

WORK-BASED LEARNING IN MOLDOVA – ASSESSMENT PER EU QUALITY STANDARDS

Moldova

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PREFACE

The study “Work-based learning in Moldova – an assessment per EU quality standards - has been produced by the European Training Foundation (ETF). The study was carried out between June and April 2026 by Angela Cara who also drafted this report which was quality checked by the QA Expert, Patrick Werquin, and the Project Director, Michal Kowal (GREATVISORY).

The study project was coordinated by Floriana Folisi (ETF). Technical input and ongoing support were provided by Floriana Folisi and Lisa Rustico (ETF).

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1 INTRODUCTION

The labour market in the Republic of Moldova exhibits several structural characteristics similar to those of other countries in the region, including relatively low labour market participation among young people and women, mismatches between the skills acquired in the education system and labour market needs, as well as persistent challenges related to youth employment (Council of Europe, 2024; World Bank, 2020). The share of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) remains relatively high compared with the European Union average (NBS, 2025), reflecting broader socio-economic challenges such as migration, demographic decline and limited employment opportunities. In this context, strengthening the links between the education system and the labour market has become an important public policy priority.

Apprenticeship and traineeship are two forms of work-based learning (WBL).¹ Apprenticeships are designed to develop occupational skills and lead to recognised qualifications. They combine school-based learning with workplace learning, with the latter typically accounting for a significant proportion of the programme duration. Apprenticeships usually have a longer duration, for example 2-4 years. Traineeships are workplace training periods that complement formal or non-formal education and training programmes. Traineeships can be a compulsory and integrated, or optional and supplementary component of a vocational training programme. They may last from a few days or weeks to several months but are generally shorter than apprenticeships. Both traineeships and apprenticeships may be offered as active labour market programmes, if they are organised and funded by public employment services.

Because of their particular importance for youth employment, the European Commission has developed quality standards for both schemes. The European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (Council of the European Union, 2018) was developed in 2018 on the initiative of the European social partners and includes 14 criteria divided into two categories: learning and working conditions, and framework conditions. The 2014 Quality Framework for Traineeships (Council of the European Union, 2014) contains a set of quality criteria relating to traineeships as part of active labour market policy (ALMP). However, the framework can also be used to guide the development and review of traineeships in other contexts, for instance in continuing vocational education and training.

This study provides a brief and clearly structured analysis of the main vocational education and training (VET) programmes in Moldova against the criteria of the two EU frameworks. The three main chapters take a look at WBL in Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET), WBL in Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET), and WBL in Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP). The most important strengths and challenges are summarised at the end of the chapters.

Through these main chapters, the report addresses the key elements of WBL, specifically: types of programmes with a WBL component, contractual agreements, definitions of learning outcomes and assessment criteria, provision of pedagogical support to participants, social protection measures for learners, health and safety regulations in work-based settings, funding sources and cost-sharing arrangements for WBL initiatives, quality assurance, and learner tracking.

In addition, the report includes a brief clarification of the most important concepts used, an outline of the methodology applied, an overview of the country employment profile, as well as a short description of the strategic, legal and governance framework of VET. Moreover, details of interviewees, a list of acronyms and references, as well as the quality criteria from the two EU frameworks are included at the end of the report.

¹ For more information on work-based learning see: Work-based learning: an introduction to key concepts. Inter-Agency Working Group on Work-based Learning (Cedefop, European Commission, ETF, ILO, OECD, UNESCO, World Bank Group) <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/work-based-learning-introduction-key-concepts>

Considering the above structure and content, the report is conceived to inform policy makers, educators, employers and relevant stakeholders about the current state of WBL in the country and to contribute to the debate on WBL at the national and international level.

2 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

In Moldova, the legal basis for vocational education and training (VET), including work-based learning (WBL), is established through the Education Code No. 152/2014, the Law on Dual Education No. 110/2022, and related regulatory acts approved by the Government and Ministry of Education and Research (MoER).

In Moldova, WBL is part of IVET and CVET. WBL is a mandatory component of all IVET programmes and is implemented through two main modalities:

- Classic (non-dual) VET programmes, including practical training (*instruire practică*) carried out both in the VET provider and at the workplace (WBL) available across all IVET programmes (2, 3, and 4 years). The number of workplace hours depends on the learner's age, ranging from 24 to 40 hours per week. In terms of shares, the theory/practice ratio is approximately 35–50% for theoretical instruction and 65–50% for practical instruction including internships (*stagii de practică de producție*, literally “internship in production”). The share of practical training hours can reach up to 70%, depending on a qualification.

Internships are regulated by the Regulation on internships in secondary VET (MoER Order No. 233/2016) and represent a mandatory component of the Framework Plan/Syllabus (see section 6.1) and the national VET curriculum aimed at developing professional competencies relevant to NQF Level 3 qualifications. Internships are carried out at workplaces such as enterprises, organisations, associations, or training workshops of VET providers. Public bodies are obligated to annually provide internship placements amounting to at least 10% of their total staff.

- Dual VET (*învățământ dual*) – A form of organisation of VET, in which theoretical education is carried out at the VET provider, and practical training is carried out primarily at the workplace: at least 70% of the total training hours for secondary-level IVET programmes and at least 50% for post-secondary programmes.²

In the context of ALMP, the National Employment Agency (*Agenția Națională pentru Ocuparea Forței de Muncă: ANOFM*) implements training programmes for unemployed persons and vulnerable groups, including WBL-based measures such as “Training at the Workplace” and “On-the-job traineeships”, often delivered in partnership with employers and supported through public subsidies or donor-funded initiatives.

Professional traineeships (*stagiu profesional*)³ are regulated by the Procedure for the organisation and implementation of traineeships (Annex No. 4 to Government Decision No. 1276/2018). A professional traineeship represents an active labour market measure organised for a duration of up to four months, aimed at acquiring practical skills, and is carried out in accordance with the employment indicators approved annually by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection for the National Employment Agency.

² This format uses the resources of both environments to ensure the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competences corresponding to levels 3, 4, and 5 of the National Qualifications Framework. Dual VET programmes include three interrelated components: (i) general education, aimed at developing transversal competences relevant to successful professional activity; (ii) profile education (theoretical and practical), focused on acquiring occupational knowledge and skills integrated into professional competences; and (iii) optional education, which enables learners to broaden or deepen their knowledge in their chosen field or related areas.

³ Annex No. 4 to Government Decision No. 1276/2018 – Procedure for the implementation of the traineeship. Available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=150721&lang=ro#

3 METHODOLOGY

The report on WBL in the Republic of Moldova was prepared in 2025 based on a desk research and field work. The data collection tools were developed in alignment with European Union quality standards for WBL, outlined in the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (Council of the European Union, 2018) for IVET and CVET, and in the 2014 Quality Framework for Traineeships (Council of the European Union, 2014) for ALMPs.

The analysis drew upon:

- National legal and regulatory frameworks, including laws, government decisions, methodologies, and other relevant documents adopted by the Ministry of Education and Research (MoER); the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research (*Agencia Națională de Asigurare a Calității în Educație și Cercetare: ANACEC*), and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (*Camera de Comerț și Industrie*).
- Strategic documents issued by the MoER, including national education and VET strategies, implementation plans, and monitoring reports.
- Existing studies, evaluations, and reports published by national institutions and international development partners involved in VET and labour market development.
- Primary data collected through interviews with representatives of the MoER, the ANOFM and Centres of Excellence.

Desk research involved a comprehensive review of existing legal frameworks and legislative documents, bylaws, strategies, relevant studies, reports and publications, guides for learners, schools, training providers, employers, governmental institutions' websites, online databases, and other sources.⁴

4 COUNTRY OVERVIEW

According to the 2024 Census published by the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, the resident population of Moldova in 2024 was 2,409,200.. According to the final results of the 2024 Population and Housing Census, compared to the 2014 census: the number of the usually resident population has decreased by approximately 13.6%.

In 2024, according to the Labour Force Survey, Moldova's labour force decreased by 4.3% to 889,100 persons, employment declined by 3.7% to 853,900 persons, and the unemployment rate dropped to 4.0%, down 0.6 percentage points from 2023..

According to the results of the Labour Force Survey conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics, in the fourth quarter of 2024, 26.0% of young people aged 15–34 in Moldova were classified as NEETs (not in employment, education, or training), marking a decrease of 2.1 percentage points compared to the same period in 2023. At the same time, 31.5% of young people (aged 15-34) were not in employment but were engaged in education or training (up by 3.6 p.p.), 35.3% were employed but not participating in education or training (up by 0.2 p.p.), and 3.0% were both employed and enrolled in education or training, a proportion that remained unchanged from the previous year. Additionally, 4.2% of young people were working or seeking work abroad (for up to one year) and not engaged in education or training, representing a decline of 1.7 p.p. from Q4 2023.

The 2022 PISA score for Republic of Moldova youth aged 15 (see Table 1) was below the OECD average and below the score of 2018 in all three disciplines: mathematics, reading and science (OECD, 2023).

⁴ A full list of the sources consulted is presented in Chapter 10: References.

According to the PISA 2022 results, the performance of 15-year-old students in the Republic of Moldova was below the OECD average. (OECD, 2023). Average 2022 results were about the same as in 2018 in mathematics and down compared to 2018 in reading and science.

Table 1: PISA results in Moldova and OECD in 2022

	Mathematics	Reading	Science
OECD average mean score PISA 2022	472	476	485
Republic of Moldova average mean score PISA 2022	414	411	417

5 FRAMEWORK FOR WORK-BASED LEARNING IN MOLDOVA

The development of WBL in the Republic of Moldova is closely aligned with the country's strategic priorities in education, employment, and economic growth. Key national policy documents, such as the Education 2030 Strategy, the National Employment Strategy, and the Economic Reform Programme 2025-2027, emphasize the need to improve the quality and relevance of VET. These strategies underline WBL as an effective approach to address skills mismatches, strengthen youth employability, and enhance Moldova's competitiveness in line with European integration objectives.

The governance of VET in Moldova is led by the Ministry of Education and Research, in coordination with other ministries, the National Employment Agency, and the Ministry of Finance, while sectoral committees, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and social partners provide consultative roles. Implementation of WBL involves VET providers, private sector companies, public institutions, and donor-funded initiatives, which together create a multi-level partnership ecosystem that supports policy, delivery, and monitoring.

5.1 Vocational education and training strategies

The main and most recent country strategic documents in the field of VET are:

The *Education Development Strategy 2030*, approved by Government Decision No. 114/2023, sets out a comprehensive vision for transforming the education sector, including VET. It emphasises the continued development of the National Qualifications Framework, qualification standards and occupational standards; the improvement of career guidance services in schools; the further development (and reorganisation) of the network of VET institutions, including the provision of dual VET through the promotion of (stronger) partnerships between VET institutions and employers and the strengthening of the involvement of social partners.

The *Youth Strategy "YOUTH 2030"* and its *Implementation Plan for 2023–2026* aim to enhance youth access to the labour market through vocational orientation, WBL opportunities, and entrepreneurship support.

Employment policies intersect with education through Government Decision No. 785/2022, which approves the *National Employment Program for 2022–2026 and its Action Plan*. This program seeks to increase employment and expand labour market access for all, with a strong focus on aligning training programs with real economic needs.

5.2 Policy dialogue and the role of actors at national level

WBL in Moldova is supported by a wide range of institutional, sectoral, and private stakeholders:

- The **Ministry of Education and Research (MoER)** is the main actor for VET governance and policy making is. It is responsible for the majority of VET institutions. It collaborates with universities and other tertiary education institutions to develop and implement policies, provides funding for research projects and supports the development of curricula and educational materials related to tertiary education.
- **The Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Regional Development, the Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs** are in charge of VET institutions that provide VET programmes relevant to their area of expertise. The development of occupational standards is coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. The Ministry of Finance participates in the VET governance through the provision of funding, in close consultation with the MoER.
- The **National Employment Agency** implements ALMP, which includes forms of WBL such as “Training at the Workplace” and “On-the-job traineeships”, aimed at increasing employment opportunities for vulnerable groups and jobseekers.
- **The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Moldova** plays a key role in supporting and monitoring dual VET and WBL implementation. In line with Law No. 110/2022 on Dual Education. It endorses curricula for occupations and specialisations in dual VET, identifies and engages economic agents for curriculum endorsement, assesses companies’ compliance for participation in dual training, and manages the Register of dual VET units. The Chamber also provides technical support and assistance to companies and learners, including support in the conclusion, implementation, and termination of dual training contracts, delegates representatives to assessment and qualification commissions, and supports the establishment of consortia, ensuring alignment between training provision and labour market needs. A key role of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry is the identification and engagement of economic agents from companies in the endorsement of dual education curricular documents, ensuring the alignment of training content with labour market and business sector requirements.
- **Sectoral Committees** are specific bodies that have also been created by Moldova that are established voluntarily by the corresponding employers’ associations and trade unions within specific economic sectors. They are expected to review and develop occupational standards that are subsequently validated and approved by the MoER or the ministry in charge of the specific VET programmes.
- **Private sector companies and public institutions** include various private companies and public institutions hosting interns under different WBL models, including those supported by donor-funded or ALMP initiatives. They play an important role in offering real-life learning environments across economic sectors such as IT, agriculture, construction, healthcare, and administration.
- **VET providers** (*Instituții de învățământ profesional tehnic*) include three types of institutions: VET schools providing only upper secondary VET (NQF level 3), VET colleges, providing upper secondary and post-secondary VET (NQF levels 3 and 4), and centres of excellence providing upper secondary and post-secondary VET (NQF levels 3, 4, and 5). These institutions offer both initial and continuing vocational training and embed WBL into their curricula at all levels.
- In addition, **trade unions, employer associations, civil society organisations, and VET institutions**, are involved in the development and implementation of VET policies and projects. Donor-funded initiatives and pilot programs have also contributed to expanding WBL opportunities, especially for adults, NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) and marginalised groups.

Together, these actors form a multi-level partnership ecosystem that supports the planning, regulation, delivery, and monitoring of WBL in Moldova.

