



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
AND RESEARCH

Vocational Education and Training in Estonia

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Some facts about Estonia

Area: 45 227 km²

Population: 1.3 million

Capital: Tallinn

Official language: Estonian

EU, NATO member since 2004

100% of public services online



Education in numbers

171,000 general education students / 27,600 VET students

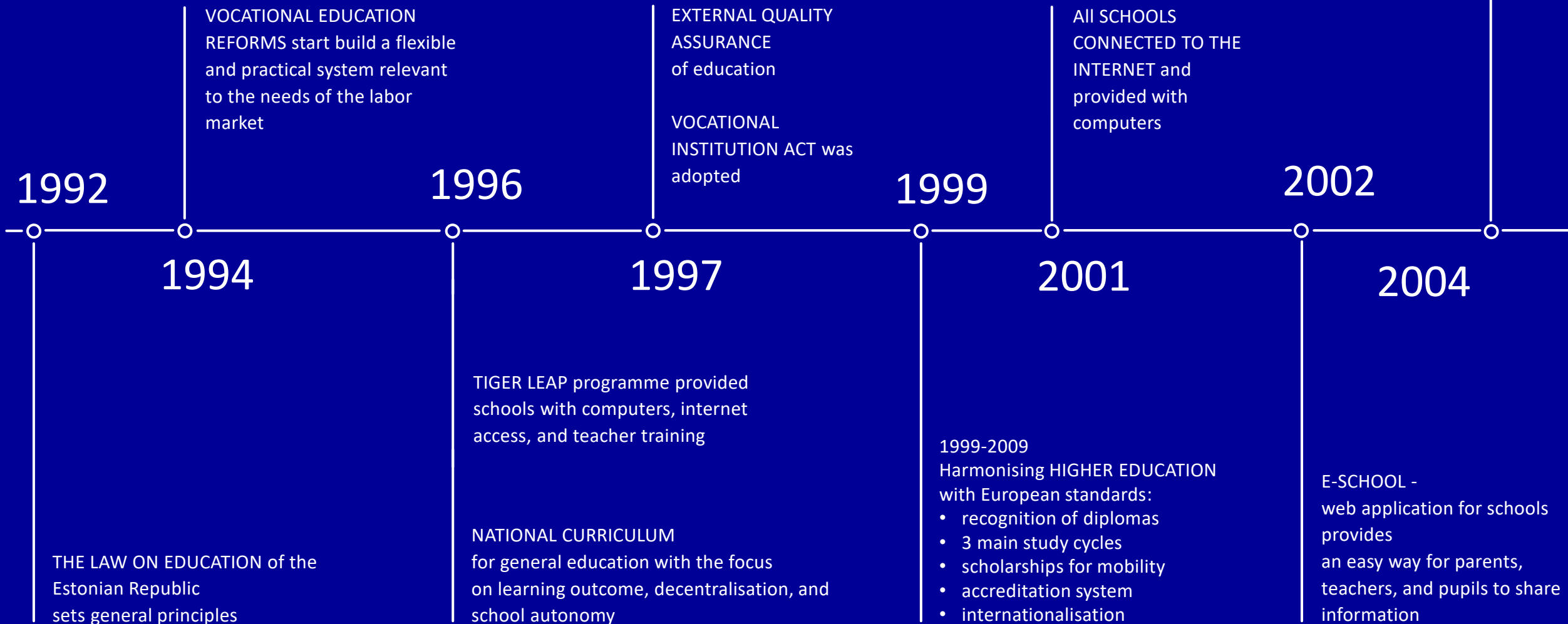
17,500 teachers in general education / 2,100 VET teachers

