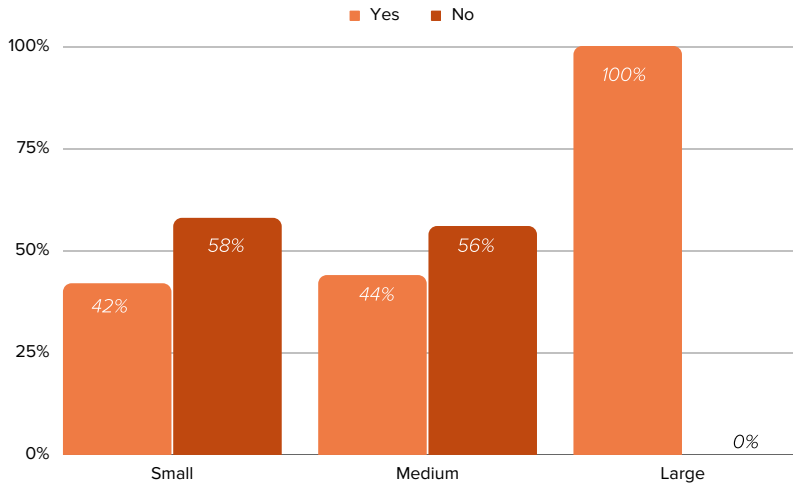



*Chart 59: Share of VET institutions maintaining a networking relationship with other VET institutions*

*Chart 60: Share of VET institutions maintaining a networking relationship with other VET institutions by size of institution*



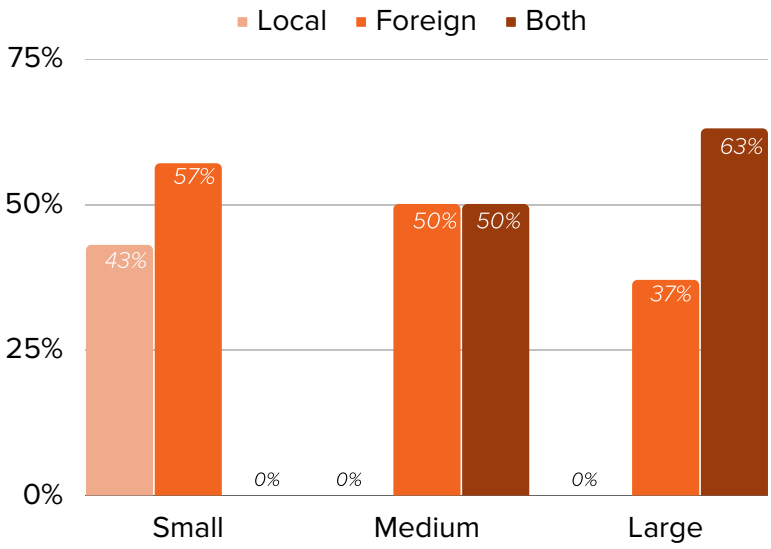




*Chart 61: Share of VET institutions maintaining a networking relationship with other VET institutions by size of institution and type of networking institution*

# Sub-indicator 11b: Share of VET institutions participating in mobility programmes with other VET institutions

**The majority of the VET institutions (63%) participate in mobility programmes with other VET institutions (Chart 62). All the large VET institutions participate in mobility programmes with other VET institutions. The shares of medium and small VET institutions participating in mobility programmes with other VET institutions reach 44% and 26%, respectively (Chart 63).**

**VET institutions from the large and medium size classes offer mobility programmes to both students and teachers and trainers, whereas the small VET institutions, which employ less than 10 teachers and trainers, offer only student mobility programmes (Chart 64).**

Mobility programmes are exchange programmes which take place during the course of an education or training programme and through which individuals experience teaching, education or training outside their home country. Both staff and learners may participate in mobility programmes. One example of a mobility programme is the Erasmus+ programme.