5.3 Legal framework

The Moldovan WBL and VET system is governed by a coherent legal framework that supports quality, relevance, and alignment with labour market needs.

At its foundation lies the Education Code No. 152/2014 which integrates VET within the broader concept of lifelong learning and defines governance structures, institutional responsibilities, and quality assurance mechanisms.

A significant milestone in the system's modernization is the adoption of Law No. 110/2022 on Dual Education, which establishes the legal framework for dual VET. This law governs the integration of classroom instruction with enterprise-based training and regulates the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, contractual arrangements, and quality standards.

To ensure the effective implementation of the Law on Dual Education, the Government of the Republic of Moldova adopted the Decision No. 97/2023, which serves as the main implementing regulation of the Law, and provides the necessary regulatory framework for operationalising dual VET. This decision introduced several key components, including:

- Criteria for the compliance of companies to participate in the dual VET, which establish the minimum requirements to be met by companies in order to initiate a dual VET programme.
- A comprehensive package of normative documents approved in 2023, including the Framework Plan/Syllabus, methodological guidelines, and other regulatory tools that support the systematic implementation of dual VET across the country.

Regulation No. 222/2024 on Adult Education (Government Decision No. 222/2024) aims at establishing a unified framework for general and vocational adult education within the context of lifelong learning, in accordance with the Education Code. To guide the design and validation of adult education programmes, Order No. 785/2024 of the MoER introduces a dedicated methodology for the development of adult education programmes within the framework of lifelong learning.

Furthermore, the Law on Sectoral Committees for Vocational Training (Law No. 244/2017), ensures the responsiveness of qualifications and curricula to labour market demands by mandating the active involvement of employers and trade unions in their development and validation of qualification standards.

Finally, the National Qualifications Framework (Government Decision No. 330/2023) aligns Moldova's qualifications system with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). It provides guidance for curriculum design, learning outcomes-based assessment, competency-based certification, and recognition of prior learning.

Together, these legal instruments form a solid regulatory foundation for a responsive, inclusive, and quality-oriented WBL and VET system in the Republic of Moldova.

6 WORK-BASED LEARNING IN INITIAL VET

6.1 Types of programmes with a WBL component

This chapter covers WBL in IVET in Moldova across both classic (non-dual) and dual VET programmes. While WBL elements are present in both formats, the analysis focuses on dual VET, where WBL constitutes a substantial and formally regulated component of programme delivery.

WBL is a core element of the IVET system in Moldova, embedded in both classic and dual VET programmes. The structure of VET programmes, both in dual and classic formats, is guided by the Framework Plan/Syllabus for Technical Vocational Education and Training, approved by Order No. 1003 of 7 August 2023 of the MoER (MoER, 2023a). The Framework Plan/Syllabus introduces a modular, competency-based curriculum for VET and is mandatory for all public and private secondary VET providers, as well as for companies implementing dual VET.

The Framework Plan is developed for qualifications listed in the Nomenclature of vocational training fields and trades/occupations, based on qualification standards, grounded in the learning outcomes. The Framework Plan is endorsed by educational institutions, enterprises, professional associations/sectoral committees, and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for dual VET programmes, and it is then submitted to the MoER for approval. The Framework Plan is approved by the order of the MoER and is valid for a period of up to five years or until the approval of a new curriculum. For dual VET programmes, Company Training Plans at the company are developed.

In classic (non-dual) programmes, the theory-to-practice ratio is approximately 35–50% for theoretical classes and 50–65% for practical training (including workplace practice). The number of practical instruction hours may reach up to 70%, depending on the specific qualification. Upon successful completion of the programme, learners are awarded a nationally recognised qualification. These programmes are delivered at NQF levels 3, 4 and 5, depending on the occupational profile. This qualification provides legal recognition of competences, facilitating labour market integration or progression to the next level of education.

In secondary dual VET programmes (NQF Level 3), the training time is allocated as follows: 20–30% of the total duration of the study programme takes place at the VET provider, and 70–80% at the company. In post-secondary VET programmes (NQF Level 4) and post-secondary non-tertiary VET programmes (NQF Level 5) delivered through dual VET, the training time at the company must not be less than 50% of the total duration of the study programme.

WBL may last between 24 and 40 hours per week, depending on the learner's age:

- 24 hours/week for students under 16,
- 36 hours/week for students aged 16–18,
- 40 hours/week for students over 18.

In 2025, the educational offer for dual VET included 38 training programmes at NQF level 3. In 2026, 1,707 students were enrolled in dual VET (level 3), out of a total of 8,300 students enrolled at this level. The practical training component is emphasised, with 70% to 80% of the training taking place directly at companies, while only 20% to 30% is delivered within VET schools. This structure ensures that learners acquire hands-on experience in real work environments, closely aligned with labour market demands.

In contrast, dual VET at NQF Levels 4 and 5 accounts for only 10% of vocational programmes at these levels. However, the distribution of the learning environment is more balanced, with 50% of training delivered by VET schools and the remaining 50% conducted at the workplace. This model supports the development of more advanced professional competences while maintaining strong ties with the labour market.

In practice, the structure and intensity of WBL differ significantly between classic and dual programmes and across NQF levels. In classic (non-dual) programmes, practical training may represent up to 70% of total hours, with production practice typically concentrated at the end of the academic year and without tripartite contracts. Dual programmes allocate at least 50% of training time to WBL, with a much higher share at NQF Level 3 (70–80%), and are based on formal cooperation agreements and company training plans. At post-secondary levels (NQF 4–5), dual programmes maintain a balanced 50/50 distribution between school and company training, while classic programmes rely on internships and block practice periods. This structure reflects a progressive intensification of WBL as learners advance through qualification levels and training pathways.

Annex II presents practical examples of programmes in the Republic of Moldova (NQF levels 3–5), as well as the structure of a classical (non-dual) VET programme with a duration of 2 years. Annex III presents a case study example on WBL within the “Construction Electrician-Locksmith” programme.

Table 2 compares the structure, legal basis, and implementation aspects of WBL in classic (non-dual) and dual VET programmes in Moldova. It highlights key differences in curriculum design, practical learning share, and collaboration between schools and companies.

Table 2: WBL structure in classic and dual VET programmes

Component	Classic (non-dual) programmes	Dual programmes
Legal basis	- Regulation on internships in secondary VET (MoER Order No. 233/2016) - The Syllabus for Technical Vocational Education, approved by Order No. 1003 of 07 August 2023	- Law No. 110/2022 on Dual Education - Government Decision No. 97/2023 on the Implementation of the provisions of Law No. 110/2022 on Dual Education - Framework Plan/Syllabus for Technical Vocational Education, approved by Order No. 1003 of 07 August 2023
Curricular structure	- Modular organisation: Each module includes specific workplace tasks and labour market-aligned objectives - Competence-based modules	- Framework Plan, approved by the MoER. - Training plan at the enterprise, developed jointly by the enterprise and the technical vocational education institution or within the consortium, in accordance with the standard template. - Curricula by modules/subjects, developed in collaboration with employers. - Methodological guidelines for the implementation of curricula.
Types of programmes	- Secondary technical vocational education and training programmes with a duration of 2–3 years (NQF Level 3); - Post-secondary technical vocational education and training programmes (NQF Level 4); - Post-secondary non-tertiary technical vocational education and training programmes (NQF Level 5).	Technical vocational education and training programmes organised in the dual system (NQF levels 3, 4, and 5), developed in cooperation with employers and characterised by a higher share of work-based learning.
Volume and organisation of workplace practice / WBL	- Theoretical classes: 35–50% - Practical instruction (including in-school practical training and workplace practice): 50–65%, may reach up to 70% depending on a qualification Training is delivered mainly within the school, with practical components organized through internships or short-term placements at companies. The emphasis is on school-based learning, with structured theoretical and practical modules.	Secondary dual VET (NQF level 3) 20–30% conducted on VET provider site 70–80% conducted on employer site Post-secondary VET (NQF levels 4 and 5) - at least 50% conducted on employer site Learning is delivered through a competence-based and modular structure that integrates theoretical learning at school with extensive practical training at the company.

Contract and status of learner	– Contract between VET school and employer – During the internship, the company and the learner conclude a fixed-term individual employment contract, in accordance with Article 55(e) of the Labour Code (2003)	– Vocational Training Contract in dual VET between learner and employer. – The professional training contract in dual education is concluded for a fixed period, ranging from a minimum of one year to a maximum of three years, depending on the provisions of the dual vocational training programme approved by the Ministry of Education and Research.
Partnership Framework for VET–Employer Collaboration	– Module- or subject-based curricula in technical vocational education and training are developed by experts in the field, according to the levels of education (secondary, post-secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary) and fields of vocational training. They are based on qualification standard and the level descriptors of the NQF. The curricula are coordinated with the sectoral committees and approved by the Ministry of Education and Research in coordination with the relevant central authorities.	– In accordance with Article 7 of Law No. 110/2022 on Dual Education, the Company Training Plan is developed for dual VET programmes by the enterprise in collaboration with the VET institution. – The Company Training Plan in dual education may be updated annually, is coordinated with the VET institution, and is approved by the enterprise providing dual training.
Compliance Requirements	– Economic units are obliged to create the necessary and safe working conditions for the production practice internship, in accordance with the content of the internship programmes, occupational health and safety rules and regulations, and the requirements necessary for the professional training of skilled workers.	In accordance with Government Decision No. 97/2023, the compliance criteria for economic units are as follows: – possession of adequate premises and provision of appropriate conditions for the practical training of students; – provision of the necessary personnel for the implementation of dual education; – fulfilment of the responsibilities stipulated by legislation in the process of implementing dual education.

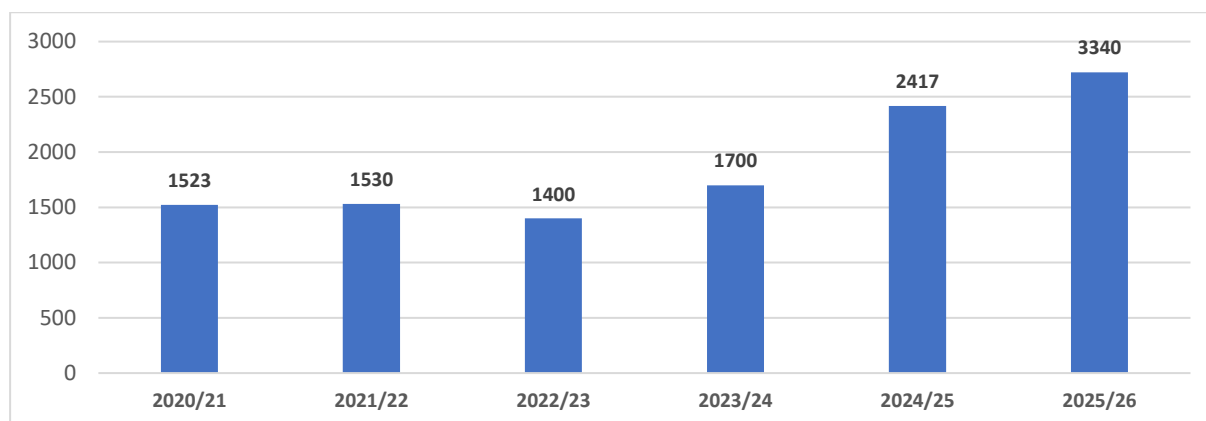
As of the 2023/2024 academic year, Moldova's VET network includes 81 institutions, structured as follows:

- 14 Centres of Excellence – advanced training hubs offering specialised programs and strong industry collaboration (12,700 students);
- 35 Colleges – delivering post-secondary and some dual programmes at NQF levels 4 and 5 (20,000 students);
- 32 Professional Schools – focused on classic and dual VET at NQF level 3 (13,200 students).

Together, these institutions serve approximately 45,900 students (MoER, 2023/2024).

Between 2020 and 2025, Moldova has seen a significant expansion in dual VET, marked by a growing number of participating VET providers, learners, and companies. As shown in Figure 1, between 2020 and 2025, the number of learners enrolled in dual VET in Moldova increased from just 1523 to 3340, reflecting the steady institutionalisation and expansion of the dual VET system.

Figure 1: Evolution of the total number of VET students in dual VET (2020/21–2025/26)



Source: MoER

Table 3 shows a consistent increase in the share of VET students enrolled in dual VET over the period 2020–2025. While the proportion remained relatively stable at around 3% between the academic years 2020–2021 and 2022–2023, a gradual upward trend is observed from 2023–2024 onwards. The share increased to 4% in 2023–2024, 5% in 2024–2025 and is projected to reach 6% in 2025–2026.

In absolute terms, the number of students enrolled in dual VET rose from 1,523 in 2020–2021 to 3,340 in 2025–2026, more than doubling over the period. This growth reflects the progressive expansion of dual VET pathways and increased engagement of employers, alongside policy efforts to strengthen the relevance of VET to labour market needs.