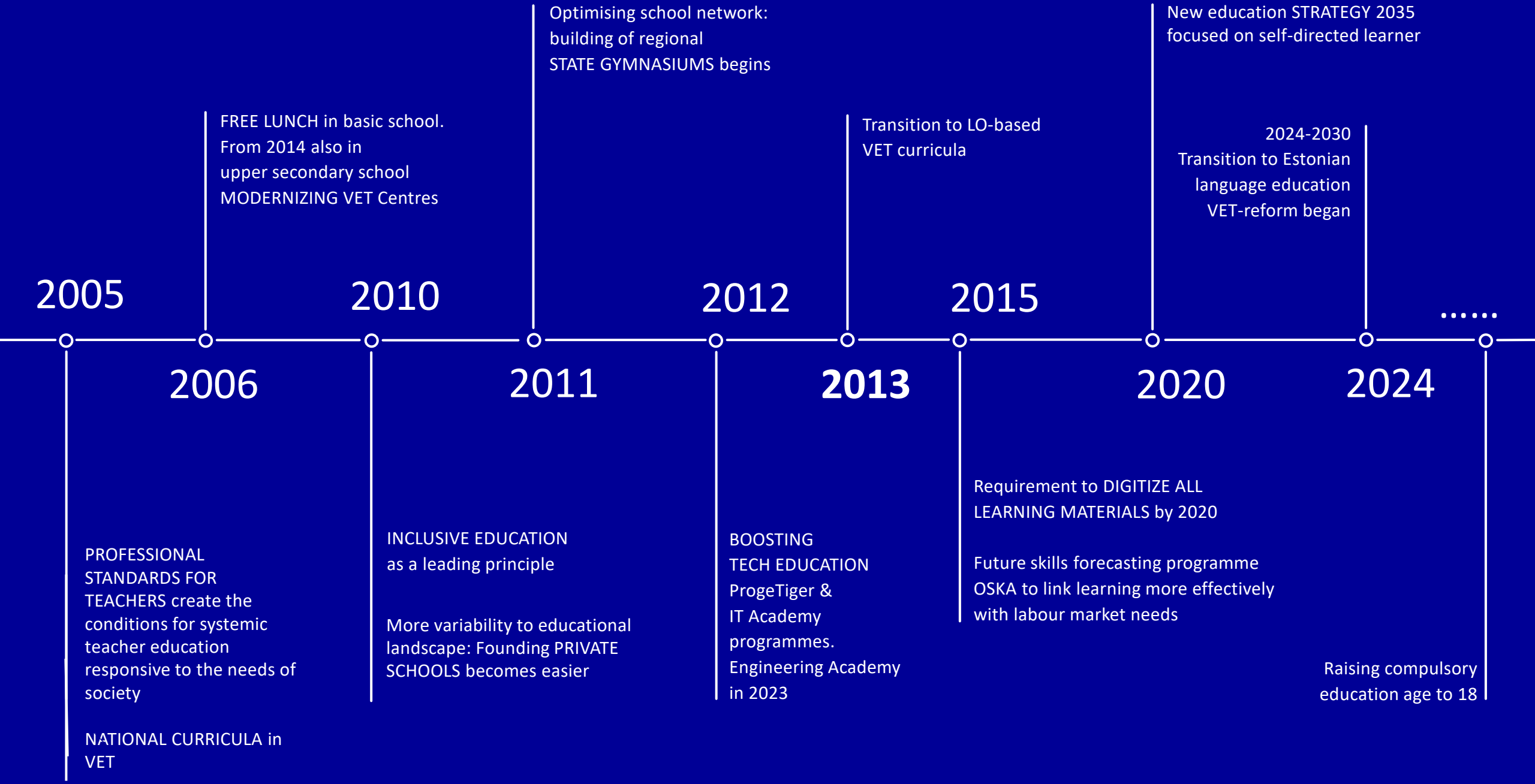
510 generalschools / 30 regional VET Centres / 18 HE institutions



Educational reforms and initiatives

A state database EHIS
brings together all
information related to
education in Estonia







The infographic features a central white circle containing the title 'Key qualities of Estonian education system'. Surrounding this circle are six colorful, irregular shapes, each representing a key quality. The background is a photograph of two young girls with long hair, smiling and taking a selfie with a smartphone. The overall design is modern and educational.

Key qualities of Estonian education system

MENTALITY

Aim-high-and-work-hard
mindset

AUTONOMY

Autonomy of schools
and teachers

GOVERNANCE AND SOCIETAL SUPPORT

Evidence-based and equity-promoting
governance, broad societal support for
education