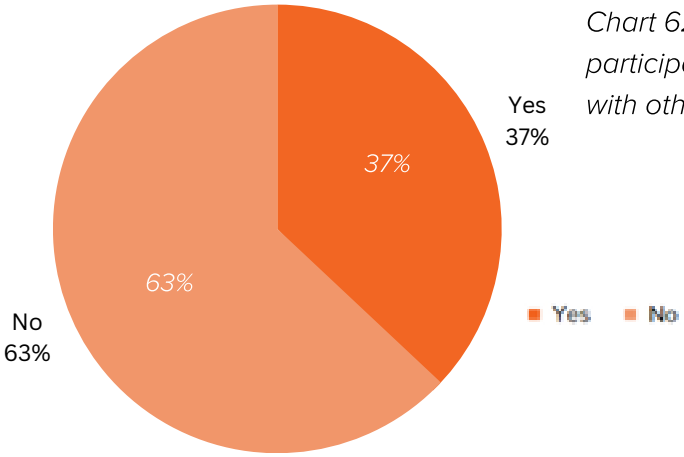



*Chart 62: Share of VET institutions participating in mobility programmes with other VET providers*

*Chart 63: Share of VET institutions participating in mobility programmes with other VET institutions by size of institution*

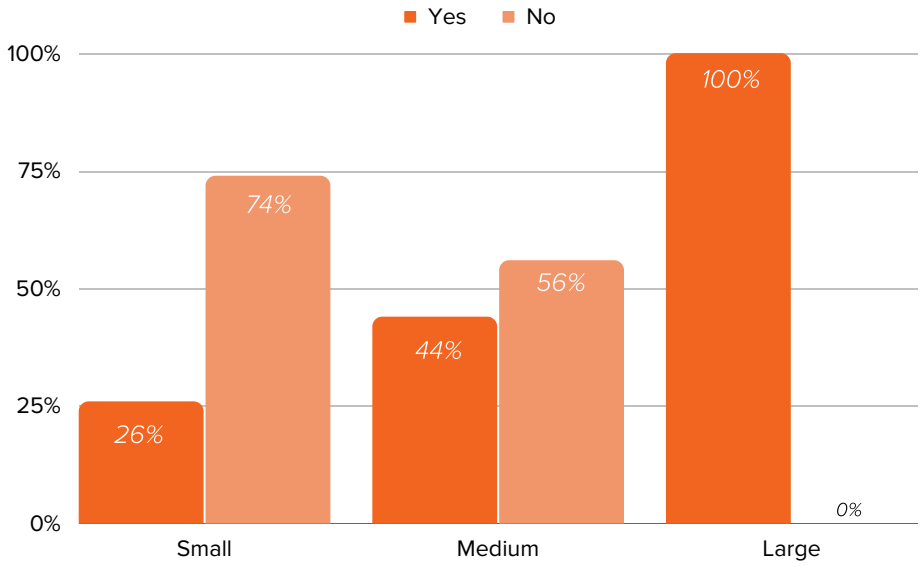
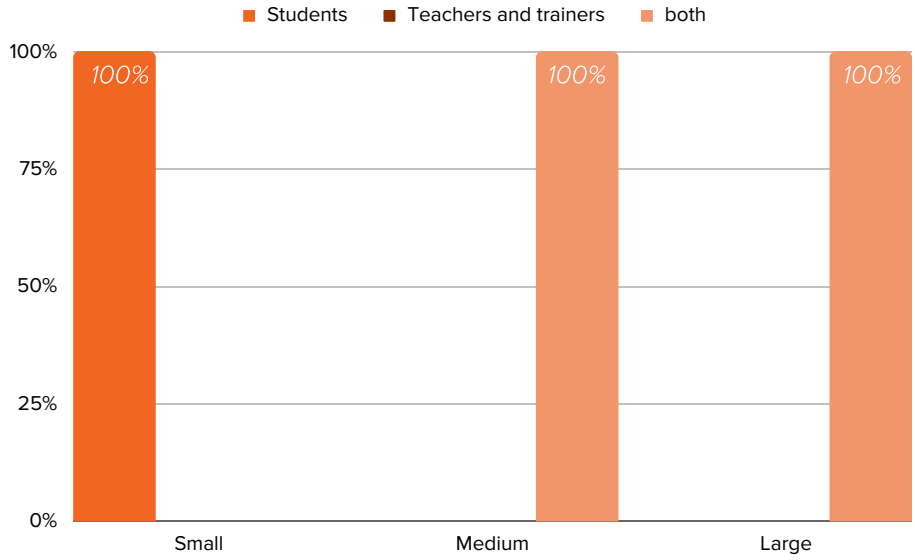



*Chart 64: Share of VET institutions participating in mobility programmes with other VET institutions by size of institution and mobility programme*



# Sub-indicator 11c: Funds invested in cooperations with other VET institutions

**More than half of the VET institutions (56%) do not invest in cooperations with other VET institutions, while almost a third of the VET institutions (30%) invest up to 5% of their annual budget in cooperations with other VET institutions (Chart 65).**

Collectively, the share of VET institutions investing between 6% and 15% amounts to 15%, however, none of the VET institutions invest more than 15% of their annual budget in cooperations with other VET institutions (Chart 65). Cooperations with other VET institutions include networking events, meetings, staff and learner training sessions, conferences, and work sessions with the aim of exchanging practices and developing strategies for improved results. The Erasmus+ programme is one initiative which supports such partnerships and cooperations [24].