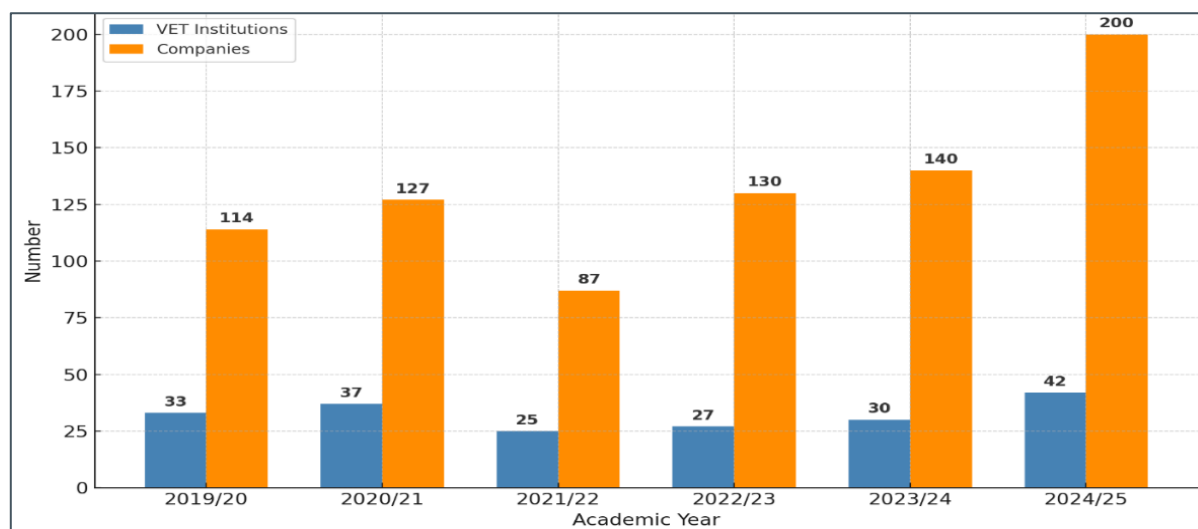
Table 3: Share of students enrolled in dual VET (2020/21–2025/26)

Academic year	Total number of students	Number of students enrolled in dual VET	Share
2020-2021	44,843	1523	3%
2021-2022	45,998	1530	3%
2022-2023	45,931	1400	3%
2023-2024	46,133	1700	4%
2024-2025	47,788	2417	5%
2025-2026	51,374	3300	6%

Source: MoER

Figure 2 illustrates the evolution of the number of VET schools and companies participating in dual VET in Moldova between the academic years 2019/20 and 2024/25. This trend highlights the expanding engagement of companies in Moldova's dual VET system, suggesting increased confidence in the model and improved collaboration between schools and employers.

Figure 2: Number of VET institutions and companies in dual VET in Moldova in 2019-2025



Source: MoER

To support and incentivise company participation, the Government has introduced a mechanism for compensating the employers, as detailed in Government Decision No. 97/2023.

In 2023, a budget of 10 million MDL (~500,000 EUR) was approved to compensate the expenses of economic units involved in dual VET, in accordance with Government Decision No. 97/2023. Of this, 3.5 million MDL (~175,000 EUR) was allocated to 26 companies (proportionate to the number of learners trained) which submitted applications to the Organisation for Entrepreneurship Development for the reimbursement of eligible costs incurred in the implementation of dual VET during the respective academic year. In 2024, 49 companies submitted requests for compensation, showing increased interest and engagement from the private sector.

The analysis below, applied to dual VET only, was guided by the criteria of the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (EFQEA).

6.2 Contract or training agreement (Criterion 1)

According to Article 7 of the Law on Dual Education, the implementation of dual VET programmes requires a Cooperation Agreement between the VET provider and the company, as well as a Vocational Training Contract (*Contract de formare profesională în învățământ dual*) between the learner and the company.

Article 18 of the Law on Dual Education stipulates that a written Vocational Training Contract in dual VET must be concluded between the learner and the company.

By signing the contract, the learner commits to following the vocational training programme, while the company undertakes to ensure the necessary conditions for WBL, including compliance with occupational health and safety standards and the provision of remuneration. The contract must include the following mandatory clauses: identification of the contracting parties:

- the purpose of the contract;
- location and schedule of the training;
- duration of the contract;
- rights and obligations of both the company and the learner;
- remuneration terms;

- conditions for contract termination or resolution;
- dispute resolution procedures; and
- the date and signatures of both parties.

The Vocational Training Contract in dual VET is concluded for a fixed period, from a minimum of one year to a maximum of 3 years, depending on the provisions of the dual VET programme approved by the MoER. The candidate for secondary dual VET programmes (NQF level 3) must reach the age of 16 during the academic year, in accordance with the Regulation on the organisation and conduct of admission to vocational training programmes, approved by MEC Order No. 648/2022.

However, in accordance with national labour legislation, the minimum age for employment is generally 16 years (or 15 years for light work, with parental consent). The enrolment in dual VET programmes of learners under the age of 18 is prohibited for functions/tasks involving heavy, harmful and/or hazardous working conditions prohibited for them.

A Practical Guide for Drafting and Finalising the Vocational Training Contract in Dual Education (MoER, 2023b), serves as a practical tool to assist the contracting parties and other stakeholders in completing the professional training contract in dual VET.

6.3 Learning outcomes (Criterion 2)

The Republic of Moldova has established a legal and institutional framework for defining, implementing, and assessing learning outcomes in VET, aligned with European standards and best practices.

The development of VET curricula in the Republic of Moldova is fully aligned with the NQF approved by Government Decision No. 330 of 31 May 2023, which is harmonised with the EQF. The NQF defines qualifications based on learning outcomes structured across three dimensions: knowledge, skills, as well as responsibility and autonomy..

Occupational standards, developed by Sectoral Committees and approved by the relevant ministries (e.g. MoER, Ministry of Labour), define the core professional and transversal competences required for specific occupations. These standards serve as the primary reference for determining the expected learning outcomes in VET curricula (MoER, 2023a).

In dual VET programmes, learning outcomes for the WBL component are jointly defined by VET providers and companies, in line with national legislation and occupational standards. The allocation of learning outcomes between school-based and workplace-based learning is agreed with partner companies and operationalised through the Company Training Plan.

Training content is defined through the national modular curriculum and operationalised through a Company Training Plan, which is jointly developed by the enterprise and the VET provider. This plan specifies the training content, sequence of modules, time allocation, and responsibilities of in-company trainers, ensuring a structured and quality-assured learning experience.

The curriculum is developed in accordance with the learning outcomes expressed as professional competences that graduates are required to possess, as defined by the NQF. Professional competences are specified in the Qualification Standard. Curricula are developed by specializations, in line with the Nomenclature of fields of vocational training, specialisations and qualifications, by the relevant subject departments with the participation of practitioners from the respective field. The curricula are coordinated with the Methodological and Scientific Council and approved by the Teaching Council. In curriculum development, the focus shall be on learner-centred education, oriented towards achieving the learning outcomes and developing the professional competences defined in the NQF for each qualification. (MoER, 2023a).

6.4 Pedagogical support (Criterion 3)

In dual VET, teaching responsibilities are shared between the vocational school-based instructor (*maistru-instructor al instituției de învățământ profesional tehnic*) and the in-company trainer (*maistru-instructor în producție*). (Law No. 110/2022 on Dual Education).

The school-based instructor is a teaching staff member employed by the VET provider, responsible for delivering practical training to learners within the school setting. The school-based instructor cooperates with the in-company trainer for the purpose of coordinating and monitoring the apprentice's vocational training process at the economic operator. Institutional liaison with the company is ensured at institutional level by the VET provider. The Order of the MoER No. 480 of 16 March 2026, amending the Regulation on the attestation of teaching staff in general education, technical vocational education, and psycho-pedagogical assistance structures (approved by Order No. 1091 of 7 October 2020), expanded access to teaching grades for school-based instructors, including those with secondary vocational qualifications.

The in-company trainer is an employee or individual entrepreneur with the competencies prescribed by the vocational training programme. According to Article 16 of the Law on Dual Education, in-company trainers must either hold a pedagogical studies diploma or complete a minimum of 20 credits in psycho-pedagogical training from a provisionally authorised or accredited training provider in order to be eligible for this role.

The in-company trainer has the following responsibilities:

- Contributing to the joint development of the curriculum in collaboration with the VET institution;
- Guiding learners through practical training activities and ensuring the availability of necessary instructional materials, manuals, technological documentation, and technical equipment;
- Developing and implementing individual training plans for each learner;
- Preparing final reports on learner's progress;
- Adapting training plans based on the learner's performance; and
- Participating, where applicable, in developing practical examination items for final assessments.

Importantly, in order to maintain training quality and provide adequate support to learners, one in-company trainer may supervise no more than 15 learners at a time.

Meanwhile, there is a need to strengthen the individualised training component, including by increasing the share of individual learning hours within modules, so that the training process is better adapted to learners' needs and pace of learning.

6.5 Workplace component (Criterion 4)

In dual VET programmes, workplace learning represents the dominant share of the curriculum: 70–80% of training time at NQF Level 3, and at least 50% at NQF Levels 4 and 5, and is delivered directly in companies. The duration of working time and, consequently, the level of remuneration may vary depending on the student's age and the number of hours actually worked within the enterprise, in accordance with labour legislation provisions on the employment of minors.

6.6 Pay and/or compensation (Criterion 5)

In accordance with the Law on Dual Education, Article 14, the employer is obligated to pay the learner, during the period of vocational training within the company, a remuneration that shall not be lower than the minimum guaranteed salary in the real sector.

6.7 Social protection (Criterion 6)

In accordance with Law No. 110/2022 on Dual Education, the company must, among other obligations, ensure conditions that comply with occupational health and safety requirements and, where possible, provide the learner, during the training period, with accommodation, transport, and meals free of charge. Moreover, access to social rights is regulated by the applicable labour and social security legislation.

6.8 Health and safety at work (Criterion 7)

According to Article 14 of the Law on Dual Education, the company is required to provide the learner with compensation for liability insurance in the event of health damage resulting from a workplace accident that occurs during practical training at the company.

The provisions of labour legislation apply to the Vocational Training Contract in dual VET. Civil legislation applies insofar as it does not contradict Law No. 110/2022 on Dual Education or Law No. 186/2008 on occupational safety and health.

6.9 Regulatory framework (Criterion 8)

The regulatory framework for dual VET in Moldova is primarily based on the Law on Dual Education, and Government Decision No. 97/2023 on the implementation of its provisions. These legal instruments define the roles, responsibilities, and procedures for implementing dual VET at both institutional and company levels.

The law and accompanying regulations establish a partnership-based model underpinned by cooperation agreements between VET providers and companies, and vocational training contracts between learners and companies. This structure sets out the allocation of responsibilities and resources, ensuring clear accountability for all parties. While the legislation does not explicitly use the term, “*fair and equitable partnership*,” its provisions reflect this principle through the transparent distribution of roles, shared responsibilities for programme delivery, and joint decision-making regarding training content, planning, and learner support.

The procedure for establishing the compliance of economic units in dual education is regulated by Government Decision No. 97/2023 that sets out the compliance criteria for their participation in the VET process. These criteria define the minimum requirements that economic units must meet in order to initiate a dual VET programme.

Quality assurance mechanisms are embedded throughout the implementation process and include:

- alignment of training content with occupational and qualification standards;
- mandatory preparation of Company Training Plans linked to the approved modular curriculum;
- regular monitoring and evaluation by VET providers and relevant authorities; and
- compliance with occupational health and safety regulations.

6.10 Involvement of social partners (Criterion 9)

The social dialogue platform allows cooperation between social partners and the government for the management and improvement of the VET system. Social partners are consulted in the process of development, implementation and monitoring of the new strategies and policies. The key stakeholders with a consultative role in VET governance and policy making, include: sectoral committees, employers' organisations, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and trade unions. Their formal involvement in VET governance is mainly exercised through their participation in sectoral committees serving as the primary institutional mechanism for social partner engagement in the VET system.

Moldova established sectoral committees (Law No. 244/2017) that are in charge of reviewing existing occupational standards and developing new ones (to be validated and approved by the MoER or the ministry in charge of specific VET programmes). The six existing sectoral committees have a limited role due to their lack of capacity.

In accordance with the Law on Dual Education, Article 11, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry is responsible for supporting and monitoring activities related to dual VET, complementing its broader consultative role in VET governance. Its responsibilities cover several key areas. The Chamber provides opinions on the curriculum for trades, professions, and specializations in dual VET. It establishes a commission to verify the compliance of the companies for participation in dual VET. It also prepares and manages the Register of Dual Education Units (i.e. companies) and publishes it on its official website. Additionally, the Chamber delegates representatives as members of the evaluation and qualification commissions in dual VET and provides support and assistance to companies that are interested or involved in implementing dual VET. It also offers support in the process of concluding, applying, or terminating vocational training contracts in dual VET, at the request of the learner or the company. Finally, it provides support and assistance to companies in the process of establishing consortia.

In Annex IV, an example of collaboration between the Centre of Excellence in Medicine and Pharmacy “Raisa Pacalo” and medical institutions in the Republic of Moldova is presented.

6.11 Support for companies - cost-sharing arrangements (Criterion 10)

To support and incentivise company participation, the Government has introduced a mechanism for compensating employers, as detailed in Government Decision No. 97/2023.

In accordance with point 20 of Annex No. 2 to Government Decision No. 97/2023, 50% of the following categories of expenses incurred by the entity in relation to dual education are eligible for compensation: training remuneration;

- the monthly basic salary of the master instructor who trained students in dual education;
- costs for organising training workplaces;
- expenses incurred by the entity for vocational training services paid to the VET institution where the student is enrolled in dual education;
- expenses incurred by the entity for the psycho-pedagogical training of the master instructor of at least 20 credits; and
- other expenses necessary for the organisation of dual education (office supplies, furniture, transport, accommodation, meals, etc.).

The government allocates approximately 15 million MDL annually (around €770,000) to support companies involved in dual VET. These subsidies cover student stipends (often at least equal to the minimum wage), compensation for in-company trainers, and the costs of psycho-pedagogical training. Employers are eligible for tax deductions on expenses related to staff training, learners' wage, and teaching materials. These incentives aim to encourage greater private sector participation in dual VET and enhance the quality of WBL opportunities.

The expenses incurred by the company for the organization and implementation of dual education are eligible for reimbursement from the state budget, in an amount of up to 50% of the costs admitted for compensation, in accordance with the Government's normative acts (Law No. 110/2022 on Dual Education).

6.12 Flexible pathways and mobility (Criterion 11)

In Moldova, dual VET offers learners flexible pathways across educational levels and facilitates both national and international mobility.

Efforts to strengthen career guidance mechanisms and the recognition of competences support the flexibility of educational pathways and cross-border mobility. A relevant example is the Engineering College in Strășeni, where the dual system is implemented following the German model, with programmes such as “Mechatronics” and “Machine Operator”. In partnership with German companies, the institution offers opportunities for international mobility, including training placements in Germany of up to six months, accompanied by financial support and German language courses.

