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SURVEY OF

TERTIARY PROFESSIONAL/VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

CONTENTS

1. Basic Information on the Sector of Post-Secondary Vocational Education TP/VE

1.1 What is the definition or concept of tertiary professional/vocational education sector in your country, and what are the main policy aims with regard to it?

The following levels can be distinguished in post-secondary education i.e. in education, which prerequisites secondary general education (post-secondary general education):

- ◆ vocational education based on upper secondary general education; its objective is to prepare the employees for service trade, office and customer services clerks and skilled workers with high general and theoretical knowledge about certain occupations. (In the Estonian education system it is not considered tertiary education. It is considered second level education, which prerequisites secondary general education; i.e. it can be called post-secondary, but not tertiary education) As more and more (over 70 %) of the young progress into gymnasiums after graduating the basic school, relative importance of the young with secondary general education has increased. A situation has emerged where programmes of professional/vocational education based on upper secondary general education have to be revised, in order to define the programmes based on secondary general education and the so called double second level programmes.
- ◆ post-secondary technical education; its objective is to prepare so called *technicians* and associate professionals, also workers in the area of art and music. The process of upgrading these programmes into applied higher education programmes has started in many cases.
- ◆ higher education, divided according to the higher education standard:
 - diploma studies – a higher education programme on speciality with tendency towards applicability. Consists of studies and acquiring knowledge and professional/vocational skills on the speciality. Objective of diploma programme is to complement the general education, to deepen the professional/vocational skills and to acquire knowledge for working on the chosen speciality. The nominal length of the diploma programmes is 3 - 4 years and content of the studies is 120 - 160 credit points. Diploma programmes are

oriented significantly towards professional/vocational preparation. Practical speciality- and occupation-related work experiences, including practising, must form at least 10 credit points of the content of the studies;

- Bachelor studies – the first step of the academic studies. Consists of studies, science- and occupation-related or other creative work. Objective of the bachelor programmes is to deepen the general education, to provide the students with enough theoretical knowledge and skills to start working on the chosen occupation and/or to continue education, to teach the students how to creatively apply the speciality related knowledge, including the ability to solve tasks which are not clearly defined and are not typical. The nominal length of bachelor programmes is 4 years and the content of the studies is 160 credit points. The bachelor programmes are basement studies founded on the scientific approach. Scientific- and occupation related or other creative work content, including the thesis paper, must form at least 20 credit points of the content of the studies.

One important reason for developing the post-secondary professional/vocational education has been to better meet the needs of continuously changing labour market. The higher the level of general education the better and quicker it is possible to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes related to constantly changing professions/vocations. Post-secondary general education has always been valued in Estonia. As it is very hard to succeed in today's labour market with only general education (which was also shown through Estonian Labour Force Survey '95), the relative importance of post-secondary education is increasing.

1.2 What types of TP/VE course programmes exist in your country, and which fields or areas of professional training?

At the moment vocational education reform is being carried out, which has an objective to audit VET schools and programmes. In order to be systematic in this task, we are dealing with all post-secondary TP/VE programmes and are comparing them to the bachelor programmes of universities. We are using the same codes, which are used in Estonian education statistics in order to differentiate all the different programmes.

- 3-3** vocational education programmes based on upper secondary general education - 1,5 - 2-year programmes;
- 4** post-secondary technical education:
 - 4-1** - 4, 5 year programmes based on basic education/lower secondary (age 15/16 – 18), programmes are aim at obtaining the qualifications of associated specialist/technicians;
 - 4-2** – 2,5 – 3 years programmes based on secondary/upper secondary education, programmes are aimed to obtain the qualification associated specialist/technicians;
 - 4-0** – programmes in Tallinn Ballet School
- 5** Diploma studies/applied higher education. Programmes leading to a higher education diploma. For graduates from gymnasiums, vocational schools with incorporated secondary general education or for those who have post-secondary technical education certificate (age 18/19 – 21/22, 4 years study). The transition to Master's degree programmes is a subject to case by case study.
- 6** Bachelor's degree programmes. For graduates from gymnasiums, vocational schools with incorporated secondary general education or for those who have post-secondary technical education certificate (age 18/19 – 21/22, 4 years study).

In the table “All Students in 1996/97” are given the number of students by type of programmes and fields of education. Annex 1 Table 1.

- 1.3 At what types of institutions of higher and post-secondary education are these course programmes provided?

Table “Number of institutions that offer post-secondary and tertiary education and number of students”. Annex 2 Table 2.

Chart of Estonian educational system and the ISCED level categories Annex 3

The Estonian educational system and ISCED levels of programmes Annex 4

Study programmes, access to further education and work (current system) Annex 5.

- 1.4 Please provide most recent basic statistics on tertiary professional/vocational education in your country.

Number of institutions that offer post-secondary and tertiary education and number of students. Annex 2 Table 2

All students in 1996/97. Annex 1 Table 1

Study programmes areas for further education and work. Annex 5

New entrant students in 1996/97. Annex 6 Table 3

Number of institutions and students on 1996/97

Graduates in 1996/97 Annex 7 Table 4

2. Legal Basis and Supervision

- 2.1 Which law(s) provide(s) the legal basis for tertiary professional/vocational education?