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

Targeted investments,
competences and tools

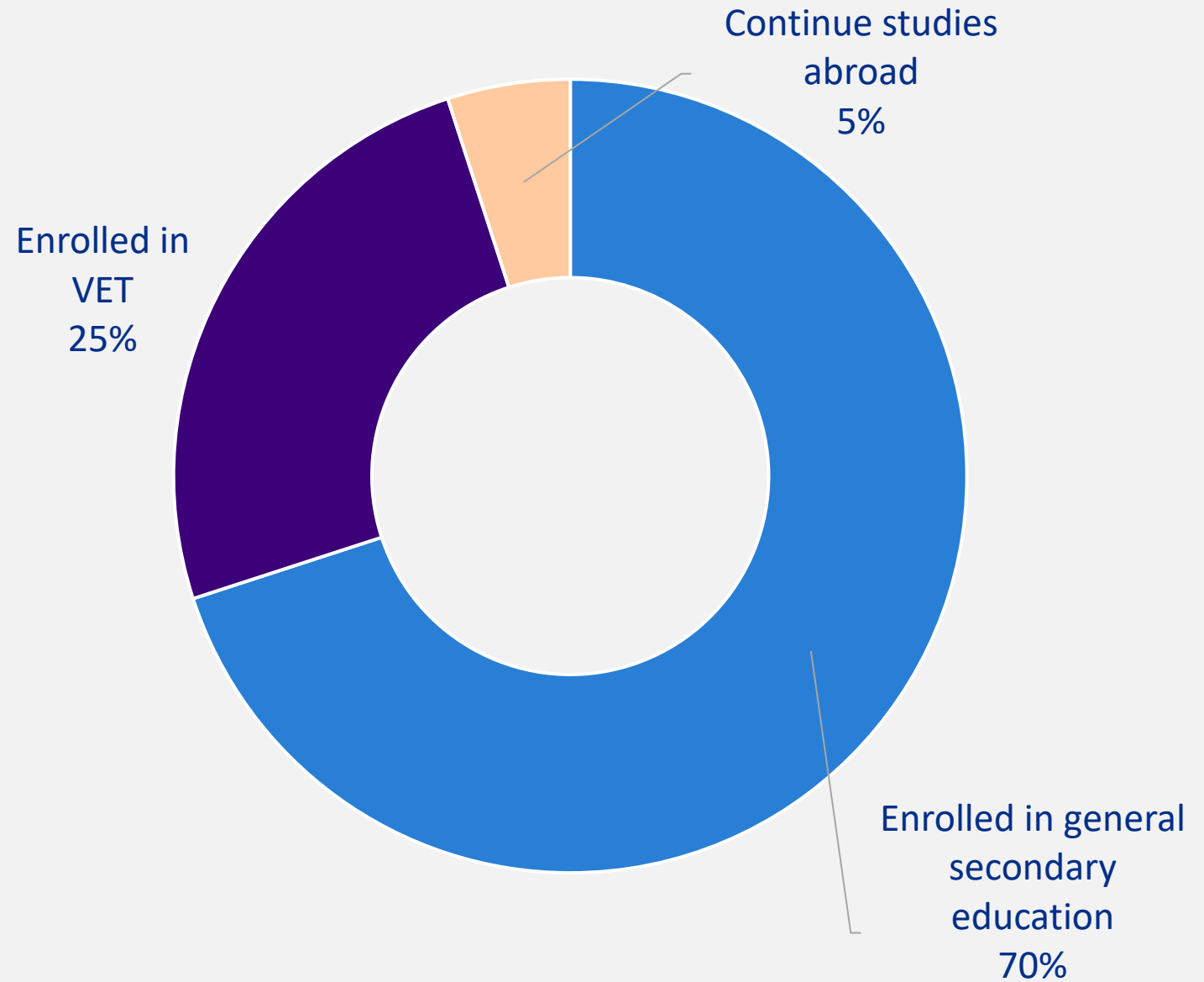
DIVERSITY

Diverse and responsive
school network

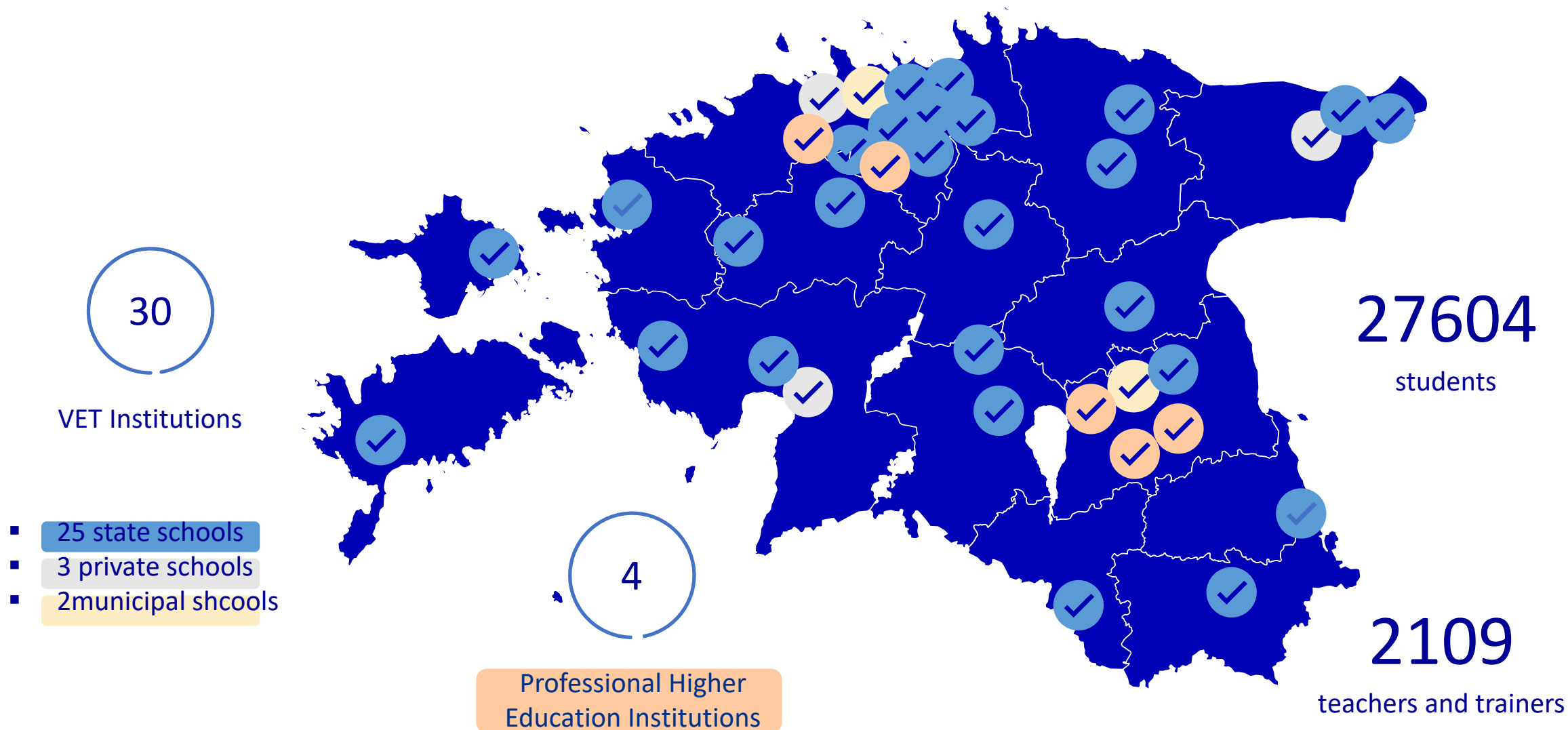
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

More than 90% of 3-7-year children
attend kindergarten

Basic education graduates choices



VET in Estonia



Legal framework

Vocational Educational Institutions Act

Standard of Vocational Education

National Curricula, EstQF 4,
upper secondary VET, Ministerial regulations

ISCED F-2013

Professional standards