Ongoing efforts to strengthen guidance and recognition mechanisms underpin both internal flexibility and cross-border mobility.

6.13 Career guidance and awareness raising (Criterion 12)

In Moldova, career guidance and awareness raising are integral to the VET system, including dual VET. In the context of dual VET, awareness raising campaigns are conducted to inform students, parents, and employers about the structure, benefits, and opportunities of WBL programmes. These efforts are often implemented in cooperation with enterprises, local public authorities, and sectoral committees. However, they are not yet widespread or sufficiently targeted, especially in regions where dual VET is less developed.

6.14 Transparency (Criterion 13)

In Moldova, transparency in dual VET is ensured through a combination of legal provisions, standardised procedures, and institutional responsibilities defined by the Law on Dual Education and related regulations. Information on dual VET programmes and companies providing WBL in Moldova is made available through the official websites and platforms managed by the MoER, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the VET providers implementing dual programmes. Dedicated online portals provide regularly updated information on available programmes, curricula, and companies authorised to host learners for workplace training. The introduction of a national register of dual VET providers within the SIME information system supports transparency and informed choice.

Companies interested in participating in dual VET must undergo a compliance procedure coordinated by MoER in collaboration with Chamber of Commerce and Industry and relevant sectoral committees. Once accredited, companies are included in the official list of providers eligible to provide WBL for approved programmes. VET institutions then select companies from this accredited list and sign cooperation agreements on dual VET. Only after these agreements are in place do learners and employers conclude vocational training contracts in dual VET, thus aligning the individual WBL arrangements with legal and curricular requirements. This structured, multi-step process ensures transparency, quality assurance, and equitable access to WBL opportunities across the dual VET system in Moldova.

6.15 Quality assurance and graduate tracking (Criterion 14)

In Moldova, quality assurance in VET – particularly dual VET – is grounded in a robust legal and institutional framework led by the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research (ANACEC). VET institutions undergo external quality evaluations every five years, resulting in mandatory corrective action plans designed to address shortcomings and continuously enhance programme quality.

Internal quality assurance systems are also in place at institutional levels, ensuring regular self-assessment and alignment with national and European standards. Crucially, graduate tracking is part of this framework: VET providers, in collaboration with employers, monitor graduates' employment outcomes to inform programme relevance and curriculum improvements.

One of the key mechanisms used is administrative tracking through employment records, which allows for systematic and objective monitoring of graduate insertion into the labour market. Data collected from the National Employment Agency and the national social insurance system provides information on whether graduates are employed, in what sector, and to what extent their employment corresponds to their field of study.

This approach enables authorities and VET institutions to assess:

- the relevance of training programmes to actual labour market needs,
- employment rates and occupational match shortly after graduation, and
- regional or sectoral disparities in graduate absorption into the workforce.

6.16 Conclusions

Strengths:

- The legal framework establishes mandatory written agreements, including cooperation agreements between VET institutions and companies, as well as vocational training contracts between learners and companies, which define the rights and obligations of all parties (Law No. 110/2022 on Dual Education and GD No.97/2023). (Criterion 1)
- All dual VET programmes are structured around learning outcomes, which are clearly defined and aligned with occupational standards. WBL is an integrated component of every programme. (Criterion 2)
- The regulatory framework defines the roles of teaching staff in VET institutions and in-company trainers. WBL trainers at both VET institutions and companies support the implementation of WBL. In-company trainers are required to complete at least 20 credits of psycho-pedagogical training. (Criterion 3)
- Over 70% of training in secondary-level dual programmes (NQF level 3) and over 50% of training in post-secondary programmes (NQF levels 4 and 5) takes place at the company, and learners participate in real work processes under supervision. (Criterion 4)
- The legal framework establishes clear financial entitlements for learners, ensuring minimum levels of remuneration and support during training. (Criterion 5)
- Learners benefit from social protection, including mandatory health insurance, social insurance, and access to accommodation, when available. (Criterion 6)
- Induction training provided by companies includes comprehensive health and safety instruction, in line with occupational standards and legal requirements. (Criterion 7)
- Implementation of dual VET is supported by a strong legal framework, including the Law on Dual Education and related government decisions. The regulatory framework defines the roles, responsibilities, and procedures for implementing dual VET at both institutional and company levels. The framework includes procedures for compliance verification and quality assurance of training companies and workplaces. (Criterion 8)
- Social partners are engaged in sectoral committees (established by employers' associations and trade unions by economic sector) and contribute to the review and development of occupational standards. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry plays a central role in dual VET, including monitoring activities, giving curriculum opinions, verifying company compliance, managing the Register of Dual Education Units, as well as supporting companies and learners in contracts, evaluation processes, and creation of consortia. (Criterion 9)
- Public subsidies and tax incentives are available to companies to cover the costs of dual VET, including learners' salaries and instructors' remuneration. (Criterion 10)

- The dual VET system enables flexible pathways across educational levels and supports national and international mobility. (Criterion 11)
- Career guidance and awareness-raising initiatives are conducted to inform students, parents, and employers about dual VET opportunities. (Criterion 12)
- Information on dual VET programmes and companies providing WBL is available online through official websites and platforms. The Educational Management Information System (SIME) includes a national register of dual VET providers. Roles and obligations of stakeholders are clearly defined in contracts and cooperation agreements, ensuring transparency and accountability. (Criterion 13)
- External quality assurance of VET institutions is conducted every five years by ANACEC, and internal quality assurance systems are also in place at institutional levels, ensuring regular self-assessment, and including graduate tracking mechanisms that are increasingly being integrated to improve curriculum relevance. (Criterion 14)

Challenges/gaps:

- Although the legal framework provides for a link between curriculum content and labour market needs, mechanisms for systematically collecting and integrating feedback from employers and sectoral committees remain limited, thus hindering full alignment between learning outcomes with evolving industry needs. Since they are primarily based on practical experience, production and training processes in many small and medium-sized enterprises are not systematically documented.
- A major barrier is the limited capacity of small and medium-sized enterprises to manage and document training plans, due to constraints in human resources and technical expertise. (Criterion 2)
- Differences in approach and experience between the school-based instructor from the VET institution and the in-company trainer—where the former is more theory-oriented and the latter more focused on practice and results—limit the coherent alignment of curricula and training plans with current labour market requirements. (Criterion 3)
- The dual VET system lacks an attractive framework of financial incentives for learners to support sustained participation and retention throughout the programme. (Criterion 5)
- While health and safety requirements are formally included in the regulatory framework, the limited availability of trained personnel and monitoring mechanisms makes it difficult to ensure consistent application across companies, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises. (Criterion 6)
- Although the governance framework for dual VET foresees the involvement of social partners, existing mechanisms do not yet ensure their consistent and systematic engagement of social partners in curriculum development and policy processes aligned with labour market needs. (Criterion 9)
- Although public subsidies and fiscal incentives exist to support enterprise engagement in dual education, the complexity and limited accessibility of these mechanisms constrain their effective understanding and use, particularly among small and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, the high volume of administrative requirements and documentation contributes to the perception of a bureaucratic system, thus discouraging participation, especially among small and medium-sized enterprises. Introducing a dedicated “help desk” support mechanism could simplify procedures and increase employer commitment. (Criterion 10)
- Career guidance mechanisms and the recognition of competences remain underdeveloped and unevenly applied, limiting the flexibility of educational pathways. Opportunities for international

mobility remain limited and accessible only to a small number of students, and have not yet been scaled across the entire system. (Criterion 11)

- Career guidance remains underdeveloped and the level of awareness regarding the opportunities offered by dual VET remains low, particularly at gymnasium level. Information sessions are predominantly theoretical, limiting the active engagement of students. Initiatives such as the “Professions Caravan” do not sufficiently engage students at the gymnasium and lyceum levels. The level of parental involvement in the process of career guidance and information remains limited, including due to the lack of accessible formats such as webinars or dedicated information sessions. (Criterion 12)
- Graduate tracking is still “in development,” and there is currently no effective mechanism to follow the long-term career path of graduates. Crucially, there is a lack of a formal feedback loop for students to report if their practice was adequate and compliant with the contract. Without this, practice is often perceived as a mere formality rather than a meaningful skill-building experience. (Criterion 14)

Additionally:

- Learners with special educational needs face limited access to vocational programmes due to inadequate infrastructure and insufficiently trained teachers. The limited capacity and preparedness of companies and VET providers to integrate learners with special educational needs further constrains access to dual VET pathways.
- A significant practical challenge is the distance between VET institutions and suitable enterprises. For example, many agricultural schools are located in the North, while specialized enterprises are often in the South. While the law mentions that companies should provide accommodation and transport “where possible”, the lack of housing infrastructure and bureaucratic complexity often force students to choose less relevant local placements.

7 WORK-BASED LEARNING IN CONTINUING VET

7.1 Types of programmes with a WBL component

This chapter analyses WBL in CVET in Moldova across both formal and non-formal learning contexts, including accredited adult education programmes, enterprise-based training, apprenticeships for the unemployed, and in-service training for employees. While formal adult education programmes provide the main structural reference, the analysis also reflects the broader CVET landscape where WBL is delivered through diverse arrangements.

In the Moldovan CVET system, WBL is integrated across various programme types and encompasses internships as part of formal adult education, dual VET programmes, enterprise-based apprenticeships for the unemployed, and in-service training for employees. In 2023, approximately 16,250 adults graduated from continuing education programmes including WBL.

There are currently some 300 providers of adult education services in the Republic of Moldova, offering more than 700 continuing education programmes accredited by the MoER.⁵

The Methodology for the Development of Adult Education Programmes within the Framework of Lifelong Learning (MoER, 2024) defines several types of adult education programmes within lifelong learning (see Table 4). These programmes constitute the main framework for CVET provision, while work-based learning may be integrated in some of them depending on the programme design and field of training.

Table 4: Adult learning programmes by NQF level, access requirements and duration

NQF Level	Programme Type	Access Requirements	Duration / Study Credits
Level 1 & 2	Adult vocational training programmes	Lower secondary education (9 grades). Persons aged 16+	90–900 hrs 3–30 credits
Level 3	a) Adult vocational training / professional development	Qualification certificate / equivalent diploma	90–900 hrs 3–30 credits
	b) Professional retraining (related to initial vocational training)	Qualification certificate / equivalent diploma	300–900 hrs 0–30 credits
	c) Partial qualification (micro-qualification)	Lower secondary / upper secondary certificate OR qualification certificate / equivalent diploma; also open to persons aged 16+ without having completed lower secondary	150–900 hrs 5–30 credits
Level 4	a) Professional development / specialisation	Professional studies diploma / equivalent diploma	150–900 hrs 5–30 credits
	b) Professional retraining (related to profession/	Professional studies diploma / equivalent diploma	900–1800 hrs 30–60 credits

⁵ <https://mecc.gov.md/ro/content/fost-aprobat-regulamentul-privind-educatia-adultilor>

	speciality of initial vocational training)		
	c) Partial qualification (micro-qualification)	Upper secondary education certificate OR professional studies diploma / equivalent diploma	150–1800 hrs 5–60 credits
Level 5	a) Professional development / specialisation	Professional studies diploma / equivalent diploma	150–900 hrs 5–30 credits
	b) Professional retraining (related to profession/ speciality of initial vocational training)	Professional studies diploma / equivalent diploma	900–1800 hrs 30–60 credits
	c) Partial qualification (micro-qualification)	Professional studies diploma / equivalent diploma	150–1800 hrs 5–60 credits
Level 6	a) Professional development / specialisation	Higher education bachelor's degree diploma / equivalent diploma	150–900 hrs 5–30 credits
	b) Professional retraining (related to speciality of initial vocational training)	Higher education bachelor's degree diploma / equivalent diploma	1800–3600 hrs 60–120 credits
	c) Partial qualification (micro-qualification)	Higher education bachelor's degree diploma / equivalent diploma	150–1800 hrs 5–60 credits
Level 7	a) Partial qualification (micro-qualification)	Higher education bachelor's degree diploma / equivalent diploma	150–1800 hrs 5–60 credits

At NQF Levels 2 and 3, CVET is primarily oriented towards trades and practical occupations. Adult vocational training and partial qualifications (micro-qualifications) cover professions such as construction electrician, locksmith, welder, carpenter, mechanic, tailor, cook, baker, hairdresser, and agricultural worker. These programmes are offered mainly by VET schools and adult training centres, and include at least 50% in-company practice share, ensuring that learners acquire solid practical skills directly relevant to occupational standards.

At NQF Level 4, programmes expand into post-secondary professional development and retraining. Specialisations include technicians in construction, transport, energy, tourism, food processing, and light industry. These programmes usually dedicate at least 1/3 of training time to in-company practice, allowing learners to consolidate technical skills and prepare for middle-level occupations.

At NQF Level 5, short-cycle higher education and advanced post-secondary programmes provide qualifications such as accounting technician, IT technician, pedagogy assistant, and social service assistant. These programmes are characterised by an estimated 40–50% of training taking place in enterprises, reflecting the need for practical readiness in complex technical and social roles.

At NQF Level 6, professional development, retraining, and micro-qualifications broaden into fields such as psychopedagogy, preschool and primary pedagogy, inclusive and special education, educational management, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, IT, foreign languages (English, French, Russian, Gagauz), history, arts, music, psychology, medicine, law, business administration, ecology,

engineering, construction, sports, and security. Based on interviews with universities and centres of excellence, academic-oriented programmes (e.g., management, languages) tend to have a lower workplace component, while technical and applied programmes (e.g., medicine, engineering, construction, sports) typically integrate a minimum of 20–30% WBL share.

At NQF Level 7, micro-qualification programmes for higher education graduates are highly flexible, and according to the consultations with provider, may include up to 50% of the WBL share, especially in fields directly connected to professional practice.