Law on Education (March, 1992)

Law on Universities (January, 1995)

Law on the University of Tartu (January 1995)

Law on Vocational Education Institutions (June 1995)

Law on Private Schools (June, 1993)

Law on Private Schools regulates the activities of the schools, which are based on private ownership. Organisation and control of learning activities in private schools are regulated by the same requirements as these are for public, municipal and public-legal universities; also admission to the private schools follows the rules established for public, municipal and public-legal universities; private schools are allowed to establish complementary requirements. Accreditation of private higher education institutions is done on the same basis as that of public-legal universities, according to the rules enforced in the Law on Universities.

“Interim law of applied higher education institution of Estonian Republic” (ratified with the act nr.4 of Estonia Ministry of Education in 19.12.1991 “

- 2.2 How do the major laws and ordinances define the sector of tertiary professional/vocational education?

Vocational education is set of necessary knowledge, skills, experiences, values and behavioural norms for working on a certain speciality, for acquiring a certain profession/vocation, for running for or maintaining a certain occupation; acquiring and complementing it creates preconditions for efficient and professional operation (§ 12 in the Law on Education) – the definition is too general, it should include vocational education acquired in vocational education institutions, applied higher education institutions and in the universities.

Vocational, special or occupational education based on either basic or secondary education can be acquired in vocational education institution (§ 21 (1) Law on Education).

Diploma studies – during diploma studies student complements his/her general education basis, deepens vocation/profession-related skills and acquires knowledge for working on the chosen speciality.

Bachelor studies – bachelor studies is the first level of academic studies, during which student deepens his/her general education basis, develops theoretical knowledge and skills on the chosen field and for further studies

Masters studies – masters studies is the second level of academic studies, during which post-graduate deepens his/her profession/vocation-related skills and acquires knowledge for independent work on the chosen speciality.

Doctoral studies – doctoral studies is the third level of academic studies, which has an objective to bring the knowledge and skills of the post-graduate to the level of independent professional on the chosen speciality.

The academic degrees named above are divided into science degrees and profession degrees. Science degree is awarded to the graduate from university, who has defended his/her dissertation written on the basis of scientific research. Profession degree is awarded to the graduate from university, who has proved by defending dissertation or some other way, an achievement of creative professional/vocational professionalism of certain level

In conclusion vocational education is a part of education provided in vocational education institutions, applied higher education institutions and universities.

2.3 Please explain major commonalties and major differences of legislation regarding university education on the one hand and tertiary professional/vocational education on the other.

Vocational education is acquired in vocational education institutions, applied higher education institutions and universities. Difference lies in the level of education, which can be achieved – level of education acquired in vocational education institutions based on secondary school is not considered higher education, in applied higher education institution and in university it is higher education.

2.4 If tertiary professional/vocational education is provided at universities: in which way do laws and eventually major ordinances refer specifically to these professional/vocational components, and in which way does the external supervision of the professional/vocational components differ from that of the university components?

Look at 2.2

2.5 Which ministries are responsible for the oversight of tertiary professional/vocational education?

According to the law of the Government of the Republic (1995) § 58 organisation of education in the state, science and youth work, planning and executing the language related work and conciliation of bills of related legal acts belong into the administration of Ministry of Education. Therefore Ministry of Education is generally responsible for the whole area of education. Still, under the current system of education, educational institutions fall under several ministries, for example the National Police Board administrates 2 police school, Ministry of Agriculture administrates 13 agricultural vocational schools and the Ministry of Internal Affairs administrates the Public Defence Academy. Ministry of Education executes control over learning activities also in these education institutions, as it is the general institution organising the education provision.

Universities in Estonia are public-legal entities, except 2 private universities, which means that they have greater autonomy. Public-legal universities have their own separate assets, they are made

responsible only by law, not by the acts of the Government of the Republic or acts of the minister. Public-legal juridical person acts according to their own law and Law on Universities. Ministry of Education executes control over the learning activities. (Law on Universities § 53)

2.6 What role do these ministries and possibly other agencies play in the establishment and approval/accreditation of tertiary professional/vocational course programmes?

According to the Law on Vocational Education Institutions, a public vocational education institution is founded by Ministry of Education or by the ministry, under which administration the school falls, according to the assign of the Government of the Republic or according to the order of the minister of education. Municipal vocational education institution is founded by county or town government according to the assign of the local council after getting the education permit from Ministry of Education. Ministry of Education gives the education permit for the municipal school if there exist buildings, practising base, pedagogues, teaching materials and programmes necessary for school activities according to the requirements enforced by the minister of education.

The Government of the Republic initiates foundation of public-legal universities after proposal of minister of education, whereas the following preconditions must be met: existence of buildings, pedagogues, programmes and their accordance to the higher education standard. Accordance of preconditions to the higher education standard is controlled by the Higher Education Quality Assessment Council of Estonia (QAC) at Ministry of Education.

Education permit is also necessary for founding a private university, generally similar preconditions have to be met for issuance. (controlled by Ministry of Education)

In Estonian Republic only the educational institutions, which give higher education (universities, applied higher education institutions) are accredited. Accreditation is executed by the Higher Education Quality Assessment Council of Estonia (QAC) founded by the Government of the Republic. It consists of representatives of scientific institutions, professional organisations and public funds, which finance the scientific activities. The QAC falls under governing of Ministry of Education on the basis of own constitution. QAC accredits the universities and applied higher education institutions at least once in seven years. During programme accreditation is evaluated accordance of the programme to the higher education standard, scientific and pedagogical qualifications of the lecturers, level of knowledge of the students and learning/teaching efficiency. During educational institution accreditation QAC evaluates organisation of work in the school.

