

## **SKILL ENERGY BSR, LATVIA**

### **Concept for the development of training program for young people with good practical skills**

In Latvia the number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) is relatively high. The challenge of youth unemployment became especially evident during the crisis, revealing also high skills mismatches. Most of the young unemployed do not possess professional qualifications.

Special active labour market policies targeted at young people have been designed and implemented including vocational training, volunteer work and wage subsidies for young people. However, given the scale of the problem, these limited activities have a relatively small impact. (From *Council Recommendations on the National Reform Programme 2012 of Latvia and delivering a Council opinion on the Convergence Programme of Latvia, 2012-2015*)

#### **VET system in Latvia**

VET system in Latvia is shown in Figure 2 and explained in detail in the Annex 1.

#### **Main reasons for youth unemployment**

- inappropriate or interrupted education;
- low quality of internships and traineeships;
- lack of professional skills and work experience;
- lack of appropriate jobs, especially outside capital city;
- unrealistic salary and duty expectations;
- lack of motivation and unwillingness to learn

#### **What can education system do to reduce youth unemployment?**

- introduce changes in education system – design study programs meeting labour market needs;
- improve partnership between education and businesses – employers participate in creation of study programs and in provision of good quality, targeted internships and traineeships;
- facilitate validation of non-formal and informal learning with the aim to award professional qualification.
- Improve cooperation with other stakeholders (Ministry of Welfare, State Employment Agency, Chambers, Lifelong learning centres, etc.)

#### **Existing practices in tackling youth unemployment**

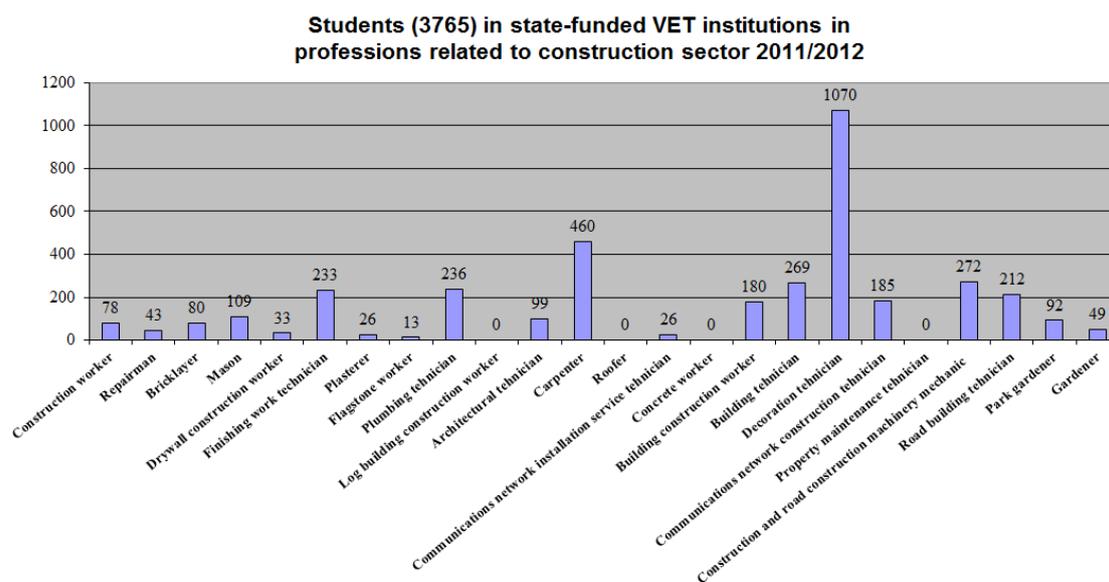
State Employment Agency is currently implementing several national level activities to reduce youth unemployment:

- Workplaces for young people;
- Support for youth voluntary work;
- Vouchers for unemployed young people to participate in formal and informal training;
- Workshops for young people;
- Support for regional mobility.

#### **Construction sector**

Ministry of Welfare statistics show that among unemployed there are VET school graduates with low professional skills that do not match labour market demands. This is also true for construction sector.

According to the data provided by the Ministry of Education and Science construction sector related professions could be acquired in 50 educational institutions, including higher education institutions, colleges, state and private VET institutions. Currently education institutions offer students opportunities to acquire 49 professional qualifications. Among most offered professions are: plumbing technician, carpenter, finishing operations technician, interior designer. About 10% of students enrolled in studies drop out. Figure 1 shows the number of students in state – funded VET institutions in professions related to construction sector



**Figure 1**

### Education program

In Latvia an education program could be designed for minimum 160 hours. It could include topics on construction materials, technologies, green skills, etc. This course or module would provide opportunities for young people:

- to validate their skills acquired in non-formal and informal education;
- to prepare for qualification exams (IVET drop-outs)

Recognition of non-formal and informal education is already practised in Latvia in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No146 “Procedures on the validation of the professional competences acquired outside formal education system”

### Potential target groups

- Young people up to 25, former IVET students from construction sector, without professional qualification (lacking competences to enter the labour market);
- Young people up to 25 with good practical skills, who have worked in building sector, but do not possess professional qualification and have lost jobs.

### Program providers

VET schools, VET competence centres in cooperation with enterprises.