In the Moldovan CVET system, Adult Education Programmes are developed in line with the national qualification standards and the framework curricula approved by the MoER. They are designed to ensure the achievement of learning outcomes while adapting to the needs of each vocational field. The structure of each Adult Education Programme – including course units, number of study hours, and types of internships – is determined by the training provider, in compliance with qualification standards and the NQF. Course units may include classroom-based activities such as lectures, seminars, laboratory and practical work, and projects, as well as learning beyond the classroom, including individual study, artistic or sports activities, social and community involvement, and internships. The ratio of contact hours to individual study varies (1:1, 1:2, or 1:3), depending on the programme's specifics and mode of study, ensuring that learners acquire both theoretical knowledge and practical skills while maintaining consistency with the national standards and the NQF.

CVET programmes within the framework of lifelong learning are subject to evaluation for accreditation or provisional authorisation of functioning, in accordance with the law. After obtaining accreditation, study programmes and institutions for adult continuous training are subject to periodic external evaluation (for the purpose of reaccreditation) at least once every five years. (Government Decision No. 222/2024)

Adult education in the Republic of Moldova is financed through a mix of sources, including the state budget, local budgets, payments from individuals and legal entities, contributions from professional associations and employers, sponsorships, donations, tuition fees, external project funds, and other lawful sources. Programmes that respond to specific local development needs fall under the responsibility of local public authorities at both levels I and II and may be supported from local budgets. External resources are attracted in line with the national legislation and international cooperation agreements to which Moldova is a party.

In Moldova, micro-qualification programmes represent a model of WBL. Developed by VET institutions and approved by the MoER, their curricula integrate 50% workplace learning, thereby ensuring that theoretical instruction is closely linked to practical activities conducted within enterprises.⁶

The analysis below applies to formal and non-formal CVET programmes with a WBL component. It was guided by the criteria of the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (EFQEA).

7.2 Contract or training agreement (Criterion 1)

The relationship between adult training providers and beneficiaries – whether individuals or organisations – is governed by educational service contracts. These contracts specify the rights and obligations of both parties, the duration of studies, and the tuition fees (Government Decision No. 222/2024).

In accordance with the Regulation on Adult Education (Government Decision No. 222/2024, point 54), relations between providers of adult vocational training within formal education and individuals or legal

⁶ For example, in the field of professional training 1041 Transport Services at NQF Level 3, the qualification 1041011 Excavator Operator (single-bucket excavator) includes a curriculum where half of the training takes place in real work environments, directly preparing learners for employment in the construction and transport sectors. Practical activities are conducted in enterprises in the fields of mining and extraction, construction and civil engineering, and transport services: 300 hours.

entities are governed by educational service contracts, specifying the rights and obligations of the parties, the duration of studies, and tuition fees. In accordance with said Regulation, providers of adult vocational training within the framework of formal education shall conclude vocational training contracts with the participants of these programmes.

7.3 Learning outcomes (Criterion 2)

In the Republic of Moldova, learning outcomes in CVET are defined and structured in line with the NQF, as established by the Education Code No. 152/2014 and the Regulation on Adult Education. Learning outcomes are formulated to ensure a balanced combination of job-specific (occupational) competences and transversal competences, in accordance with the NQF descriptors of knowledge, skills, and responsibility and autonomy.

The framework relies on key normative references, including the Classifier of Occupations of the Republic of Moldova (Order of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection No. 11/2021), the Nomenclature of Professional Training Fields and Specialties in Higher Education (Government Decision No. 482/2017), the Nomenclature of Professional Training Fields and Trades/Professions (Government Decision No. 425/2015), and the Nomenclature of Professional Training Fields, Specialties and Qualifications for Post-Secondary and Non-Tertiary Technical Vocational Education (Government Decision No. 853/2015). Together, these instruments ensure consistency between education programmes and labour market needs (Government Decision No. 222/2024).

Within this framework, job-specific competences are derived primarily from occupational standards and sectoral requirements, while transversal competences –e.g. communication, teamwork, digital skills, problem-solving, learning to learn, and civic responsibility – are embedded across programmes and levels. Together, these instruments ensure consistency between education programmes and labour market needs.

7.4 Pedagogical support (Criterion 3)

According to the Regulation on Adult Education, the organisation and delivery of CVET are subject to strict quality requirements and external oversight mechanisms. Adult training providers are required to demonstrate that their programmes are implemented with qualified trainers whose professional profiles and specialisations correspond to the content of the training, and who also possess the pedagogical and psychological preparation specific to adult education, in line with occupational standards. This requirement ensures that the provision of adult education is not only professionally relevant but also tailored to the specific learning needs of adults.

The Regulation also provides that adult vocational training providers may organise training programmes with personnel who have a professional profile or specialization corresponding to the training programme and the respective level of the NQF, and who possess the required psycho-pedagogical training. In addition, such providers must be authorised in accordance with the legislation regulating external quality evaluation, specifically the procedures for provisional authorisation of functioning and the accreditation of programmes and institutions.

With regard to in-company trainers involved in CVET programmes with WBL components, the Regulation on Adult Education does not establish a distinct professional status or specific pedagogical qualification requirements.

In accordance with the Regulation on Adult Education (Government Decision No. 222/2024, point 34), where vocational training plans include internships, providers are required to create the necessary conditions for the placement of beneficiaries. Internships are organized to enable the practical application of professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through theoretical training, support the acquisition of advanced experience, and develop practical skills for performing new professional tasks. Such internships may be carried out both in the Republic of Moldova and abroad,

within enterprises, organisations, educational institutions, or research institutes, and constitute an important element of pedagogical support in programmes including work-based learning components.

However, the pool of trainers with both technical expertise and psycho-pedagogical preparation remains limited, particularly in rural areas, and incentives for companies to invest in in-company mentor training are weak (World Bank, 2020).

7.5 Workplace component (Criterion 4)

In Moldova, CVET programmes – such as adult vocational training, professional retraining, and short-cycle higher education – also integrate structured forms of WBL, with proportions varying between 1/3 and 1/2 of their total duration, depending on the field and level of training.

Partial qualification programmes (micro-qualifications) approved by the MoER systematically integrate 50% WBL share. Training is structured so that half of the total workload is carried out in enterprises under real working conditions, guided by in-company trainers (*maistru-instructori*). This design ensures that theoretical instruction delivered in VET institutions is directly complemented by practical experience, enabling learners to acquire professional competences in authentic work environments while consolidating transversal skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and occupational safety.

Workplace learning is organised in enterprises and institutions relevant to the training field, under the supervision of in-company trainers. Competences acquired are jointly assessed by training providers and enterprises, contributing to nationally recognised qualifications aligned with the NQF.

7.6 Pay and/or compensation (Criterion 5)

In the Moldovan CVET system, the issue of pay or compensation during WBL activities depends on the type of programme (see Table 4 above) and the contractual arrangements between learners, training providers, and enterprises.

- For adult vocational training and partial qualification (micro-qualification) programmes, learners are not usually employees of the enterprise where WBL takes place. In these cases, participation in workplace training is generally unpaid, but costs may be covered through state subsidies, donor-funded projects, or the ANOFM voucher system that supports unemployed and vulnerable groups.
- For professional retraining or dual-type programmes, if learners sign an employment or apprenticeship contract with the host company, they may receive a stipend or salary, proportionate to the hours worked and in accordance with the Labour Code (2003).
- For in-service training programmes, employees continue to receive their regular salary from the employer, as WBL is part of professional development within the workplace.

This differentiated approach reflects the flexibility of the Moldovan CVET system, ensuring both access to workplace training for vulnerable groups and financial recognition for learners engaged under formal employment or apprenticeship contracts.

7.7 Social protection (Criterion 6)

In the Republic of Moldova, social protection for adults engaged in CVET is regulated primarily by the Labour Code (2003). Regardless of employment status, all adults participating in WBL must be introduced to occupational health and safety rules at the enterprise and are entitled to basic protective measures under the Labour Protection Law No. 186/2008. Hosting enterprises are obliged to ensure safe working conditions, supervision, and access to necessary protective equipment (Labour Code, 2003).

7.8 Health and safety at work (Criterion 7)

Occupational health and safety (OHS) in CVET is governed by the Labour Code (2003) and Labour Protection Law No. 186/2008. Before starting any WBL activity, all adult learners must undergo mandatory OHS induction adapted to workplace-specific risks. Hosting enterprises are responsible for organising this training, documenting its completion, and ensuring safe working conditions throughout the training process. Employers must provide appropriate protective equipment, maintain close supervision, and conduct continuous risk assessments to mitigate hazards associated with assigned tasks.

7.9 Regulatory framework (Criterion 8)

The regulatory framework for CVET with a WBL component in the Republic of Moldova is defined by a combination of education and labour legislation that establishes the institutional responsibilities, contractual arrangements, and quality assurance mechanisms.

The key legal acts are:

- Education Code of the Republic of Moldova No. 152/2014 establishes the principles of lifelong learning, including adult education, professional retraining, and continuing vocational training. Articles 126–127 define the organisation and financing of adult education, while Article 13 sets out the role of the NQF in structuring learning outcomes and recognition of qualifications.
- Government Decision No. 222/2024 on the approval of the Regulation on Adult Education provides the specific rules for designing and implementing adult education programmes, including retraining, professional development, specialisation, and partial qualifications (micro-qualifications). It also defines the obligations of providers, procedures for programme accreditation and requirements for organising internships, practice modules, and workplace-based training.
- Labour Code of the Republic of Moldova No. 154/2003. regulates employment relations during WBL activities. It also provides the legal basis for employer obligations with respect to pay, working time, occupational safety and health, and social protection for learners engaged in enterprise-based training.
- The Law on health protection and labour safety No. 186/2008 establishes the OHS standards applicable to all workplaces.

The regulatory framework does not explicitly mention a fair and equitable partnership approach. However, cooperation between adult training providers, employers and learners is encouraged in the implementation of WBL components. Responsibilities related to training delivery, supervision, working conditions, occupational safety and health, and learner protection are shared between providers and host organisations in accordance with education and labour legislation. Contractual arrangements and cooperation agreements aim to ensure transparency, mutual responsibilities, and balanced benefits for all parties involved.

7.10 Involvement of social partners (Criterion 9)

The involvement of social partners in CVET with a WBL component in the Republic of Moldova represents a fundamental element of the governance framework. Their participation ensures that programmes remain relevant to labour market needs and that responsibility is shared between the state, employers, and civil society.

Social partners are regularly engaged in dialogue with the Ministry of Education and Research, as well as with local public authorities, to establish partnerships that expand access to adult education and strengthen the integration of work-based learning (WBL) across different sectors.

This combination of national policy measures (MoER approval, ANOFM support) and local partnerships with enterprises makes micro-qualifications a valuable tool for enhancing skills development, employability, and lifelong learning opportunities.

7.11 Support for companies - cost-sharing arrangements (Criterion 10)

In the Republic of Moldova, the participation of companies in CVET with a WBL component is encouraged through a mix of direct and indirect cost-sharing mechanisms. These arrangements aim to reduce the financial burden on employers while ensuring that learners can access high-quality workplace training.

Forms of support:

- Public subsidies and tax incentives: Law No. 105/2018 on Employment Promotion and Unemployment Insurance provides financial support to employers participating in active labour market measures (including the integration of unemployed persons and vulnerable groups) through wage subsidies and other forms of financial support. These mechanisms indirectly support the involvement of enterprises in WBL (Law No. 105/2018).
- Shared responsibility for stipends and allowances: In many WBL programmes, the VET institution and the company jointly contribute to learner stipends, transport costs, or meals during training. This arrangement is regulated through partnership agreements between VET schools and enterprises, based on the Labour Code of the Republic of Moldova No. 154/2003 (with amendments).
- Donor and project-based support: In recent years, development partners (EU, ETF, UNICEF, Soros Foundation Moldova) have piloted co-financing models where external funding offsets employer costs for trainers' fees, protective equipment, or insurance for adult learners.

While the regulatory framework does not establish dedicated cost-sharing schemes exclusively for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, several existing measures are particularly relevant for MSMEs in practice. Public subsidies and wage support provided under employment promotion legislation are frequently accessed by smaller firms facing higher relative training costs. In addition, donor- and project-based initiatives often prioritise MSMEs by covering part of the costs related to workplace trainers, protective equipment, insurance, or mentoring. Through these mechanisms, MSMEs are indirectly supported in participating in CVET and hosting adult learners within WBL arrangements.

7.12 Flexible pathways and mobility (Criterion 11)

The Moldovan framework for CVET, including WBL, supports flexible pathways and learner mobility across different forms and levels of adult education. Anchored in the Education Code No. 152/2014 and the Regulation on Adult Education (Government Decision No. 222/2024), it promotes lifelong learning and flexibility between formal, non-formal, and informal learning.

Key features include:

- Adults can access CVET programmes at different NQF levels depending on prior education or experience. Certain programmes are open to individuals aged 16+ even without having completed lower secondary education.
- Skills acquired through work, non-formal or informal learning may be assessed and recognised, enabling progression or shorter programme duration.
- Learners can advance from micro-qualifications to retraining and higher-level programmes, with WBL outcomes contributing cumulatively to professional mobility.

- Programmes are delivered full-time, part-time, or via distance learning, helping adults combine work, family, and study.
- Cooperation with enterprises across regions and sectors (supported by donor projects and cross-border initiatives) enhances both geographic and sectoral mobility, aligning with European lifelong learning standards.

Moldova's framework facilitates flexibility and mobility, however, mechanisms for systematic and cross-border mobility require further strengthening to maximise the inclusiveness and attractiveness of WBL in CVET.

7.13 Career guidance and awareness raising (Criterion 12)

In Moldova, career guidance in CVET is closely aligned with national lifelong learning strategies, supporting adults in navigating flexible pathways across retraining, micro-qualifications, and professional development programmes. ANOFM offers career guidance and vocational counselling to unemployed persons and jobseekers, information on CVET opportunities, including enterprise-based training programmes. Services also provide insights into labour market trends, occupational profiles, and pathways for reskilling and upskilling.