QAC accreditation decision is enforced with affirmation of minister of education. If the accreditation result is negative for second time, the activities of the university are terminated.

Accreditation of private universities and private applied higher education institutions follows the same basis as that of public-legal universities according to the order enforced in the Law on Universities.

Learning activities of the vocational education institutions is controlled by Ministry of Education in the form of monitoring, no accreditation.

2.7 Please describe the key features of supervision on the one hand and autonomy and educational/academic freedom on the other hand of the tertiary professional/vocational education sector.

The Ministry of Education executes monitoring of the learning activities in vocational education institutions, applied higher education institutions and universities. Rules of monitoring are similar for all of the above mentioned educational institutions.

For executing monitoring in private universities and private applied higher education institutions minister of education forms a special expert committee, which controls if the requirements derived from education related legal acts and rules about the single-purpose use of the resources allocated for the school from state budget are followed. The official who is executing the official monitoring has the

right to visit lectures, seminars, etc. speak to the owner, leader and students of the school and to get access to relevant information, and the necessary documentation.

If there are shortcomings in learning activities, the monitoring body compiles a precept for eliminating these shortcomings, where is also defined the deadline for eliminating the shortcomings. If the owner or leader of the school will not eliminate the shortcomings, Ministry of Education may annul the education permit, which is basis for termination of school activities.

According to the Law on Universities Ministry of Education also executes monitoring in the public-legal universities. To date Ministry of Education has not yet accepted the rules of monitoring. According to the Law on Universities minister of education has the right to suspend the illegal decisions of the rector or council of the university and to demand changing these. NB! As the university is public-legal juridical person, therefore independent legal subject, minister of education can not annul the decisions.

Monitoring over vocational education institutions executed by the Ministry of Education is similar to that of private applied higher education institutions and private universities.

Autonomy of the public-legal university, look p.2.5.

2.8 Please describe, if applicable, the differences between the university sector and the tertiary professional/vocational education sector?

At the moment activities of the public applied higher education institutions are legally regulated by the "Interim law of applied higher education institution of Estonian Republic" (ratified with the act nr.4 of Estonia Ministry of Education in 19.12.1991; partly changed by the act nr.5 of Estonian Ministry of Culture and Education in 28.02.1994) According to this legal act:

- The state applied higher education institutions are established and reorganised by Estonian government (at the moment there are 6 applied higher education institutions under the administration of Ministry of Education, 1 under Ministry of Internal Affairs, and 1 under Ministry of Transport and Communications);
- the structure of the institution is similar to the structure of university, structures are formed by the higher education institution independently;
- general administration is exercised by the governing body of the higher education institution; one official from vocational education department supervises the higher education institution from the side of Ministry of Education
- financing is exercised by the higher education institution independently according to the budget limits allocated from the Ministry of Education; financial control is executed by the budget and planning department of the Ministry of Education;
- selecting and controlling the personnel is exercised by the higher education institution independently; lecturers are teachers, senior teachers, readers/principal lecturers and professors, chosen to the position through open contest for period up to 5 years. The higher authority (the ministry administrating the higher education institution) appoints the rector through open competition;
- programmes and curriculums are determined by the higher education institution independently (affirmed by the council of the higher education institution);
- education processes, methods of teaching, etc. are chosen by the higher education institution independently; based on the "Higher education Standard", which is unified and regulates learning activities in all universities as well as in the higher education institutions;

- process of examining and issuing diplomas is similar to that of universities (it is regulated by the “Statute of unified national diploma to certify the acquiring of higher education”, ratified by the act nr.167 of the Government of the Republic in 11.05.1994).

3. Administration, Funding and Staff

3.1 Please describe the key features of internal management and administration of the institutions of tertiary professional/vocational education.

In the public higher education institutions the main characteristics of the internal management and administration are similar to that of universities, except that appointing the rector to the post in applied higher education institutions is done by its’ higher authority. Similar to the supervisory bodies of universities, it is allowed to form an advisory body in applied higher education institutions. Advisory body helps to specify the social order dominating in the field of activities of the education institution, and scope of financing and complementary sources, evaluates the performance activities of the higher education institution and provides development proposals. Advisory body consists of rector, representative of the administrating Ministry, and representatives of other boards/offices, professional/vocational unions and public. The administrating ministry, affirms membership of the advisory body according to the proposal of the higher education institution.

According to the laws on vocational education position of the headmaster of public vocational education institution is filled through open contest for five years. According to the Law on Vocational Education Institution, the founder of a school forms a body of five to seven members in order to direct activities of the vocational education institution and to make decisions about school development, possessions and budget. The council is formed of the representatives of founders of the vocational education institution, professional/vocational, special and occupational experts on the fields taught in the school, employers connected to the educational fields, local municipalities, public and cultural people in the region where the school is located and the student body. Activities of the council should be directed towards inclusion of school’s co-operation partners in order to create better conditions for school activities and to ensure school development. Learning council is responsible for deciding upon questions related to learning activities of the vocational education institution. Members of the learning council are pedagogues of the school and the headmaster.

3.2 If tertiary professional/vocational education is provided at universities: how is it institutionalised?

Diploma study level of professional/vocational education is provided at applied higher education institutions and two universities. Tallinn Pedagogical University and the University of Tartu also have diploma studies at different departments. The studies are held at the departments using special programmes of diploma studies. Teaching staff is similar compared to academic studies.

3.3 Please, describe the funding, in terms of sources of income, of institutions providing tertiary professional/vocational education.