**All the VET institutions from the large size class invest between 6% and 10% of their annual budget in cooperations with other VET institutions (Chart 66).**

The largest portion of VET institutions which do not invest in cooperations with other VET institutions comes from the small size class (41%) and is followed by the medium size class (14%). A similar pattern can be observed for the institutions which invest up to 5% of their annual budget in cooperations with other VET providers, with 19% and 11% of the small- and medium-sized institutions, respectively (Chart 66).

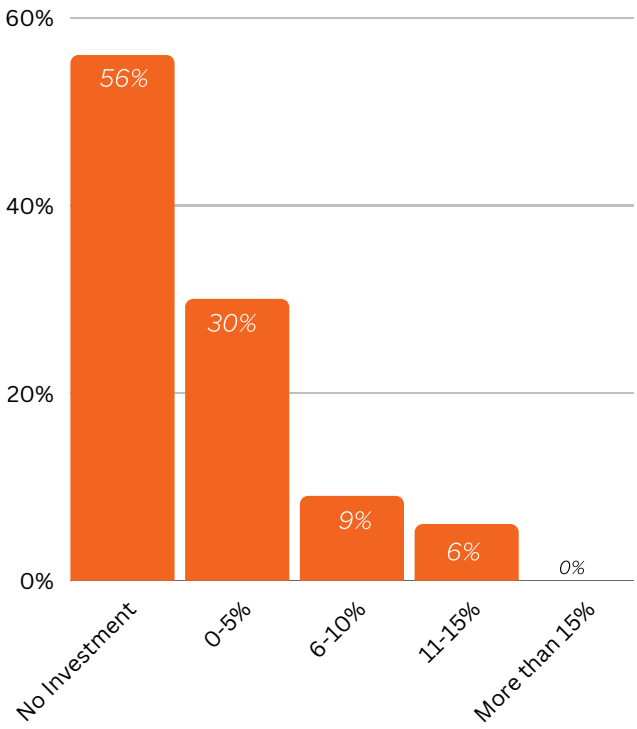
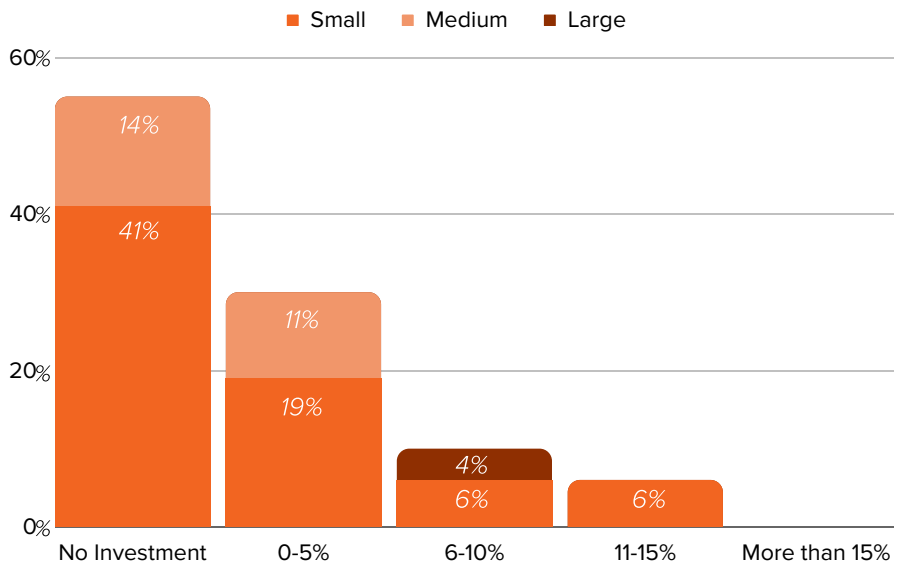



*Chart 65: Share of the annual budget invested in cooperations with other VET institutions*

*Chart 66: Share of the annual budget invested in cooperations with other VET institutions by size of institution*



# Sources and Methods

**This section provides an overview of the data sources utilised for the computation of the presented indicators as well as the methodology applied and the limitations of this report.**

## 1. Sources

The data used for the computation of the EQAVET indicators come from three different sources:

- Education enrollments data for academic year 2020/2021
- Education graduates data for academic year 2020/2021
- Institution data collected in 2023

### 1.1 Education enrollments data for academic year 2020/2021

The Education enrollments dataset emerges from an annual register-based data collection exercise conducted among institutions whereby institutions are asked to report data on the students which are enrolled in an education programme during the reference academic year. This data collection exercise captures all fields of education, including both academic and vocational programmes, and all MQF levels. The scope of this data collection exercise includes only education institutions which had students enrolled in programmes on 31st March of the reference academic year.