However, career guidance services are underdeveloped for adults already in the labour force, with rural areas and vulnerable groups facing limited access to personalised counselling.

7.14 Transparency (Criterion 13)

Transparency in CVET and WBL is ensured through several mechanisms. Providers are obliged to publish clear information on admission requirements, expected learning outcomes, workload, and work-based components, which allows learners and employers to make informed decisions. All programmes are aligned with the NQF, ensuring that qualifications are transparent, comparable, and recognised nationally and internationally. Clarity is further reinforced through formal contracts between learners, providers, and employers, which specify programme duration, costs, assessment procedures, and certification conditions. Upon completion, learners receive certificates or diplomas that indicate the qualification level, number of credits, and NQF recognition, facilitating the portability of qualifications. Finally, the MoER, together with ANOFM and sectoral committees, regularly monitors adult education provision and publishes data on participation, outcomes, and labour market relevance.

7.15 Quality assurance and graduate tracking (Criterion 14)

Quality assurance in CVET, including WBL, is a key component of Moldova's education system, regulated by the Education Code No. 152/2014, the Regulation on Adult Education (Government Decision No. 222/2024), the Methodology for Adult Education Programmes, and the NQF. Accreditation by ANACEC guarantees alignment with occupational standards, competence-based curricula, and institutional requirements (MoER, 2024a). Providers must also monitor delivery and report results, while sectoral committees and employers validate standards and ensure labour market relevance. Graduate tracking is undertaken by the National Employment Agency and institutions, focusing on employment outcomes, job retention, and qualification relevance. Systematic tracer studies are still developing, with pilot projects supported by international partners. Findings derived from institutional-level monitoring processes and from the monitoring of graduates' pathways are used to update curricula, adjust WBL, and improve teaching and mentoring, strengthening accountability, transparency, and effectiveness. Expanding graduate tracking and linking data with labour market systems remain top priorities.

7.16 Conclusions

Strengths:

- Written contracts and training agreements clearly define the rights and obligations of providers, learners, and enterprises, ensuring accountability and transparency. (Criterion 1)
- Learning outcomes are systematically aligned with the NQF and occupational standards, supported by national nomenclatures and classifiers, which guarantees consistency with labour market needs. (Criterion 2)
- Qualified trainers with both professional and psycho-pedagogical preparation ensure that adult education is tailored to learners' needs and aligned with occupational standards. (Criterion 3)
- The introduction of micro-qualifications (with a 50% WBL component) provides necessary flexibility for adult learners. More broadly, WBL is strongly embedded in the system, with micro-qualifications allocating 50% of training to enterprises and other CVET programmes dedicating one-third to one-half of study time to practical experience. The system also benefits from qualified trainers with both technical and psycho-pedagogical preparation, as well as the ANOFM voucher system that facilitates access for vulnerable groups. (Criterion 4)
- The CVET system applies a differentiated approach to pay and compensation, combining unpaid placements supported by subsidies, stipends or wages within vocational training programmes, as well as the maintenance of wages in the case of training at the workplace. (Criterion 5)
- All adults engaged in WBL benefit from social protection measures, including mandatory occupational safety and health (OHS) induction, safe working conditions, and protective equipment, in line with the Labour Code and the Law on Occupational Safety and Health. (Criterion 6)
- A solid legal framework (the Education Code, Regulation on Adult Education, the Labour Code, OHS Law) underpins CVET and WBL, ensuring clarity of institutional responsibilities, contractual arrangements, and quality assurance. (Criterion 8)
- Social partners actively participate in governance structures, curriculum design, validation of occupational standards, organisation of workplace learning, and labour market policy measures, strengthening the relevance of CVET. In practice, curriculum development is mainly carried out by education providers in cooperation with employers, while the involvement of trade unions in curriculum design and validation remains limited. (Criterion 9)
- Companies benefit from cost-sharing mechanisms, including subsidies, tax incentives, shared stipends, and donor support, reducing the financial burden of hosting learners. (Criterion 10)
- The framework enables flexible pathways and mobility, with multiple entry points, recognition of prior learning, progression across NQF levels, varied learning formats, and cross-border cooperation. (Criterion 11)
- Career guidance and awareness-raising services are integrated with lifelong learning strategies and supported by ANOFM, providing learners with information on CVET pathways, labour market trends, and reskilling opportunities. (Criterion 12)
- Transparency is ensured through published programme information, NQF-referenced qualifications, clear contracts, standardised certification, and public reporting mechanisms. (Criterion 13)
- Quality assurance is guaranteed by ANACEC accreditation, systematic monitoring, social partner feedback, and emerging graduate tracking systems that support continuous improvement and labour market relevance. (Criterion 14)

Challenges/gaps:

- The pool of trainers with both technical expertise and psycho-pedagogical preparation remains limited, particularly in rural areas, and incentives for companies to invest in in-company mentor training are insufficient. (Criterion 3)
- Although social partner involvement is formally embedded primarily in management structures, the system design provides limited mechanisms to ensure sustained and consistent engagement. In particular, the framework does not define stable resource arrangements or continuity mechanisms for sectoral committees, nor does it include explicit design features to incentivise employer participation in curriculum development and workplace-based learning. In practice, the involvement of trade unions in the development and validation of curricula remains limited in the Republic of Moldova. Curriculum development is mainly carried out by education providers in cooperation with employers, with coordination from institutions such as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Moldova, while the validation process typically involves employer representatives and sector-specific experts. (Criterion 9)
- The design of the lifelong guidance system places limited emphasis on adults already in the labour force. While career guidance services exist, the framework does not sufficiently specify tailored guidance models for employed adults, rural populations, or vulnerable groups, nor does it ensure systematic access to personalised counselling across regions. (Criterion 12)
- The system includes provisions for transparency and information tools, but these are not fully specified in terms of scope, integration and user accessibility. The regulatory framework does not clearly establish comprehensive, user-friendly digital platforms that consolidate programme offers, qualification pathways and labour market information for adult learners. (Criterion 13)

8 WORK-BASED LEARNING IN ALMP

8.1 Types of programmes with a WBL component

In the Republic of Moldova, Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) aim to connect labour supply with labour demand and are implemented by the National Employment Agency. These measures include unemployment prevention programmes, territorial employment support programmes, programmes to facilitate the integration of migrants and national minorities into the labour market, and programmes to support the employment of jobseekers who require additional assistance on the labour market. These target groups include young people aged 16 to 24, persons without a profession or occupation, persons with disabilities, long-term unemployed, persons aged 50+, persons released from detention, victims of human trafficking after psychological and social rehabilitation, persons recovering from the use of narcotic or psychotropic substances, and victims of domestic violence.

ALMP measures are addressed to unemployed persons, employers and are provided with the purpose of increasing employment opportunities, either by creating new jobs or by facilitating access to existing vacancies.

The National Employment Agency implements the following ALMP measures through its territorial subdivisions: voucher-based vocational training courses; on-the-job training within enterprises; and professional traineeships:

- **Vocational training of the unemployed through voucher-based courses** (*Procedura de formare profesională a șomerilor prin cursuri de voucher*) constitutes a mechanism that enables unemployed persons to access training programmes provided by public or private providers, provisionally authorized/accredited in accordance with the relevant education legislation and registered on the Agency's "Voucher for Vocational Training" platform (Annex No. 2 to

Government Decision No. 1276/2018, Procedure on vocational training of the unemployed through voucher-based courses). According to training providers, in a course with a duration of six months, the theoretical component delivered by the provider typically lasts 2–2.5 months, while the practical component carried out at the employer lasts 3.5–4 months.

- **On-the-job training within an enterprise** (*instruire la locul de muncă în cadrul unității*) represents a vocational training process for unemployed persons, involving training delivered both by a training provider and an employer, with the aim of acquiring the knowledge, skills, competences, and qualifications necessary for employment. The theoretical component is delivered by the training provider and accounts for no more than 20% of the total training hours, while the practical component is delivered by the employer and accounts for at least 80% of the total training hours (Annex No. 3 to Government Decision No. 1276/2018, Procedure on the on-the-job training within an enterprise).
- **Professional traineeship** (*stagiul profesional*) is an active measure implemented for a period of up to four months, aimed at developing practical skills, and is carried out in line with employment indicators approved annually by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection for the Agency. The traineeship takes place within public or private entities that have informed the territorial subdivisions about their willingness to participate in the measure, in accordance with the procedure approved by order of the Director of the Agency (Annex No. 4 to Government Decision No. 1276/2018, Procedure on the implementation of professional traineeships).

Table 5: Types of ALMP programmes with WBL component

Programmes	Beneficiary	Duration	WBL share
Vocational training for the unemployed through voucher-based courses	Persons registered with the territorial subdivisions with the status of unemployed, who do not have a profession/trade or whose profession/trade is not in demand on the local labour market, as well as training providers and the Agency.	In a course with a duration of six months, the theoretical component delivered by the training provider typically lasts 2–2.5 months, while the practical component carried out at the employer lasts 3.5–4 months.	Approximately 60–65% practical training at the employer site
On-the-job training within enterprises	Unemployed persons registered with the territorial subdivisions who do not have a profession or trade, or who have a profession or trade that is not in demand on the local labour market, and who have benefited from career guidance services and have a recommendation for workplace training.	Unemployed trainees may benefit from on-the-job training only once within a period of 24 months from the date of completion of the previous on-the-job training measure.	The practical training of the unemployed trainee is provided by the employer and includes a minimum of 80% of the total number of hours allocated to the VET programme.
Professional traineeship	Registered unemployed persons with the territorial subdivisions who have no work experience in their occupation/trade and who cannot be employed due to the lack of professional experience within a maximum of one month from the date of registration as unemployed.	The duration of professional trainee-ships is determined by the employer based on availability and may not exceed 4 months.	Primarily workplace-based

To support the implementation of these measures, a structured network of VET service providers and training offers was established. The list of vocational training service providers for 2026 is presented in Annex V.

The evolution of participation in on-the-job training programmes during the period 2021–2024 reflects both the dynamics of the implementation of this measure and the varying level of interest among employers and beneficiaries. Data from the activity reports of the National Employment Agency indicate fluctuations in the number of participants from year to year (Table 6).

Table 6: Number of participants in programmes with a work-based learning component within active labour market policies during the period 2021–2025

Programmes	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Vocational training through qualification, requalification, upskilling, and specialization courses	886	1062			
Voucher-based vocational training courses			762	587	557
On-the-job training within enterprises	152	71	138	57	49
Professional traineeship	263	270	196	116	109

Source: Prepared by author according to reports obtained from National Employment Agency

The analysis below covers ALMPs with at least 25% of WBL; it was guided by the criteria of the European Quality Framework for Traineeships (EQFT).

8.2 Conclusion of a written traineeship agreement (Criteria 2 and 3)

The implementation of training programmes within active labour market policies (ALMPs) in the Republic of Moldova is based on clear contractual arrangements that define the rights and obligations of all parties involved: the National Employment Agency, training providers, and unemployed beneficiaries.

Voucher-based vocational training courses. To operationalise the system, the National Employment Agency signs a framework agreement with accepted providers in electronic format. The model of the framework agreement is approved by the Agency following mutual agreement between the parties, in accordance with civil legislation. The framework agreement establishes key elements such as:

- the object and duration of cooperation between the National Employment Agency and providers;
- the price for each training course set by the Agency;
- the rights and obligations of both parties;
- the conditions for amending the framework agreement; and
- any other elements/conditions deemed necessary by the parties.

The National Employment Agency concludes a vocational training contract with the unemployed person based on the approved template, following confirmation from the provider regarding the acceptance of the voucher. This contract is concluded before the start of the training course and sets out provisions regarding the duration of the course, the rights and obligations of the parties, as well as the conditions for suspension and termination of participation (Annex No. 2 to Government Decision No. 1276/2018, Procedure on vocational training of the unemployed through voucher-based training courses).

In parallel, the National Employment Agency concludes a service provision contract for vocational training with the provider, based on the approved template. This contract is concluded within up to five working days from the start date of the training course. All administrative actions related to the participation of unemployed persons e.g. enrolment, completion, suspension, reintegration, or expulsion, are recorded and reported electronically through the national “Voucher for Vocational Training” platform. This digital system ensures transparent monitoring, real-time communication between providers and the Agency, and full traceability of programme implementation. These multi-level contractual mechanisms (the framework agreement, the individual training contract, and the service provision contract) provide a solid legal and operational basis for the delivery of training programmes. However, despite the clarity of the legal and contractual framework, the implementation of these provisions varies across districts. Although written agreements are mandatory, monitoring and enforcement remain uneven at the level of territorial subdivisions.

On-the-job training within enterprises is organised based on contractual relationships between the National Employment Agency and training providers, as well as between the territorial subdivision, the unemployed person, and the employer, in accordance with the standard contract approved by order of the Agency’s Director. The contract concluded between the territorial subdivision, the unemployed person, and the employer includes provisions regarding the employer’s responsibility to ensure occupational health and safety at the workplace, in accordance with applicable legislation (Annex No. 3 to Government Decision No. 1276/2018, Procedure on the on-the-job training within an enterprise).

Professional traineeships are organised based on contractual relationships between the employer, the unemployed trainee, and the National Employment Agency. The contract may include provisions regarding the possible employment of the trainee by the host employer after the successful completion of the traineeship (Annex No. 4 to Government Decision No. 1276/2018, Procedure on the implementation of professional traineeships).

8.3 Learning and training objectives (Criteria 4 and 5)

In accordance with the Methodology for Developing Adult Education Programmes (MoER, 2024a), training providers are required to design their programmes on the basis of clearly defined learning outcomes. These outcomes must specify the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy that learners are expected to demonstrate upon completion of each course or module. The methodology further requires that programme content, teaching methods, assessment procedures and practical components be fully aligned with these learning outcomes, ensuring coherence, relevance and quality across all forms of adult education. Programme developers are also required to align these learning outcomes with the NQF, the defined occupational fields, and the relevant occupational or qualification standards.