Estonian VET in a nutshell

VET comprises **initial and further training** (IVET and CVET) and provides students flexible learning pathways.

VET has **many target groups**: young people, adults and people in working life who need upskilling or reskilling, unemployed

VET curricula consists **units of learning outcomes** (i.e modules) LO describe the knowledge, skills and the level of independence and autonomy

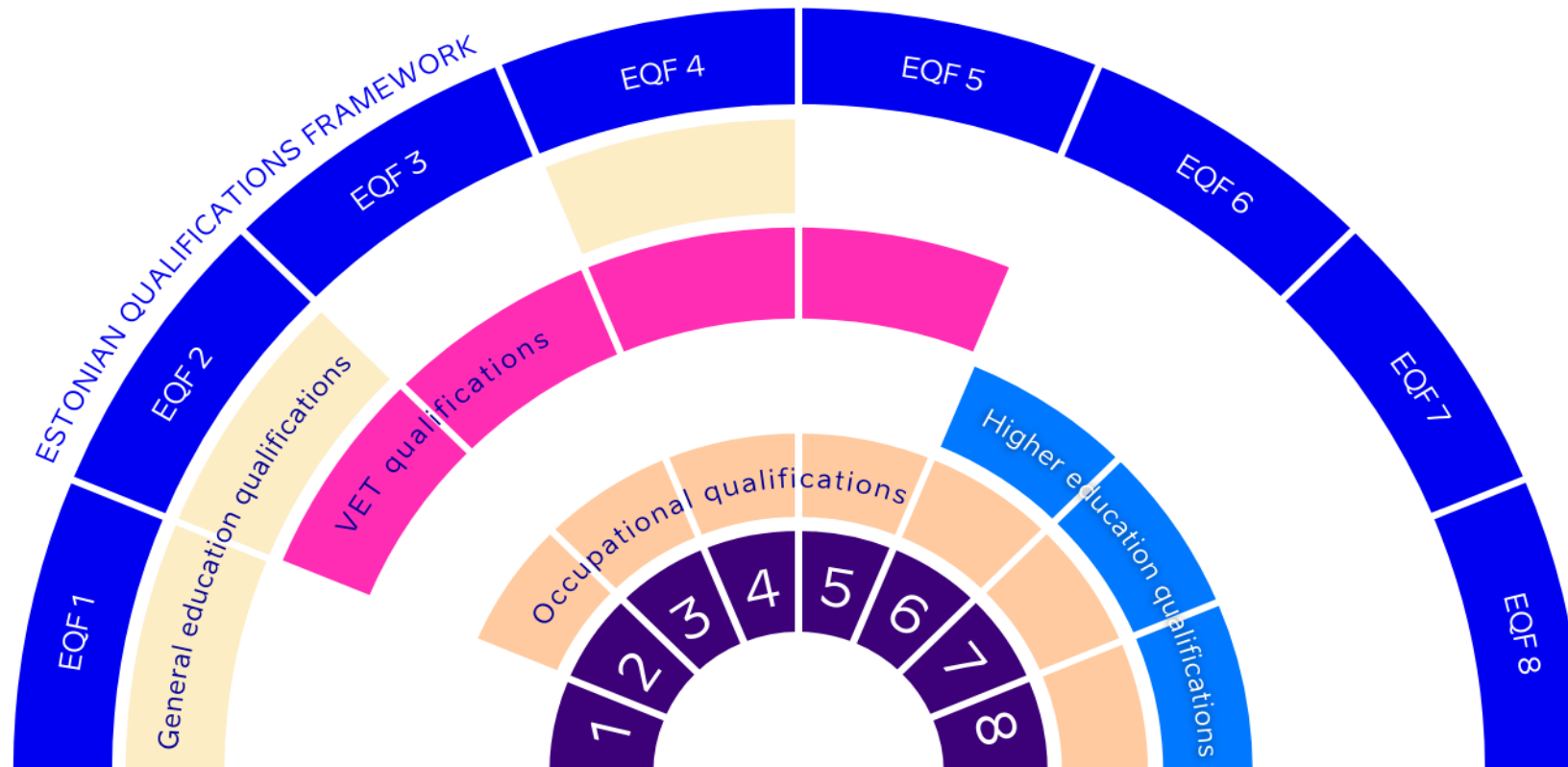
Versatile learning environments – VET-institutions, workplaces (including apprenticeship training), digital environments and various combinations of these