Sources of income of institutions are: state budget, public (municipal/local government) support, private commercial income of the institutions (for renting rooms, selling production, etc.) and others. Tuition fees of students are covered by study loans from state budget. The cost of additional tuition fees (compensation for transport, etc.) is funded from national budget, too.

3.4 Please characterise training and qualification; status, careers and assignments; remuneration of the regular teaching staff in tertiary professional/vocational education.

Teaching staff in vocational education institutions by training and qualifications;

Academic staff in universities and in applied higher education institutions by training and qualifications. Annex 8

Data are available by type of institutions, not by type of education.

Remuneration data is not available in this cut.

3.5 What are the provisions and activities of in-service training for teaching staff in tertiary professional/vocational education? About how many teachers participate, how often?

Complementary training in the applied higher education institutions is similar to that of the universities. Requirements for the lecturers in the universities as well as in the applied higher education institutions are fixed by the "Higher education Standard", which will be enforced in 01. September 1997.

According to the Law on Adult Education § 13 (5), job related training of government officials and pedagogues has its' foreseen resources in the state budget. These resources are provided in the scope of at least 3 % of the annual wages fund of these employees and pedagogues.

Statistical information about how many teachers participate in in-service training is not available.

4. Entry Requirements and Admission

4.1 How many prior years of schooling - and eventually training and practice - are typically required for entry to tertiary professional/vocational education?

For entry to tertiary professional/vocational education is required obtained secondary education, either general upper-secondary education (*keskildharidus*) or secondary professional/vocational (*kutsekeskharidus*). Also the people who have graduated from post-secondary technical school (*keskeriharidus*), based on basic school have the right to go to learn in TP/VE. Typically is required 12 years of schooling for entry to TP/VE.

4.2 Please describe the typical entry requirements for tertiary professional/vocational education in comparison to the typical entry requirements to university programmes?

Generally the entry requirements are according to those described in 4.1. Prior vocational education, training or work experiences are not required. Prior work experience is required only in Public Defence Academy and police schools.

4.3 Please describe alternative entry routes for tertiary professional/vocational education, possibly in comparison to alternative entry routes to university education.

Law on Education, § 8 (4), provides that there are various forms of education. Entrance via evening schools for adolescents and adults can be observed as alternative entry route for TP/V education. Still, the programmes and accordingly the education level of evening schools is the same as that of basic or upper-secondary education. Law on Basic and Upper-Secondary Schools § 6 offers an opportunity to pass examinations without having passed the programme to be graduated from gymnasiums and upper-secondary schools as an extern. The same is valid for admission to universities and higher education institutions.

4.4 If a selective admission is undertaken: is there information available regarding the rate of selectivity?

Depending on school there may be advantages towards admission of those who have graduated cum-laude.

Generally, there is no selective admissions.

4.5 Please characterise briefly and generally the students' options and choices at entry to tertiary education.

Major modes and criteria of selection differ by faculties. Generally, national graduation examinations, which are valid since 1997, are accepted as a part of admission examinations. For entrance, an applicant has to pass additional examinations on specialisation area as well as write an essay and/or pass an interview and pass professional abilities testing for admissions to the specialities of creative activities as music, dance, drama or journalism. General principle of the conditions for choice is to provide an access and equal opportunities to everybody. The entry depends on applicant's personal abilities.

If not all the places are covered after the first route of admission, additional admission is established. The conditions of additional admission can differ from those of the first route. For example, an applicant who has not been admitted to an attractive speciality/department in a university can be admitted for another one, considering the admission examinations passed already.

Background of the admissions in 1996:

- 84% of the admissions to vocational education based on upper secondary general education (3-3) were graduates from gymnasiums, i.e. they had upper secondary general education, 10% were graduates from some other vocational education institution and 6% had work experience of at least 2 years;
- 81% of admissions to post-secondary technical education (based on upper-secondary general education 4-2) were graduates from gymnasiums, 5% had preliminary vocational education and 8% had preliminary post-secondary technical education;
- For comparison, 94% of the admissions to bachelor studies had secondary general education, i.e. graduates from gymnasiums, 2% had preliminary vocational education and 4% had preliminary post-secondary technical education. Relative importance of obtained preliminary vocational education among admissions has tendency towards increase in recent years.

Applications per admitted students:

Vocational education based on upper-secondary general education 1,4 applications;
post-secondary technical education 1,5 applications;
diploma studies 2,5 applications;
bachelor studies 3,9 applications.

5. Curricula, Teaching and Learning, Examinations

5.1 What is the required overall period of study at the various types and fields/professional areas of tertiary professional/vocational education?

The required overall period of study at the various types and fields/professional areas of TP/V education differs by profession. In professional/vocational education based on upper secondary education the period of study is 1,5 – 2 years. In post secondary education – based on basic education the study period is 4,5 years, in post-secondary education based on upper secondary general education the study period is 2,5 – 3 years. In applied higher education institutions and universities the duration of diploma studies can vary, generally the studies last for four years.

5.2 Please describe the major phases and activities during the course of study.

General tendency is to reduce the theoretical part of studies and replace it with more practical and interactive (seminaries, live practice experiences, independent working, etc.) modes. Practice is passed in summer and in some faculties half year before graduating. Examinations are passed twice a year, at the end of both autumn and spring terms. In some faculties term examination sessions are replaced with so-called mid-term examinations and tests which makes the feedback easier. Final examinations contain diploma paper and examinations and tests on major and more important areas.

