

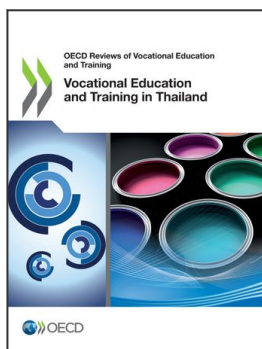
Foreword

Vocational education and training (VET) is an important part of education systems around the world. In an era of changing skill needs in the labour market, as a result of global megatrends such as automation and population ageing, VET is well-placed to equip students with the skills the labour market needs and provide education and training opportunities for adults. Likewise, VET can play an important role in the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, by developing in-demand skills to avoid hiring difficulties among employers, providing youth at risk of being not in education, employment, or training (NEET) with opportunities to acquire work experience through apprenticeships and other forms of work-based learning, and creating avenues for up-skilling or re-skilling of workers who have been displaced, or in need of training to adapt to a changing work environment.

In Thailand, VET has the potential to provide relevant education and training opportunities to youth and adults, especially as the demand for technical skills is high. Building on the strengths of the system, including a strong postsecondary VET system and a small but dynamic dual system, more needs to be done to reach the full potential of VET. The report “Vocational Education and Training in Thailand” assesses the key strengths and weaknesses of the Thai VET system and provides recommendations for how to strengthen it so that students, employers and the society as a whole can benefit from VET as much as possible.

VET remains an unattractive option for many students in Thailand, because of a poor image among students and parents, quality issues, a hard-to-navigate system and limited progression pathways. Inequalities in access to high-quality VET exist, with very few adults participating in the system, female students participating less than male students and being concentrated in programmes with weaker labour market prospects, and regional differences in the quality of VET provision. Moreover, data on skills shortages and mismatches and on the labour market outcomes of VET graduates suggest that additional efforts are needed to align VET provision with the needs of the Thai labour market. The Thai VET system does not sufficiently rely on skill intelligence and on inputs from stakeholders to design VET policies and programmes. An important step has been taken with the expansion of dual vocational programmes, and efforts to strengthen work-based learning need to continue.

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