National network of 30 VET institutions, which are different in size and scope (multisectoral nature).

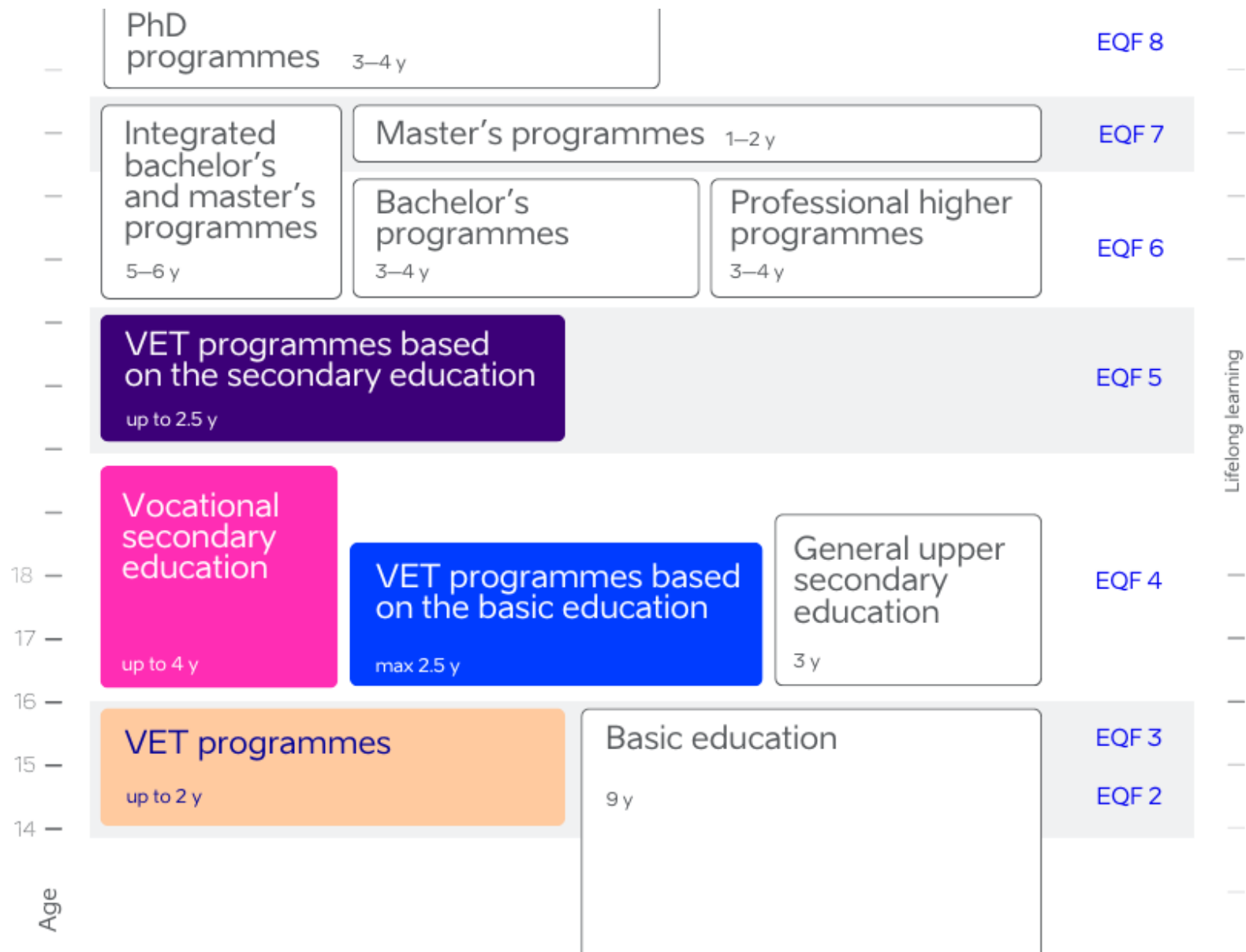
Vocational education - Practical, Flexible and Available