5.3 What course programmes are provided - solely or additionally to full-time day schooling

Annex 9 Table 6 presents division of students according to levels of education, education fields and study forms.

Annex 10 Table 7 gives the relative importance of students by types of programmes, fields of study and study forms.

During recent years many students, especially in diploma and bachelor studies, are working at the time of studies. They are allowed to apply for permission to participate lectures of different study forms.

5.4 Does the period of study in these courses differ from those for full-time day study? What proportion of new entrant students enrol in these courses?

Duration of studies depends on student's attitude: in case of intensive studies the courses can be passed in shorter period. Duration of studies in full-time day study and evening and extra-mural study can differ for 1-2 years.

During recent years the real length of studies has become longer in all forms of study, especially in diploma and bachelor studies, because many students are working parallel to studies.

5.5 Please characterise the dominant teaching and learning modes in tertiary professional/vocational education as compared to those dominant in university course programmes and those in secondary general or vocational education.

Compared to university studies, the teaching and learning modes in TP/V education are more concentrated on practice.

5.6 Please, characterise the dominant assessment and examination modes in tertiary professional/vocational education as compared to those dominant in university course programmes and those in secondary general or vocational education.

Credit system is under reconstruction to become harmonised with the according educational levels in Europe. Generally duration of preparing final thesis is not very different in TP/VE and university institutions.

In vocational education institution 5-point system is generally used in grading.

Students pass both written and oral examinations. The proportions are not regulated. In order to graduate the school is generally written a thesis, which may either be theoretical or practical work.

In the applied higher education institutions and universities the dominant assessment and examination modes in TP/V education are the same. Results are measured in credit points. Programme of diploma studies must be similar to the programme of bachelor's studies in order to make the study mode flexible and to give the students a possibility to progress into academic studies.

5.7 What day-to-day activities exist in tertiary professional/vocational education for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning?

In applied higher education institutions and universities accreditation process has began. Process of applying certain leadership style, which would ensure quality according to the standard ISO 9000 has been started in vocational education institutions and applied higher education institutions.

Estonian Ministry of Education and PHARE programme has arranged in-service training courses for staff (both school managers and teachers) in Estonia and abroad. This kind of training and study visits can be regarded as continuing quality improvement.

- 5.8 What regular and systematic mechanisms of quality assurance, evaluation, accreditation etc. are established for assessing and reinforcing the quality of teaching and learning in tertiary professional/vocational education?

Quality assurance of staff is provided by quality assessment in higher education level: people who have graduated or those who have passed in-service training courses at the universities are educated by the European and worldwide standards. Everyday work in teaching and managing is also an important indicator of quality assessment. Students have an opportunity to inform the staff and higher instances if they are not satisfied with teaching or managing.

In vocational education institutions the process of applying the principles of ISO 9000 has been started.

6. Qualifications or Credentials and their Professional and Academic Value.

- 6.1 How are the credentials named which are awarded upon graduation for the various types of tertiary professional/vocational education, and what titles are conferred, if any?

Graduation certificate of vocational education institution (vocational education based on upper secondary general education programmes; 3-3):

e.g. ... (students name) ..., who studied according to the officially recognised programme acquiring knowledge and practical skills required in the professional/vocational work, which is certified by the national examination committee.

Graduation certificate of vocational education institution about acquiring post-secondary technical education programmes (*keskeriharidus*)

e.g. ... (students name) ..., studied ... (speciality) ... according to the officially recognised programme and acquired the knowledge and practical skills necessary for professional/vocational work, which is certified by the national examination committee.

DIPLOMA

e.g. ... (institution) ... certifies that ... (students name, date of birth) ... has filled the ... (speciality) ... programme in full capacity.

Bachelor Degree (*bakalaureuse kraad*)

e.g. ... (institution) ... certifies that ... (students name, date of birth) ... has filled the ... (speciality) ... bachelor programme in full capacity and he/she was awarded with Bachelor Degree.

- 6.2 How do the credentials awarded in tertiary professional/vocational education compare internationally?

In hard-regulated professions like health care area the university curricula have been reconstructed according to the European Union directives (e.g. medicine: 6 years of academic studies and 6 more years concentrated on professional training and obtaining of professional experiences; Engineers study for 3-4 years in universities but have to have extra professional training for one or two years. Academic part of TP/V education in Estonia has been solved by the conclusion that post-secondary vocational education is not obtaining higher education diploma. 8 applied higher education institutions have been founded recently, with objective to educate professional specialists who are good at practical work. The study is called diploma study. Accordingly, universities have similar programmes for the diploma studies held there. So it is quite easy to continue studies on the academic levels. In

some cases diploma studies take place at university colleges. Level of education of diploma studies in applied higher education institutions and at universities is equal and is regulated by Higher Education Standard. Estonian diploma studies are correspondent to the study level of e.g. European *Fachhochschulen*.

- 6.3 How would you characterise the professional areas and levels of credentials which tertiary professional/vocational education typically leads to?

The system is described with a graph “Curriculums and work possibilities”. Annex 11

- 6.4 Is tertiary professional/vocational education viewed as a complete professional qualification, or are subsequent training periods and licensing customary?

In tertiary professional vocational education the graduation certificate is viewed as a complete professional qualification. As national system of professional/vocational qualifications is being elaborated there is possibility for changes in the future.

- 6.5 What opportunities exist to transfer to university programmes, what are the provisions and conditions?