8.4 Working conditions applicable to trainees (Criteria 6, 7 and 8)

Voucher-based vocational training includes the following types of financial support provided by the National Employment Agency:

- Full coverage of vocational training costs incurred by accredited training providers, based on the voucher.
- Participants receive a monthly non-taxable allowance amounting to 35% of the average monthly wage in the economy for the previous year, granted proportionally to their attendance at the training courses.
- The Agency reimburses training providers for the costs related to the training of unemployed persons in the month following the delivery of the courses, in accordance with the contract concluded.

Participation in the main active labour market measures for unemployed persons in the Republic of Moldova does not, in itself, create an employment relationship. During these programmes, participants

retain their status as registered unemployed persons (“learners”), although standard contracts for on-the-job training and professional traineeships may include clauses regarding possible employment by the host employer following the successful completion of the programme (Law No. 105/2018; Government Decision No. 1276/2018).

On-the-job training (pursuant to Annex No. 3 to Government Decision No. 1276/2018. Procedure regarding on-the-job training within an enterprise), involves the following types of financial support by the National Employment Agency.:

- Both the theoretical training and monitoring provided by the training provider, and the practical training delivered by the employer.
- Unemployed participants (*şomeri-cursanţi*) receive a monthly, non-taxable scholarship equal to 35% of the average monthly wage in the economy for the previous year, proportional to their attendance.
- Employers receive a monthly subsidy equal to 30% of the average monthly wage in the economy for the previous year for each trainee, for the full duration of the practical training period.
- Payment of costs related to theoretical training and monitoring during on-the-job training, including the subsidy granted to the employer and the stipend provided to the unemployed learner.
- All payments cease when the training period ends, the participant is ex-matriculated, or the unemployed status is lost.

On-the-job training is financed within the limits of the budget allocations approved annually and is explicitly designed to increase the employment opportunities of unemployed persons and to support their transition to stable employment, without automatically establishing an employment relationship during participation in the programme. Working time, including the daily and weekly schedule, is determined at enterprise level in accordance with the Labour Code (2003), as participants carry out training or work activities on the basis of contractual arrangements concluded with the employer.

Professional traineeships provided by the National Employment Agency (Government Decision No. 1276/2018) include the following types of financial support:

- Unemployed trainees receive a monthly non-taxable allowance amounting to 35% of the average monthly wage in the economy for the previous year, granted proportionally to their participation in the traineeship.
- Employers receive a monthly subsidy equal to 30% of the average monthly wage in the economy for the previous year for each trainee, for the entire duration of the traineeship.

As with on-the-job training, the payment of the allowance and the subsidy ceases upon completion of the traineeship, termination of the contract, or loss of the participant’s unemployed status.

All these measures are financed within the limits of annually approved budget allocations and are explicitly designed to increase the employment prospects of unemployed persons and support their transition into stable employment, without automatically establishing an employment relationship during participation in the programme.

In accordance with Article 24 of Annex No. 2 to Government Decision No. 1276/2018, the contract concluded between the territorial subdivision, the unemployed participant, and the employer includes explicit provisions regarding the employer’s responsibility to ensure occupational health and safety at the workplace, in line with national legislation. Working time, including daily and weekly schedules, is determined at the level of the enterprise in accordance with the Labour Code, as participants carry out training or work activities based on contractual arrangements concluded with the employer.

8.5 Rights and obligations (Criterion 9)

The rights and obligations of the parties involved in the implementation of on-the-job training in the Republic of Moldova are regulated by national legislation and specific procedures, including those set out in Government Decision No. 1276/2018, as well as by contracts concluded between the National Employment Agency, employers or vocational training providers, and unemployed persons participating in the programmes. The obligations of employers/vocational training providers include:

- being registered in accordance with the legislation;
- not having their activity suspended and not being subject to insolvency or liquidation proceedings;
- having no outstanding debts to employees for the previous year and no outstanding liabilities to the national public budget for the previous year;
- ensuring the conditions necessary for on-the-job training in accordance with the training programme; having qualified staff to perform the role of in-company trainer during the training period; and
- ensuring compliance with occupational health and safety requirements as well as with applicable labour legislation.

Unemployed trainees participating in workplace training are required to attend all activities included in the vocational training programme, fulfil all requirements set out therein, and follow the workplace training. Unemployed trainees may benefit from on-the-job training only once within a 24-month period from the completion of a previous on-the-job training measure.

8.6 Reasonable duration (max. six months) (Criteria 10, 11 and 12)

The Moldovan legal framework does not impose a uniform maximum duration of six months for all measures. Instead, each type of measure has its own specific provisions and implementation modalities.

The **On-the-job training within enterprises** measure does not provide for a fixed duration limit in months. The duration of the training itself is defined in the individual training contract, depending on the occupational profile, the complexity of skills to be acquired, and the training plan agreed with the employer and the National Employment Agency.

Most vocational training courses in 2025 run between 1 and 6 months, ensuring that programmes remain short, targeted, and well aligned with the labour market's needs for rapid reskilling and upskilling.

8.7 Proper recognition of traineeships (Criterion 13)

The assessment of knowledge, skills, and competences acquired through ALMP with a WBL component in the Republic of Moldova is regulated through the contractual obligations established between National Employment Agency, the employer or training provider, and the participant. These obligations are detailed in the respective programme procedures and are reflected in the training agreements.

For **On-the-job training within enterprises**, unemployed trainees who successfully complete the training are issued free educational documents in accordance with the models approved by the national education legislation. It certifies participation and practical competences acquired but do not constitute qualifications or micro-credentials referenced to the NQF. Unemployed trainees who do not complete the on-the-job training receive a free certificate of participation, issued according to the model approved by the order of the Director of the National Employment Agency.

The **professional traineeship** concludes with the evaluation of the unemployed trainee and the issuance by the employer of a confirmation certifying the trainee's participation in the traineeship and the practical competences acquired, in accordance with the template approved by the Order of the Director of the National Employment Agency.

8.8 Transparency requirements (Criteria 14 and 15)

Relevant information regarding eligibility criteria, procedures, rights and obligations, financial support measures, and application processes is made publicly available on the official website of the National Employment Agency (www.anofm.md) and, where relevant, through its territorial subdivisions.⁷

8.9 Cross-border traineeships (Criteria 16 and 17)

In the Republic of Moldova, no specific legal framework or regulations exists for the cross-border mobility of young workers, trainees and young professionals/entrepreneurs. However, the Law “On Job Promotion and Unemployment Insurance” (Law No. 105/2018) does contain specific provisions on internal labour mobility, including measures to support this type of mobility.

8.10 Use of European Structural and Investment Funds (Criterion 18)

The Republic of Moldova does not have direct access to European Structural and Investment Funds as a non-EU Member State; however, the country benefits from substantial support from the European Union and other international donors through a range of pre-accession and neighbourhood instruments, as well as bilateral cooperation programmes (e.g.: European Neighbourhood Policy – Moldova)

In the field of ALMP and human capital development, EU assistance is channelled through programmes such as:

- The European Neighbourhood Instrument and the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), supporting reforms in employment, education, and vocational training;
- Projects financed by EU Member States, including Sweden, Germany, and others, focusing on strengthening employment services and modernising vocational education and training (VET) to improve employability and labour market integration.

Specific programmes and donor interventions include:

- EU4Moldova and EU4Youth initiatives, aimed at fostering youth employment, entrepreneurship, and skills development, including through WBL and traineeship opportunities; (EU4Moldova & EU4Youth).
- Support for modernising the National Employment Agency and strengthening employment services at the local level, including pilot measures to enhance the employability of vulnerable groups such as youth, long-term unemployed, persons with disabilities, and women;
- Swiss Development Cooperation and other bilateral donors that support the development of WBL opportunities, career guidance, and skills matching initiatives in line with labour market needs (refer to Swiss Development Cooperation – Skills Development in Moldova).

This external financial and technical assistance contributes to strengthening the capacity of employment services, promoting WBL and on-the-job training, and increasing access to employment for disadvantaged groups. It also plays an important role in aligning national employment and training policies with European standards and practices.

8.11 Applying the Quality Framework for Traineeships (Criteria 19, 20, 21 and 22)

⁷ <https://www.anofm.md/ro/contactus>

Although Moldova has not yet adopted a dedicated Law on Traineeships, the current regulatory framework includes several elements aligned with the 2014 EU Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships, including:

- clearly defined learning objectives and duration of programmes;
- contractual arrangements between the unemployed person (trainee), the employer, and the National Employment Agency;
- financial support mechanisms for both trainees and employers; and
- provisions related to workplace health and safety.

In addition, there are ongoing efforts to align national legislation more closely with EU standards, particularly in the context of labour market reforms and EU–Moldova cooperation. Discussions are underway on strengthening the quality assurance framework for traineeships, including more systematic monitoring, evaluation of learning outcomes, and stronger links between traineeships and subsequent employment opportunities. These planned reforms aim to enhance the transition from education to employment, improve the quality and transparency of traineeships, and ensure better protection and support for trainees, in line with European good practices.

8.12 Conclusions

Strengths:

- The contractual framework regulates voucher-based vocational training, on-the-job training, and professional traineeships, ensuring a clear and coherent legal basis for the implementation of active labour market measures, with the involvement of the National Employment Agency. The standardisation of contracts and the use of digital monitoring systems contribute to increased transparency, improved monitoring, and the relevance of programmes for labour market integration (Criteria 2 and 3).
- The learning objectives are clearly defined and based on learning outcomes, ensuring alignment between content, methods and assessment, as well as correlation with the NQF and relevant occupational standards. (Criteria 4 and 5).
- The implementation framework for measures by the National Employment Agency ensures a coherent system of financial support for participants and employers, combining allowances, subsidies, and coverage of training costs, thereby encouraging participation and enhancing the labour market relevance of programmes. At the same time, contractual provisions, including those related to occupational health and safety and the organisation of working time, contribute to the protection of participants and ensure appropriate conditions for the delivery of training and traineeships. Financial incentives, such as employer subsidies (30% of the average wage) and trainee allowances (35% of the average wage), further support participation. Procedures are transparent and publicly available on the National Employment Agency website. (Criteria 6, 7 and 8)
- The rights and obligations of the parties involved in workplace training are clearly defined through the regulatory and contractual framework, ensuring clearly delineated responsibilities for employers and participants. This framework contributes to the organised implementation of the training process, compliance with quality and safety standards, and the more efficient use of active labour market measures. (Criterion 9)
- Although the regulatory framework does not establish a uniform maximum duration for all measures, training programmes are, in practice, short-term and flexible, being adapted to occupational profiles and labour market needs, which ensures their efficiency and relevance. (Criteria 10, 11 and 12)

- The recognition of learning outcomes is ensured through the issuance of completion or participation documents; however, these are not fully integrated into the NQF. Thus, although mechanisms for validating acquired competences exist, strengthening the link with the formal qualifications system remains a direction for development. (Criterion 13)
- All eligibility criteria and procedures are publicly available on www.anofm.md and through the territorial employment offices. (Criteria 14 and 15)
- The Republic of Moldova benefits from substantial financial and technical support from the European Union and other donors, which contributes to the development of active labour market measures, the promotion of WBL, and the alignment of national policies with European standards. (Criteria 16, 17 and 18)
- Quality of on-the-job training and traineeships is monitored by the National Employment Agency (ANOFM) through its territorial offices, based on standard contracts, health-and-safety provisions, and periodic reporting by employers. Accredited vocational training programmes are subject to external evaluation and quality assurance by the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research (ANACEC), which authorises and monitors training providers. (Criteria 19, 20, 21 and 22)

Challenges/gaps:

- The legal framework defines the roles of several actors involved in programme implementation, including the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the National Employment Agency, training providers, and employers. However, the involvement of multiple institutions requires stronger coordination across all stages of the programme cycle. (Criteria 6, 7 and 8)
- Information on programmes, eligibility conditions and results is available through various institutional sources. However, the absence of a single integrated platform may make it more difficult for beneficiaries and employers to access consolidated information. The transparency of information is fragmented, as there is no unified integrated platform providing beneficiaries and employers with comprehensive data on programmes and their results. (Criteria 14 and 15)

9 ACRONYMS

ALMP	Active Labour Market Policy
ANACEC	National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research
ANOFM	National Employment Agency
BNS	National Bureau of Statistics
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
CVET	Continuing vocational education and training
EFQEA	European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ETF	European Training Foundation
IT	Information Technology
IVET	Initial vocational education and training
MoER	Ministry of Education and Research
NDICI	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
NEET	Not engaged in education, employment or training
SIME	Education Management Information System
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WBL	Work-based Learning

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ANNEX I: Details of interviewees

Name	Organisation	Position	Date
Interviewee 1	Ministry of Education and Research	Senior Consultant, Directorate for VET Policy and Lifelong Learning	6 June 2025
Interviewee 2	Ministry of Education and Research	Principal Consultant, Lifelong Learning Service	8 July 2025
Interviewee 3	National Employment Agency	Principal Specialist	30 July 2025
Interviewee 4	Resource Centre for Continuing Training, Moldova State University	Director of the Centre	6 August 2025
Interviewee 5	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Moldova	Head of the Dual Education Department	3 February 2026
Interviewee 6	Vocational School No. 11, Chişinău	Director	9 July 2025
Interviewee 7	Centre of Excellence in Transport, Chişinău	Psychologist	15 July 2025
Interviewee 8	Vocational School No. 2 in Cahul	Director	7 August 2025
Interviewee 9	Vocational School No. 7 in Chişinău	Deputy Director for Instruction and Education	12 August 2025
Interviewee 10	Vocational School No. 5, Bălţi Municipality	Director	18 August 2025
Interviewee 11	National Employment Agency	Deputy Head of the Directorate/ Head of the Active Measures and Services Division	19 March 2026

ANNEX II: Examples of structures of classic (Non-Dual) VET Programmes

Practical examples of programmes (NQF levels 3–5) in Moldova

Level	General field of study	Professional training field	Qualification title	Study duration	Theoretical / practical division
NQF Level 3	73: Architecture and Construction	0732 Civil Construction and Engineering	Tile Installer	3 years for training in related trades, based on lower secondary education; 2 years for training in a single trade, based on lower secondary education; 1–2 years depending on the complexity of the trade, based on upper secondary education.	Practical training accounts for 50%–65% of the total number of study hours. It may reach up to 70%, depending on the specifics of the occupation.
NQF Level 4	73: Architecture and Construction	0732.3 Road Construction and Maintenance	Road Construction and Operation Technician	4 years, 120 credits	Introductory field practice; Training practice; Specialty practice; Pre-graduation practice.
NQF Level 5	113: Primary Education	11310 Teacher Training for Primary Education	Primary School Teacher	4 years, full-time	Introductory field practice;

Structure of a selected classic (non-dual) 2-year VET programme

No.	Module Title	Total Hours	Theoretical Training	Practical Training	Workplace Practice
1.	Organisation of the Work Process for Performing Tiling Works	118	82	36	
2.	Levelling Vertical Surfaces for Tiling Works	458	218	240	
	Workplace Practice	210			210
	Total Year I	786	300	276	210
3.	Performing Tiling Works on Vertical Surfaces	198	96	102	
4.	Casting Floors for Tiling Works	108	60	48	
5.	Executing Floor Tiling Works	180	78	102	
6.	Realizing Mosaic Floors	44	20	24	
7.	Executing Paving Works	46	22	24	
	Workplace Practice	420			420
	Total Year II	996	276	300	420
	Total Year I + Year II	1782	576	576	630

ANNEX III: Case example – WBL in the “Construction Electrician-Locksmith” programme

To illustrate the practical application of WBL in Moldova, the “Construction Electrician-Locksmith” qualification exemplifies how the modular and competency-based approach is applied. The programme integrates: theoretical instruction with industry-aligned practical training; workplace-oriented teaching and assessment methods; clearly defined tasks and learning outcomes tailored to job roles.