- Access to VET programmes and additional training is free for all ages
- With over 130 specialities to choose from, Estonian vocational education offers a comprehensive range of options
- Flexible study formats offer wide range of possibilities, including full-time, part-time, and distance learning
- The state has special project (OSKA) to ANALYSE THE LABOUR MARKET needs to find out what skills are needed in the future
- All VET curricula consists WORK-BASED LEARNING, allowing students to better prepare for the entering to Labor Market
- Close COOPERATION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR provides students real workplace experience

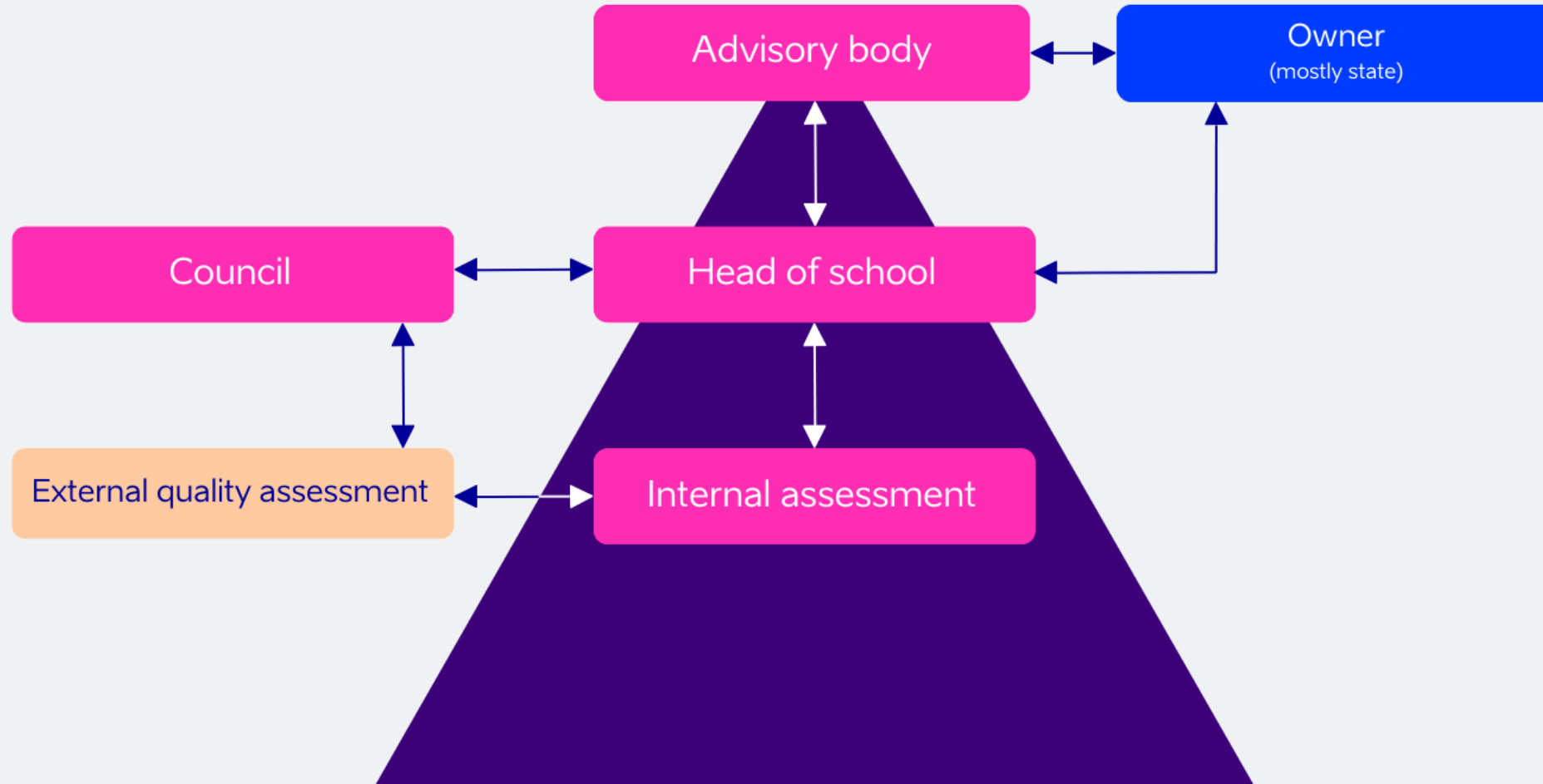
VET curricula is directly driven by professional standards