It is important to note that the data emerging from this source reflects the number of student enrollments not the number of students in the reference period. The two may not necessarily be equivalent since a single individual may be enrolled in more than one programme within the reference period. The Education enrollments dataset for academic year 2020/2021 captures 100 institutions.

It is important to note that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of institutions were not in operation for a portion of the reference academic year, while others underwent significant changes in their operations. This may have impacted the reported figures.

## 1.2 Education graduates data for academic year 2020/2021

The Education graduates dataset emerges from an annual register-based data collection exercise conducted among institutions whereby institutions are asked to report data on the students which completed an education programme during the reference academic year. This data collection exercise captures all fields of education, including both academic and vocational programmes, and all MQF levels. The scope of this data collection exercise includes only education institutions which had students who completed programmes that were in operation during the reference academic year, which is defined as the period between 1st October and 30th September.

It is important to note that the data emerging from this source reflects the number of course completions not the number of individuals completing a course in the reference period. The two may not necessarily be equivalent since a single individual may complete more than one programme within the reference period. The Education graduates dataset for academic year 2020/2021 captures 84 institutions.

It is important to note that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of institutions were not in operation for a portion of the reference academic year, while others underwent significant changes in their operations. This may have impacted the reported figures.

## 1.3 Institutions data collected in 2023

The Institutions dataset is a sample-based data source emerging from a survey which was carried out among VET institutions in 2023. This survey collected data from institutions with reference to academic year 2020/2021.

# 2. Methods

The data from the mentioned data sources was initially cleaned and prepared for the computation of the indicators.

Due to the nature of the Education enrollments and Education graduates datasets, no weighting was required since the data is register-based and therefore assimilates a census where data from each unit within the target population is collected directly.

Data from the Institutions dataset was stratified by license category and weighted such that the data collected may represent each VET institution more accurately.

During the data cleaning process, codes were used to represent localities and districts of residence, levels of education and fields of study. The coding of localities and districts of residence was carried out using the Local Administrative Units (LAU) classification system, which is based on the geographical location of units [25]. The coding of the level of education of the programmes and qualifications was carried out based on the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) classification system [26]. The field of education of the programmes and qualifications was coded using the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) Field of Education 2013 classification system [27].

Data from the Education enrollments and the Education graduates datasets contain some slight differences. One such difference is that while one collects the nationality of students or graduates, the other collects citizenship. For the purposes of this project, both variables were treated as the country of birth of the data subject since this distinguishes between locals and foreigners and is a demographic variable reported in this work. While it is possible to have multiple citizenships, it is not possible to have multiple countries of birth. Therefore, for cases where the respondent provided multiple responses for the Nationality/Citizenship variable, the first response was considered as the country of birth.

The Age variable was collected with reference to 1st January 2021. However, as a quality measure, in cases where both the age and the date of birth were provided, the age was recalculated from the date of birth with reference to 1st January 2021 to eliminate possible errors. In cases where only the age was provided, this was considered as the correct age. Cases where neither the age nor the date of birth was provided were coded as '-1'; defined as 'Age not available'.

With reference to the Institutions dataset, the size of the education institutions was classified based on the Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) number of teachers and trainers employed within the institution.The institution size classes used for this project are reported in Table 3.

| Size Class | Description |
|---|---|
| Small | Less than 10 FTE teachers or trainers |
| Medium | Between 10 and 49 FTE teachers or trainers |
| Large | 50 or more FTE teachers or trainers |

*Table 3: VET institution size classes*

The FTE number of teachers and trainers was calculated as the sum of the total number of full-time teachers and trainers and half the total number of part-time teachers and trainers (FTE = ∑ FT + 0.5 ∑ PT). This method results in a more realistic representation of the size of the institution.

Calculating the size of a VET institution based on the number of teaching or training hours results in less variation year-on-year than a calculation based on the number of students. This gives results which are more robust and consistent over time.