Students graduated from secondary vocational education institutions can become admitted in applied higher education institutions and also to diploma level of universities. If the graduates want to be admitted to academic level studies, maturation (national) examinations must be passed. So, Estonian higher education has two different lines: academic studies and professional studies. Estonian system does not give permission to transfer credits from vocational education institutions to applied higher education institutions. Depending on the programme of applied higher education institution, applicants who have graduated from general secondary education institutions can be admitted, also e.g. to pedagogical specialities. The term *professional baccalaureate* is not valid in Estonia. Students graduated from applied higher education institutions have not reached academic study level. Having been graduated from diploma studies, one can be admitted to *professional master's* studies.

Programmes of diploma studies and bachelor studies are compiled so that it is easy to continue academic studies immediately after being graduated from TP/V education institution. Having been graduated from (applied) higher education institutions, it is possible to pass additional course of approximately 40 credit points or 1 academic study year, to get bachelor's degree and then continue studies in two next academic study levels. (Look at Annex 5)

7. Links to the Employment System

- 7.1 Please state links between tertiary professional/vocational education and the employment system, referring to public and private employers, professional bodies etc.

School level. (Look 3-1)

National level. National qualifications system is being elaborated. (Look at Annex 12)

According to this system Plan of Activities is as follows:

I Vocational education reform in Estonia can be carried out only if professions facing favourable employment are distinguished by fields, and selected according to national priorities.

To accomplish this:

- a) Social Ministry co-ordinates the elucidation of professions;
- b) Social Ministry ensures the correspondence of professions to the international occupational classification table;
- c) Social Ministry together with respective offices and social partners selects professions to be trained.

II Ministry of Education reorganises the vocational schools' network according to professions, based on the results of the work carried out by social Ministry.

III Vocational education reform comes about only if the skills acquired at school correspond to the requirements at the labour market. In order to clarify the requirements, employees' qualification system is to be formed first.

For this:

- 1) Employers organised by Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECCI) put down the descriptions and standards of professional skills, and the system of qualification categories within professions;
- 2) Social Ministry establishes a register on the bases of the data that is to be operated and processed from there on by ECCI;
- 3) ECCI forms workshops that will create the system for describing professional skills, professional standards and qualification categories within professions;
- 4) The descriptions of professional skills, professional standards and qualification categories are co-ordinated and affirmed with Trade Committees, made up of the members of the workshops and representatives of Social Ministry and Ministry of Education;
- 5) At the proposal of these 4 institutions ECCI forms Trade Committees and co-ordinates their work.

IV Through Examination and Qualification Centre, Ministry of Education co-ordinates the formation of curricula grounded on the principles in III. Ministry of Education develops vocational education system that is based on modular curricula.

V ECCI is responsible for the system of acquiring profession. The system of acquiring profession is created at the proposals of workshops (III,3) and has to be co-ordinated and affirmed by Trade Committees and Vocational Education Council.

VI Ministry of Education co-ordinates the study process and the organisation of final examinations at vocational education establishments,

While:

- 1) Vocational school diplomas can be used as assumptions in applying for certificates;
- 2) Certificates are not related to diplomas;

VII ECCI issues nationally acknowledged certificates.

- 1) Formation of the qualification system, i.e. carrying out vocational reform at the co-ordination of ECCI, the concept of employees and employers ensures the acknowledgement of certificates by all sides involved.
- 2) State's supervision (Vocational Education Council, Trade Committees) ensures national acknowledgement of certificates.

Finances:

Employees' qualification system is ordered by the state from ECCI. For specific steps to be carried out, international support can be received.

7.2 Please, characterise the information available and the channels of information in your country on employment and work of graduates from tertiary professional/vocational education

Unfortunately, the situation of labour force statistics in Estonia at the end of 1996 is not very clear, and because of the lack of legal regulation, we can only talk about different rates of unemployment, varying from 1,5% to 11%. Today we can say for sure that the initial uneasiness has been overcome and conceptions have appeared about how the Estonian labour force statistics should be organised. For the time being, the most operative picture of the present situation in the labour market can be obtained from statistics of state employment offices. In order to get a more detailed picture, the Statistical Office of Estonia has planned a number of surveys.

Labour Force Survey 1995. Labour Force Survey 1997. The first Labour Force Survey (ELFS 95) was carried out at the beginning of 1995. The retrospective part of the ELFS 95 recorded the respondent's situation at the beginning of 1989 and then the changes of the situation in 1989-1995. A similar survey has been carried out in 1997. The Questionnaire for ELFS 95 was divided into sections: activities in

the beginning of 1989, main jobs in 1989 – 1995, unemployment in 1989 – 1995, non-activity in 1989 – 1995, second jobs in 1989 – 1995, studies in 1989 – 1995 (table of studies, table of qualifications, the highest level of completed education), family changes in 1989 – 1995, changes of residence in 1989 – 1995, main job and second jobs in the survey week, unemployment in the survey week, household characteristics, economical status and housing conditions, future plans. Employers take part in the working groups which deal with preparation of according legislation. Employers will also take care of professional qualifications elaboration as members of Vocational Education Council and Trade Committees (look Annex 12) in the near future. The results are published and will be published by Statistical Office of Estonia.

(Sources: Estonian Labour Force Survey 1995, Methodological Report, Statistical Office of Estonia; Additional information: Monthly publication of Estonian Statistics; Labour Board Statistics, Statistical Office of Estonia

Overview of Estonian Economics 1996 – 1997, Ministry of Economics)

7.3 What role do employers and their associations, chambers of industry and commerce, professional bodies, unions etc. play in national debates and decision-making as regards tertiary professional/vocational education?