The programme is fully aligned with the NQF, ensuring that learners are equipped with both general competencies and occupation-specific skills required for immediate integration into the workforce.

Case example: WBL in the “Construction Electrician-Locksmith” Programme

The modular curriculum for the qualification *Construction Electrician-Locksmith* (code 732019, classic programme, 2-year duration) is developed based on the model described above. It aims to develop the competencies required for the occupation of a Level 3 National Qualifications Framework specialist, capable of installing, operating, and maintaining electrical installations in construction (networks, devices, grounding sockets, temporary lighting, etc.).

Targeted Competencies

The occupational curriculum defines both *general competencies* (e.g., organizing the workplace, applying occupational safety and health standards, environmental protection, and quality assurance) and *specific professional competencies* related to the trade. Examples of defined specific competencies include:

- planning daily activities and required materials;
- ensuring electricity supply on the construction site and within the network;
- operating and maintaining electrical installations; and
- ensuring the functionality of distribution and lighting networks.

Each core competency is translated into *learning modules* with clear objectives and expected outcomes that reflect the specific competencies outlined in the curriculum. The modular structure is focused on the progressive acquisition of competencies, from simple to complex. In parallel, learners strengthen their general knowledge by studying subjects such as *mathematics, physics, and Romanian language*.

From a *WBL perspective*, the curriculum promotes *interactive and hands-on methods* that engage students in action. Workshop activities or simulated construction site work are essential for developing practical skills. The program includes:

- intensive practical exercises; and
- concrete design and execution of increasingly complex practical tasks to ensure quality vocational training.

Theory is closely integrated with practice, so that theoretical knowledge is immediately applied in practical activities.

Module assessments are competency-based, using:

- initial (diagnostic), formative, and summative evaluations; and
- tools that assess both theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

For example, a module may be evaluated through:

- a written test; or
- practical tasks such as planning or electrical assembly.

Assessment tools aim to demonstrate the professional competencies # real-world contexts (i.e. the practical component of the qualification exam includes tasks for designing and executing electrical assembly work).

ANNEX IV: EXAMPLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP IN TVET

A relevant example of a functional social partnership is the collaboration between the Centre of Excellence in Medicine and Pharmacy “Raisa Pacalo” and a wide range of public and private medical institutions in the Republic of Moldova.

According to the institution’s official information, the partnerships include institutions such as the Mother and Child Institute and the “Valentin Ignatenco” Clinical Hospital for Children, which provide the necessary conditions for students’ practical training. The collaboration also extends to national-level medical institutions, such as the Institute of Emergency Medicine, the “Timofei Moşneaga” Republican Clinical Hospital, and the Oncology Institute, as well as to a broad network of district hospitals, health centres, and primary healthcare institutions.

In the private sector, a concrete example is the partnership with Medpark International Hospital, which actively contributes to the organisation of practical placements, mentoring, and even support for students through scholarships and training activities. Within these partnerships, students are involved in real practical activities carried out in clinical departments, emergency units, and pharmacies, under the supervision of medical staff. This cooperation enables the development of professional competences in real-world working conditions and ensures the alignment of training with the requirements of the healthcare system. The direct involvement of medical institutions in the training and assessment process thus simultaneously enhances the relevance of qualifications and facilitates the professional integration of graduates.

ANNEX V: List of Vocational Training Service Providers and Trades/Professions Available for the Vocational Training of Unemployed Persons – 2026

The table below provides a list of vocational training service providers and the trades/professions/specialties available for the vocational training of unemployed persons through training courses in 2026

No.	VET Service Providers	Occupation / profession / specialisation	Training Duration (months)	Number of available places
1	Centre of Excellence in Services and Food Processing, Bălți Address: 111 Decebal Str., Bălți	Cook	4	15
2	Vocational School, Cupcini Address: 5 Chișinăului Str., Cupcini, Edineț district Email: kovotari@gmail.com	Auto mechanic	3	15
3	Vocational School No. 7, Chișinău Address: 5 M. Dragan Str., Chișinău Tel.: 022-47-10-44 Email: sp7_chisinau@mail.ru	Construction electrician Auto mechanic Plasterer	6 6 4	12 12 12
4	NGO “Island of Hope”, Chișinău Address: 7 Miron Costin Str., Chișinău Tel.: 022 10 00 10 Email: office@insula.md	Cook Confectioner	6 5	15 15
5	Vocational School, Florești Address: 34 Miron Costin Str., Florești Tel.: 0250-02657 Email: sp.floresti@gmail.com	Electrogas welder-installer Agricultural machinery operator	4 6	7 6
12	TOTAL: 5 vocational training service providers 7 occupations/professions/specialisations 109 places available	7 occupations / professions / specialisations	109	

Source: National Employment Agency, 2026

ANNEX VI: Quality criteria for apprenticeships, based on the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships

Criteria for learning and working conditions:

Written agreement

1. Before the start of the apprenticeship a written agreement should be concluded to define the rights and obligations of the apprentice, the employer and, where appropriate, the vocational education and training institution, related to learning and working conditions.

Learning outcomes

2. The delivery of a set of comprehensive learning outcomes defined in accordance with national legislation should be agreed by the employers and vocational education and training institutions and, where appropriate, trade unions. This should ensure a balance between job-specific skills, knowledge and key competences for lifelong learning supporting both the personal development and lifelong career opportunities of the apprentices with a view to adapting to changing career patterns.

Pedagogical support

3. In-company trainers should be designated and tasked to cooperate closely with vocational education and training institutions and teachers to provide guidance to apprentices and to ensure mutual and regular feed-back. Teachers, trainers and mentors, especially in micro-, small and medium-sized companies, should be supported to update their skills, knowledge and competences in order to train apprentices according to the latest teaching and training methods and labour market needs.

Workplace component

4. A substantial part of the apprenticeship, meaning at least half of it, should be carried out in the workplace with, where possible, the opportunity to undertake a part of the workplace experience abroad. Taking into account the diversity of national schemes, the aim is to progress gradually towards that share of the apprenticeship being workplace learning.

Pay and/or compensation

5. Apprentices should be paid or otherwise compensated, in line with national or sectoral requirements or collective agreements where they exist while taking into account arrangements on cost-sharing between employers and public authorities.

Social protection

6. Apprentices should be entitled to social protection, including necessary insurance in line with national legislation.

Work, health and safety conditions

7. The host workplace should comply with relevant rules and regulations on working conditions, in particular health and safety legislation.

Criteria for framework conditions

Regulatory framework

8. A clear and consistent regulatory framework should be in place based on a fair and equitable partnership approach, including a structured and transparent dialogue among all relevant stakeholders. This may include accreditation procedures for companies and workplaces that offer apprenticeships and/or other quality assurance measures.

Involvement of social partners

9. Social partners, including, where relevant, at sectoral level and/or intermediary bodies, should be involved in the design, governance and implementation of apprenticeship schemes, in line with national industrial relations systems and education and training practices.

Support for companies

10. Financial and/or non-financial support should be envisaged, particularly for micro-, small and medium-sized companies, enabling cost-effective apprenticeships for companies, taking into account, where appropriate, cost-sharing arrangements between employers and public authorities.

Flexible pathways and mobility

11. To facilitate access, entry requirements for apprenticeships should take into account relevant informal and non-formal learning and/or, if relevant, the accomplishment of preparatory programs. Qualifications acquired through apprenticeships should be included in nationally recognised qualification frameworks referenced to the European Qualifications Framework. Apprenticeships should allow access to other learning opportunities, including at higher education and training levels, career pathways and/or, where relevant, the accumulation of units of learning outcomes. Transnational mobility of apprentices, either at the workplace or education and training institutions, should be progressively promoted as a component of apprenticeship qualifications.

Career guidance and awareness raising

12. Career guidance, mentoring and learner support should be provided before and during the apprenticeship to ensure successful outcomes, to prevent and reduce drop-outs as well as support those learners to reengage into relevant education and training pathways. Apprenticeships should be promoted as an attractive learning pathway through widely targeted awareness-raising activities.

Transparency

13. The transparency of and access to apprenticeship offers within and between Member States should be ensured, including with the support of public and private employment services as well as other relevant bodies and, when appropriate, by using Union tools such as EURES as provided for in the EURES regulation.

Quality assurance and tracking of apprentices

14. Quality assurance approaches should be in place taking into account the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET), including a process allowing a valid and reliable assessment of the learning outcomes. The tracking of employment and career progression of the apprentices should be pursued, in accordance with national and European legislation on data protection.

ANNEX VII: Quality criteria for traineeships, based on the European Quality Framework for Traineeships

1. Improve the quality of traineeships, in particular as regards learning and training content and working conditions, with the aim of easing the transition from education, unemployment or inactivity to work by putting in practice the following principles for a Quality Framework for Traineeships:

Conclusion of a written traineeship agreement

2. Require that traineeships are based on a written agreement concluded at the beginning of the traineeship between the trainee and the traineeship provider;
3. Require that traineeship agreements indicate the educational objectives, the working conditions, whether an allowance or compensation is provided to the trainee by the traineeship provider, and the rights and obligations of the parties under applicable EU and national law, as well as the duration of the traineeship, as referred to in recommendations 4-12;

Learning and training objectives

4. Promote best practices as regards learning and training objectives in order to help trainees acquire practical experience and relevant skills; The tasks assigned to the trainee should enable these objectives to be attained;
5. Encourage traineeship providers to designate a supervisor for trainees guiding the trainee through the assigned tasks, monitoring and assessing his/her progress;

Working conditions applicable to trainees

6. Ensure that the rights and working conditions of trainees under applicable EU and national law, including limits to maximum weekly working time, minimum daily and weekly rest periods and, where applicable, minimum holiday entitlements, are respected;
7. Encourage traineeship providers to clarify whether they provide coverage in terms of health and accident insurance as well as sick leave;
8. Require that the traineeship agreement clarifies whether an allowance or compensation is applicable, and if applicable, its amount;

Rights and obligations

9. Encourage the concerned parties to ensure that the traineeship agreement lays down the rights and obligations of the trainee and the traineeship provider, including, where relevant, the traineeship provider's policies on confidentiality and the ownership of intellectual property rights;

Reasonable duration

10. Ensure a reasonable duration of traineeships that, in principle, does not exceed six months, except in cases where a longer duration is justified, taking into account national practices;
11. Clarify the circumstances and conditions under which a traineeship may be extended or renewed after the initial traineeship agreement expired;
12. Encourage the practice of specifying in the traineeship agreement that either the trainee or the traineeship provider may terminate it by written communication, providing advance notice of an appropriate duration in view of the length of the traineeship and relevant national practice;

Proper recognition of traineeships

13. Promote the recognition and validation of the knowledge, skills and competences acquired during traineeships and encourage traineeship providers to attest them, on the basis of an assessment, through a certificate;

Transparency requirements

14. Encourage traineeship providers to include in their vacancy notices and advertisements information on the terms and conditions of the traineeship, in particular on whether an allowance and/or compensation and health and accident insurance are applicable; encourage traineeship providers to give information on recruitment policies, including the share of trainees recruited in recent years;
15. Encourage employment services and other providers of career guidance, if providing information on traineeships, to apply transparency requirements;

Cross-border traineeships

16. Facilitate the cross-border mobility of trainees in the European Union inter alia, by clarifying the national legal framework for traineeships and establishing clear rules on hosting trainees from, and the sending of trainees to, other Member States and by reducing administrative formalities;
17. Examine the possibility to make use of the extended EURES network and to exchange information on paid traineeships through the EURES portal;

Use of European Structural and Investment Funds

18. Make use of the European Structural and Investment Funds, namely the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund, in the programming period 2014-2020, and the Youth Employment Initiative, where applicable, for increasing the number and quality of traineeships, including through effective partnerships with all relevant stakeholders;

Applying the Quality Framework for Traineeships

19. Take appropriate measures to apply the Quality Framework for Traineeships as soon as possible;
20. Provide information to the Commission by the end of 2015 on the measures taken in accordance with this Recommendation;
21. Promote the active involvement of social partners in applying the Quality Framework for Traineeships;
22. Promote the active involvement of employment services, educational institutions and training providers in applying the Quality Framework for Traineeships.