Flexible learning possibilities



Management of VET schools



Funding model

School performance indicators

- % of students graduated from the professional examination
- % of students participating in apprenticeships
- % of vocational secondary education graduates
- % of students studying further or employed

80–95%

Basic funding finances the organisation of teaching and learning work, the provision of support services and the management of the school. This ensures stable funding of the school regardless of an unpredictable decrease in the number of learners.

Through **the component of the availability of vocational training**, funds are allocated within the operating support to cover school lunches, study grants and other costs regulated by legislation

10–20%

Performance based funding finances the fulfilment of performance indicators related to strategic objectives important to the state.

Grants
for
students

Quality assessment

- Internal evaluations for quality control and improvement
- External evaluations to align with national educational standards
- Incorporating feedback from students and employers for curriculum development



Navigating the challenges

- NEET rate among 18-24y is 9.8%.
- Differing paths in secondary education are not equally valued
- High drop-out rate in VET
- The share of boys is much higher among low achievers and secondary education dropouts
- Lack of qualified vocational educators and specialists
- The **proportions of graduates** from different fields of education not in line with job opportunities
- High **skills mismatch** of the current labour force
- Need for a **common platform** to connect education system and economy/employers (+ need for better links between education policies, social policies and economic policies)
- **Curricula** not always up-to-date and streamlined with the needs of society and economy



OSKA - anticipation and monitoring system for labour and skills demand

ADDRESSING KEY QUESTIONS:

- How many people and which skills are needed in our labour market today and tomorrow?
- Where and how to acquire those skills?
- What should be changed to meet the future needs?

THE RESULTS OF ANALYSIS ARE USED AS:

- input to the qualification and career counselling system
 - curriculum development of educational institutions
 - financing of educational institutions (allocation of study places)
- + The entire economy is divided into 24 OSKA sectors.
- + More information [OSKA - OSKA studies - Estonian Qualifications Authority](#)

Vocational Education Reform

to enhance VET's appeal to better align with future trends, expand choices after graduation, and ensure a longer-lasting skill set

Curriculum reform

- New model of vocational secondary education
- Broad-based sectoral curricula
- Focus on developing general skills/competences and practical skills assessment
- More personalized approach to choosing study paths

School network

- Regional education centers to provide wide range of learning pathways
- Competency-based division of schools

Review of legislation

- New funding mechanisms
- Makes changes to start and support reforms
- New VET Law for 2027 to perpetuate the new concept



HARIDUS- JA
TEADUSMINISTEERIUM

A new model of Vocational Secondary Education

- Framework for 4-year studies
- General education studies create prerequisites for continuing studies at the next vocational or educational level
- Consists introductory part of studies to support the learner's further (learning) choices
- Orientation to skills
- Development of general competences and general skills for working life throughout studies
- More choices than before in basic and elective studies