Recently have representatives of employers shown up much more interest towards vocational education. This is connected to the changes in the labour market. The existing labour force often does not meet the changing needs of the labour market in terms of education. In connection to the elaboration of principles of the national professional/vocational qualification system and presentation of the conceptual standpoints of vocational education for public discussions and opinions, discussions about professional/vocational skills and about developing an education system according to these skills have started. Principal co-operation scheme presented to the government is described in Annex 12.

7.4 How would you characterise the communication on the regional and local level between the employment system and the institutions providing tertiary professional/vocational education?

According to the Law on Vocational Education Institution, the founder of a school forms a body of five to seven members in order to direct activities of the vocational education institution and to make decisions about school development, possessions and budget. The council is formed of the representatives of founders of the vocational education institution, professional/vocational, special and occupational experts on the fields taught in the school, employers connected to the educational fields, local municipalities, public and cultural people in the region where the school is located and the student body. Activities of the council should be directed towards inclusion of school's co-operation partners in order to create better conditions for school activities and to ensure school development. The council evaluates the school development plans; makes proposals to the founder of the school about confirming the admission quotas of new students and about financial budgets; conciliates the learning programmes to be presented for registration in the Ministry of Education; confirms the report about following the budget; listens to the reports of the headmaster of the school and his/her deputies and makes relevant decisions; confirms enterprises for practical experience; presents the fields, forms and order of adult education organised in the school to founder of the school for confirmation; organises the open contest for filling vacant position of school headmaster according to the order established in the Ministry of Education and confirms the budget about the use of resources from other than state budget.

Similarly to the supervisory bodies of universities, it is allowed to form advisory body in the applied higher education institutions, which helps to specify the social order dominating in the field of activities of the education institution, the content of programmes, scope of financing and complementary sources, evaluates the performance of the activities of the higher education institution and provides development proposals. Advisory body consists of rector, representative of the administrating Ministry, representatives of other boards/offices, vocational/professional unions and public. The administrating ministry according to the proposal of the higher education institution affirms membership of the advisory body.

The information presented above stands only for public education institutions.

The employers participate in consultation and decision-making, concerning work experiences during the study period, a curriculum development and counselling.

7.5 To what extent and in which ways are representatives of the employment system involved in the daily life of tertiary professional/vocational education?

In Estonia, the situation in professional/vocational education was guarded according the principles of centralisation in the Soviet period. Since early 1990s there is an opportunity for interactive participation in decision-making process. Initiative to found professional/vocational unions exists but the legislation is still in the preparation phase. Employer and employee organisations (e.g. hotel, catering, construction, maritime, nursing fields) have started to participate and co-operate in elaboration of the requirements for professional/vocational qualifications and developing programmes based on these qualifications.

During the transition in between collapse of the old economic system and creation of the new has emerged co-operation between schools and social partners, mostly related to co-operation regarding internships, developing programmes, part-time teaching (especially in diploma studies), etc. More accurate information about the scope of co-operation is not available.

7.6 How are the relationships between the employment system and tertiary professional/vocational education generally assessed in your country? What are the major strengths and weaknesses? How did they change over the years since the early 1990s?

As organisation of social partners is in initial stage, relations between entrepreneurs and schools are only partial. There are some very active social partners (Nurses Union, Union of Construction Entrepreneurs), who are actively involved in the development of new programmes, creation of qualification system, creation of practising possibilities for students, etc.

8. Implementation of Reforms since the Early 1990s.

8.1 In what respect does tertiary professional/vocational education trace back to the situation in your country in the 1980s, and in what respects have major innovations been undertaken in the 1990s?

Compared to 1980s, two innovations of great importance have been implemented. The first is reorganisation of several TP/V education institutions to public applied higher education institutions. The second is implementation of diploma study in these institutions and universities. Opening of new private higher education institutions can be observed as the third innovation. In the field of post-secondary technical education was decided that in 1997/98 study year will start transition into having in this field only the programmes based on secondary education, i.e. admission to the programmes based on basic school is ended up except for programmes in art and music. According to the vocational education reform all programmes will be revised and renewed, during which some of the programmes will be up-graded to the level of diploma studies according to the changed needs in the labour market. Today the applicants have more opportunities to make acceptable choice where they would like to study. Contest between different institutions causes self-improvement and implementation of better study conditions for students, etc.

8.2 What were the major contributing factors for the establishment or reform of tertiary professional/vocational education in your country since the beginning of the 1990s?

Transformation of the economic system is the most important factor, which influences the vocational education reform. Schools are forced to more closely consider the changing entrepreneurship's demands to the labour force. In connection to this, inclusion of the social partners to vocational education has become very important.

For example, social partners are participating in:

- Phare Vocational Education Reform Programme;

- Starting the elaboration of the national vocational/professional qualification system and programmes development; in co-operation with social partners according to the changing needs of the labour market.
- Staff development programmes;
- Different bi- and multilateral projects, which are directed towards education, especially which include development of vocational education KAMARE.

8.3 What were the major impediments as regards the establishment or reform of tertiary professional/vocational education since the beginning of the 1990s?

Among major impediments in TP/V education, lack of agreements on educational policy can be presented.

8.4 Did EU countries or other countries serve as models for the establishment or restructuring of tertiary professional/vocational education in your country in the 1990s?

