VET Attractiveness in Cyprus: *Survey results*

George Horattas, Ph.D.
Productivity Officer A´
Cyprus Productivity Centre
Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
Government of Cyprus

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The attractiveness of VET in Cyprus

The problem

- Period 2008-2018
- Annual shortages of technicians in Cyprus
  - Inputs of workers < Annual Needs
  - 1700 persons per year (+ accumulating)
- Result: Enterprises forced to import technicians

The attractiveness of VET in Cyprus

The root of the problem

- Low participation rates in VET (14%)

- The Cause = low attractiveness of VET

The attractiveness of VET in Cyprus

- Aim of survey conducted by the Cyprus Productivity Centre (CPC)
  - Identify degree of attractiveness of VET
  - Investigate factors influencing students´ educational and occupational decisions, causing low participation in VET
  - Test measures that could correct the problem

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The attractiveness of VET in Cyprus

- Methodology
  - What? Nationwide survey among young students in their last compulsory schooling year, 14-15 y.o., (Population 8.813, 52% male, 48% female)
  - How? Random stratified sampling, 19/70 schools, Sample = 719
  - When? April-May 2010

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Terminology

- Gymnasium = lower secondary school (general)
- Lyceum = general upper secondary school
- Technical School = VET upper secondary school
  - Theoretical and Practical orientations
- Grades

A = (18-20)
B = (16-18)
C = (14-16)
D = (12-14)
E = (10-12)

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Degree of attractiveness of VET

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Summary

- Low attractiveness of VET confirmed
- VET the choice of only 14,1% of the students (21,5% of the males and 5,4% of the females)
- Only male students in the Apprentices Scheme

  – *Percentages, coincide with Eurostat data for Cyprus´ participation in VET (14% overall, 22% for males and less than 5% for females)*
    - *confirms the validity of the survey*

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Factors influencing students educational and occupational decisions

Factors influencing students' educational and occupational decisions

- 66,6% desire to study in a university or college
- 43,4% individual interests
- 42,0% desire to follow a specific profession
- 21,1% grades
- 10,3% family desires
- 7,2% friends´ opinions
- 4,7% teachers´ opinions
- 3,3% desire to follow the profession of a parent
- 3,3% desire to work in the family business

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Factors influencing students educational and occupational decisions

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Factors influencing students educational and occupational decisions

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Factors influencing students educational and occupational decisions

Students´ plans after the secondary level

Students´ needs for a university degree

Students´ needs for a university degree

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Students´ preferred professions

Factors affecting students´ occupational decisions

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Students´ most important criteria for the selection of a profession

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Students´ most important reasons for not choosing a profession

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Factors causing VET unattractiveness

Factors causing low participation in VET

- 58,5% Tertiary studies in a non-technical profession
- 29,1% Status of technical VET schools lower than Lyceums
- 28,1% Status of students in technical VET schools lower than Lyceums
- 17,2% interest in other profession not offered by technical schools
- 13,2% smaller salaries earned by technicians
- 11,1% low recognition enjoyed by technicians in society
- 8,4% absence of information and guidance regarding opportunities and prospects in technical professions
- 4,6% family pressure
- 2,5% peer pressure
- ...

Measures that could correct the problem?

- Technical VET schools offering the same opportunities as general education to continue for tertiary studies

Measures that could correct the problem?

- Better information on the opportunities and prospects in technical professions

Measures that could correct the problem?

- Improve status, recognition and prestige of technicians in the society

Measures that could correct the problem?

- Stopping higher secondary school segregation
- Customized programs according to students' interests

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Conclusions

For VET to become more attractive

- Implementation of the “New Lyceum”
  - Stop higher secondary school segregation
  - Offering students equal access to tertiary studies and academic degrees
  - Customized programs according to students' interests
  - Improved vocational guidance and support services

Conclusions

For VET to become more attractive

- Information campaigns
  - Inform students, families, citizens
  - Opportunities, prospects and earnings in technical occupations
  - Creating interest among young people to enroll in VET and pursue employment in technical occupations

Conclusions

For VET to become more attractive

- Improve status, recognition and prestige of technicians
  - Skills Competitions and promotion of skills
- “room” for improving participation in VET
  - 35%-37%
  - Targets for increasing participation in VET
    - 20% in five years
    - 30% in ten years

....Thank you for your attention