A new model of Vocational Secondary Education curriculum

1. Basic studies, including internship 125 CP

1.1. Common basic studies 30 CP

1.2 Elective basic studies related to the choice of specialization

2. General subject studies 80 CP

1) Language and literature, incl. Estonian as a second language 14 CP

2) Foreign language at language proficiency level B2, 4.5 CP

3) Foreign language at language proficiency level B1, 7.5 CP

4) Mathematics, 12 CP

5) Natural sciences, 18 CP

6) Social sciences, 13 CP

7) Art and Music, 4 CP

8) Physical development, 5.5, CP

9) National Defence Studies, 1.5 CP

3. Elective study modules 35 CP

New curricula in Secondary Vocational Education

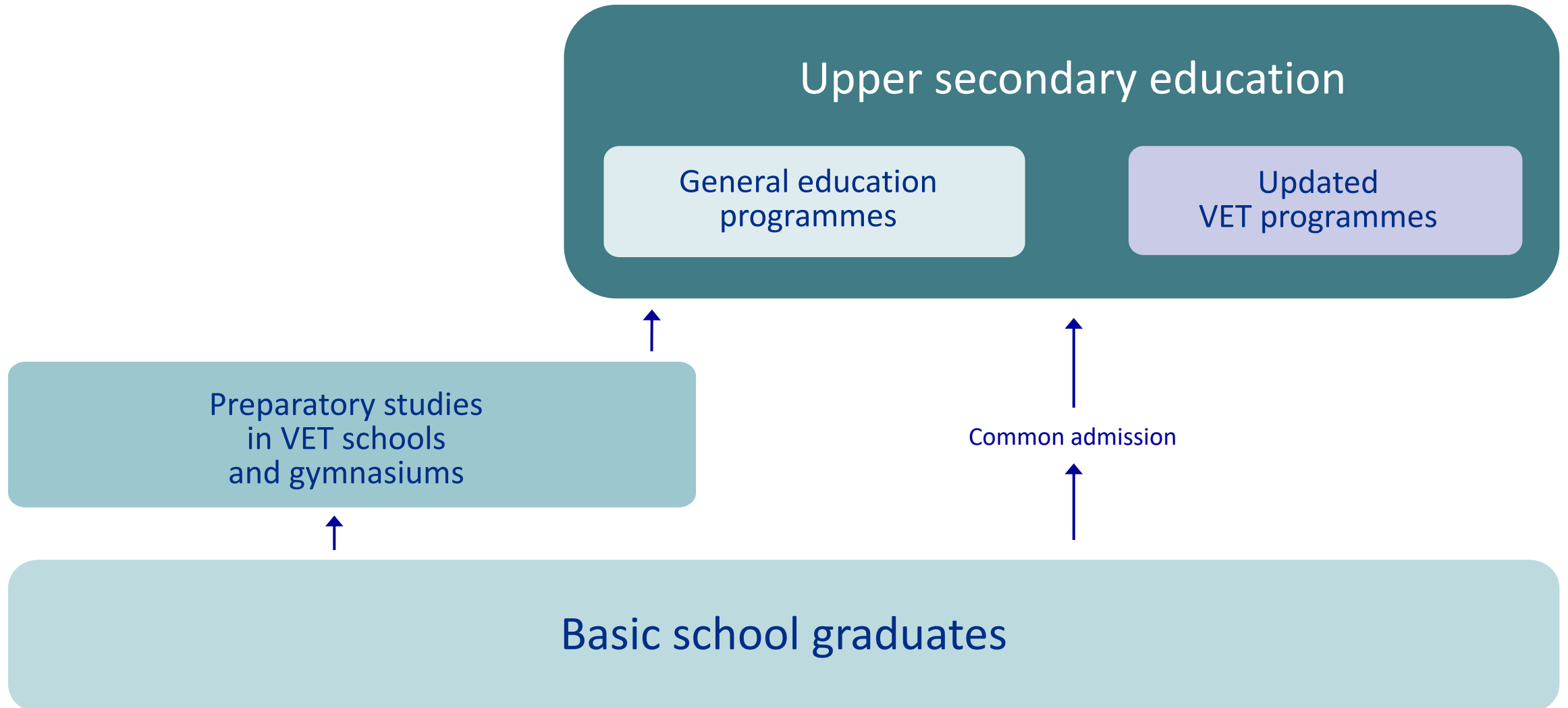
The following new broad-based curricula were launched in school-year 2025/26:

- 1) Bio- and Chemical Industry Technology*
- 2) Construction Technology
- 3) Beauty and Wellness Services
- 4) Information and Communication Technology
- 5) Sustainable Business Management*
- 6) Logistics and Warehouse Management
- 7) Machine Processing Technology
- 8) Communication and Network Technology
- 9) Textile Design and Technology
- 10) Food Technology
- 11) Tourism Services
- 12) Industrial Digital Technology*
- 13) Visual Media Technology

Development activities have been launched to compile curricula in the following areas:

- Sports *
- Music and performing arts
- Forestry
- Defense Forces
- Horticulture
- Arts and design
- Traditional crafts
- Agriculture
- Social work
- Woodworking technology
- Drone technology *
- Vehicle maintenance and repair technology
- Electronics, Electricity and automatics technology

New learning paths in secondary education



Kiitos! Thank you!

More information you can find on
Education Estonia website
[Estonian education system - Education
Estonia](#)

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estonia