# 3. Limitations

The main limiting factor in this project was the restricted amount of data available. While all efforts were made to obtain readily available data and collect data where feasibly possible, it was not possible to gain access to all the required data variables. The data which was not obtained includes:

- Information on the presence of special needs within the Education graduates dataset
- Information on employment status
- Information on the highest level of education successfully completed

This data impacted indicator 8, which reports the prevalence of vulnerable groups.Moreover, it impacted the criteria used in the selection on the active population for the computation of indicators 3c and 4c, which regard the CVET participation and completion rates of persons within the active population, respectively.

The active population is made up of individuals aged between 15 and 74 years who are either employed, self-employed or unemployed. Selection of the individuals which satisfy these criteria would require knowledge of their employment status. However, since this data was not available, the active population was regarded as the subset of individuals aged between 15 and 74 years.

Another implication of the lack of data regarding employment was the impact on the IVET-CVET classification of programmes and qualifications. IVET is defined as initial vocational education and training and is considered as vocational education or training which is carried out in the initial phase of education, usually before entering working life. By contrast, CVET is defined as continuing vocational education and training and is considered as education or training undertaken after initial education or following entry into working life. Typically, CVET is aimed at helping individuals to improve or update their knowledge and skills or acquire new skills for a career move, retraining or continuing personal or professional development [28].

An accurate classification of enrollments and graduates into IVET or CVET requires information about job history, however, the data sources available for this project were limited to education and do not contain any information about employment. As a result, it was not possible to verify whether a programme was carried out before or after the onset of employment. Similarly, it was not possible to verify whether a qualification was obtained before or after the onset of employment.

Instead, it was observed that an average student typically completes education by the age of 25 years. This considers a four-year course at MQF level 6 as the longest programme route. It also allows for a margin of 2 years to capture any repeated academic years as well as any age discrepancies arising from the fact that the academic year does not coincide with the calendar year. Therefore, as a mitigation measure, the classification of programmes and qualifications into IVET or CVET was carried out based on the age of the student or graduate. Vocational programmes or qualifications where the age of the student or graduate was 25 years or less were classified as IVET programmes or qualifications whereas vocational programmes or qualifications where the age of the student or graduate was 26 years or more were classified as CVET programmes or qualifications. While this method does not lead to a precise classification, it is based on a reasonable assumption and is considered to lead to realistic results, given the existing data limitations.

Another important limitation to note is that programmes lasting less than one academic year risk not being captured in the enrollments dataset if the programme is not in operation on 31st March of the reference year. This is the result of the nature of the Education enrollments dataset. However, it may significantly impact on the number of short courses being reported, which is likely to be diminished. In turn, this affects the number of enrollments and programme completions.

# 4. Deviations

## Deviation 1

A further limitation of the Education enrollments and Education graduates datasets is that they are not longitudinal in nature. Longitudinal datasets follow the same data subjects over time whereas cross-sectional datasets consider the data subjects available at a given point in time. The Education enrollments and Education graduates datasets are cross-sectional in nature and are therefore unsuitable for the calculation of accurate completion rates.

A meaningful measure of the quality of VET programmes is the completion rate, which is defined as the share of enrolled students who successfully complete a given programme. In order to capture this effect, it is necessary to follow the same individuals from enrollment to completion. The dataset available only captures the same individuals if the programme undertaken spans one academic year. Cases lasting more than one academic year will either be captured by the enrollments dataset or the graduates dataset in a given year, losing the longitudinal property of the dataset.

Due to this limitation, a deviation was introduced in indicator 4, which was initially designed to capture the share of VET enrollments which result in VET programme completions. Instead, indicator 4 was modified to report the number of VET enrollments as a proportion of all programme completions, which is still indicative of the prevalence rate in VET.

## Deviation 2

The information reported under indicators 5 and 6 presents a deviation from the original plan. Indicator 5 intended to capture the share of VET graduates in employment or education, while indicator 6 intended to capture the relevance of the vocational education or training compared with the graduate's current occupation, from both the graduate's and the employer's perspective.

Many VET institutions do not collect such information since it is not a requirement and hence such data is unavailable. In addition, the provision of any data collected from third parties, such as graduates and employers, is regarded as confidential data, making it the institutions' legal obligation not to share the collected data. As a result, it was not possible to access this information.

As a mitigation measure, indicators 5 and 6 were modified to present statistics on the number of VET institutions collecting this information, the information collected and the time point at which this data is collected. Such information is key towards an accurate portrayal of the status of VET in Malta and may serve as the grounds for addressing this limitation in the future.

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