Finland, Denmark, The Netherlands and Germany serve as models for restructuring vocational and professional education including tertiary TP/VE.

The Danish model called the lump-sum, has been taken as an example for directing financing of vocational education in Estonia.

In elaboration of new programmes are considered the changing needs of industry. Both employers and employees are included into the elaboration/development process. Similar approach is common for all projects related to vocational education.

8.5 Did you co-operate with representatives from other countries in the establishment or reform of tertiary professional/vocational education?

Finland, Denmark and Germany are notably the biggest bilateral donors. For example: The Estonian National School Board, (reorganised), in co-operation with SEL (the Royal Danish School of Educational Studies for Vocational Teachers) from Denmark. Conducted the “Development of the Estonian Vocational Education System (DEVES) project from September 1993 until February 1995. Its objective was to support “the development of a modern, labour market oriented vocational education system in Estonia following a Danish concept but adjusted to Estonian wishes and needs”. It also includes a development programme for school manager and teachers. The Danish-Estonian Business Education Reform (BER) project started on January 1, 1993 and has since then received substantial funds from the Danish Government. It aims at the development of 4-year programmes. The project is now continued with Phare support.

The German-Estonian pilot project at Tallinn School of Commerce begun in 1993 and was meant for 4 years. It aims at developing a model centre for training in the commercial field. The project introduces two new programmes– commercial training in material management and banking, provides new equipment and familiarises teachers with innovative learning methods.

The Phare 1994 VET Reform Programme is the first significant multilateral aid contribution to systematic VET reform. The overall objective is to improve the present system by preparing school leavers who are more suited to the evolving economic and labour market conditions. To support the VET Reform process at both national and school level, the present programme is active in 5 main areas including: programme development, teacher training and upgrading learning equipment, partnerships with EU schools and policy development in the VET area. 13 pilot schools are involved. The Estonian programme is making good progress at raising the quality of training in general. Government officials, as well representatives from some social partner organisations are actively involved in the process. The programme is also promoting national policy initiatives. And thus it has led to discussions about the relevance and context of the education system within the economy.

Finland-Estonian bilateral project “Upgrading 4 Estonian vocational schools” (KAMARE) started in 1993. Developing the middle level occupational education (KAMARE) project is meant for elaboration of the sample programme for applied higher education and for relevant teacher training in quite a broad field: social, art, agriculture and technical areas. Objectives include: support to the enterprise education inside school organisation, extension of schools activities – creating relationships

towards new directions and organisations, connections with economic life and companies, selling services and products, participating in efforts for improvement of the environment.

In January 1995 started the implementation of “Estonian Maritime Academy” project, financed by the government of the Netherlands. The first phase was to create a strategic development frame plan, which foresaw: 1) updating programmes and elaboration of new programmes, 2) extending learning period towards 4 years, 3) reducing the auditory study to 30 hours per week, 4) cutting costs, 5) finding international donors among other EU countries, 6) hiring young teachers.

8.6 In what way did assistance from other countries play a role in the establishment, reform or enhancement of tertiary professional/vocational education?

The assistance from other countries was arranged by bi- and multilateral agreements and participating in international programmes. The process is going on and continues with next level EU study programmes as LEONARDO and SOCRATES:

9. Recent Reform Debates and Expected Future Developments

9.2 How is the current state of tertiary professional/vocational education generally considered in your country? Which issues are given the most attention in public debates?

Education reform is continuously going on in Estonia. Minister of Education has initiated elaboration of Estonian Education Policy Paper. Professional/vocational training has been declared the priority of Estonian education policy, therefore it is highly appreciated. The first draft of the Policy Paper for vocational education is presented for public discussions.

9.3 Is there new legislation under preparation addressing tertiary professional/vocational education? Are there other major reform efforts underway?

Law on Applied Higher Education Institution is being prepared. When this is enforced the Interim Law on Applied Higher Education Institution, which currently regulates the activities of public and municipal applied higher education institutions, will lose its force. The bill of the Law on Applied Higher Education Institution is in harmony with the Law on Universities (school structure, requirements for the pedagogues, rights of the students, etc.). According to the bill of the Law on Applied Higher Education Institution, is allowed the existence of applied higher education institutions based on both public and private ownership. Applied higher education institution can not act as a public-legal juridical person, it is either public institution or institution based on private ownership.

9.4 Which major issues of tertiary professional/vocational education are hardly addressed in efforts for legislative and other reforms, although they would deserve attention?

There is lack of legislation and special opportunities concerning the especially gifted students and for providing education to the disabled people. A legal regulation about monitoring in this area is also not appropriate.

9.5 What role is expected in the near future of European and international co-operation, and to what legal, policy, administrative or educational changes should that co-operation contribute?

Any kind of constructive co-operation is welcome. Presumably the most important role will be played by major bi- and multilateral international programmes (LEONARDO, SOCRATES etc).

9.6 What major long-term developments in tertiary professional/vocational education do you expect in the about next ten years.

Overall objective is to integration into the European Union. Accordingly, the first level of education reform must be completed successfully. The legislation must be harmonised with the corresponding standards in Europe.

Implementation of qualification system ensures the accordance of the programmes to the constantly changing needs of the labour market.

Considering Estonian integration to the European economy and evolving of the united labour market in the member countries of the European Union, the workers who have obtained appropriate vocational education should be competitive on the opening labour market.

Education system as a whole, especially tertiary vocational/professional education system has been developed in accordance with the life-long learning principles.