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ABSTRACT

This report on vocational education and training (VET) reform in Estonia is one of a series of country reports by the European Training Foundation on the reform process in partner countries. Chapter 1 provides basic data on the country. Chapter 2 describes the present situation and recent developments in VET. It covers main features of the educational system, strategic objectives for VET, and legislative framework. It looks at developments in these areas: administrative structure and decentralization; finance; adaptation of training to changes in the economy and society; identification of skills needs; quality standards and qualifications; promotion of continuing VET; social partners; involvement of enterprises in VET; equal opportunities; access to training; and vocational guidance and counseling. Chapter 3 describes international assistance and cooperation, including the European Union's Phare (VET reform) and Leonardo programs. Chapter 4 covers these challenges and further needs: skills needs analysis, institutional arrangements, and qualifications and training methods. Chapter 5 suggests these priorities for further assistance: system monitoring, links with the labor market, continuing training system, social partner involvement, vocational guidance and counseling system, exchange programs, rural area youth, and teacher and trainer training. Appendixes include key indicators, VET system diagram, legislative framework, responsible bodies, and international assistance. (YLB)

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Report on the vocational education and training system

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COUNTRY REPORT

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European Training Foundation

Villa Gualino, Viale Settimio Severo, 65, I-10133 Torino
Tel: (39)11 630 22 22 / Fax: (39)11 630 22 00 / email: info@etf.it
Web: <http://www.etf.it>

The European Training Foundation is an agency of the European Community which works in the field of vocational education and training in Central and Eastern Europe, the New Independent States and Mongolia. The Foundation also provides technical assistance to the European Commission for the Tempus Programme.



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Reform in

ESTONIA

A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the Internet. It can be accessed through the Europa server (<http://europa.eu.int>).

Cataloguing data can be found at the end of this publication

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FOREWORD

This report on vocational education and training reform has been produced by the European Training Foundation based mainly on information provided by the National Observatory. The report consists of a condensed description of the present situation in vocational education and training and analysis of the main challenges facing vocational education and training reform in the country. It also outlines possible priorities for future assistance to sustain and further the reform process. The report will be updated in 1998.

In order to provide accurate, up to date information on the progress of reform, a network of National Observatories has been set up by the Foundation in partnership with the national authorities of the partner countries. These National Observatories, mainly hosted by existing organisations involved in the reform process, gather and analyse information on vocational education and training issues according to a common framework agreed with the Foundation. The Observatories are also responsible for the dissemination of their outputs. Since 1996, National Observatories have been set up in 22 partner countries eligible for support under the EU Phare¹ and Tacis² Programmes. The Foundation aims to set up Observatories in all remaining partner countries in these regions by the end of 1997.

This report is one of a series of country reports and factsheets which the Foundation is currently producing on the reform process in each of the partner countries. The Foundation intends to produce these documents on an annual basis. These reports are available from the Foundation and can also be consulted on the Foundation's Home Page on the WWW. Enquiries regarding the reports should be addressed to the Information & Publications Department at the Foundation.

Please note that more detailed information on vocational education and training reform issues in each country is also available directly from the respective National Observatory. Please refer to the list of National Observatories enclosed in this report.

Torino, October 1997

¹ In the Phare area, Observatories have been set up in Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovenia

² In the Tacis area, Observatories have been set up in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russian Federation (Moscow and St Petersburg) Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

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1. BASIC DATA

Since independence in 1991, successive Governments in Estonia have kept the country on the road towards a market-based system. The economy has been restructured and stabilised, substantial progress has been made in the liberalisation of prices, keeping trade free from tariffs and quantitative restrictions and in attracting foreign investment. The move to an open economic system means significant changes in the skills required by the industry, construction, service and management sectors. Estonia signed the Europe Association Agreement on 12 June 1995.

Geographic area:	45,227 km ²
Total population / population density / growth:	1,462,130 (1995) / 32.3 km ² / decline 1%
Urban Population:	69.8% (1995)
Age structure:	0-14: 20.7% / 15-24: 14.2% / 25-44 28.5% / 45-64 23.5% / 65-max 13.1% (1995)
Ethnic profile:	Estonians (64.6%), Russians (28.5%), Ukrainians (2.6%), Belorussians (1.5%), Finns (0.9%), Other (1.9%)
Languages:	Estonian (official), Russian
GDP-ECU/GDP per capita-PPP-ECU/ growth:	5.9 Billion / per capita 3,920 (1995) / growth 4% (1996), 3.5% forecast (1997)
Inflation:	23% (1996), 15% forecast (1997)
Privatisation of state enterprises:	Well advanced for both large and small-scale. Most large enterprises sold except transport, telecommunication and energy sectors (1996).
Unemployment: (ILO definition)	10.2% (Fourth quarter 1996) / under 25's 11.8% (1994) / 25's and over 6.9%
Education budget:	5.3% of GDP (1995); vocational training 1.2% (1995)

2. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

2.1 Main features of system

The Estonian educational system consists of pre-school, primary, secondary, vocational, university/higher level, and adult education. The instructional languages are Estonian or Russian. There are two options after basic school - upper secondary school (grades 10-12) or vocational school. (See Annex 2 for further details). The vocational education programmes available are:

- 2 or 3 year programmes in vocational schools which focus very much on basic skills for narrow specialisations;
- post-secondary technical schools with programmes lasting between 2.5 years for gymnasium and 4 years for basic school graduates;
- applied higher education institutions.
- Some vocational schools provide secondary education additionally to vocational education.
- The secondary school certificate gives the right to continue education either in universities or other institutions of higher education.
- Currently there are 91 schools offering vocational training. (60% in the Estonian language, 20% in Russian and 20% in both). The number of students enrolling in vocational courses declined between 1991/92 and 1996. For 1995 vocational education and training student enrolment represented 25.9% of overall secondary education enrolment.
- Since 1991, 20 new public and private schools for tertiary (applied higher) education have been opened. Most of these new institutions provide programmes leading to advanced professional qualification. 4 of 8 of these public applied higher education institutions were previous *Technicums*. The administrative responsibility of non-post-secondary level vocational education institutions is delegated to local municipalities.

2.2 Strategic objectives for vocational education and training

A formal strategy of vocational education and training system reform is not yet in place although the Ministry of Education is currently working on a policy document. The overall objective remains one of alignment to present-day labour market needs.

The Minister of Education presented the Ministry's priorities at the "Forum of Education 1996" in Pärnu as being the following:

- to reform the vocational education and training system in accordance with the changing economy;
- to audit vocational education and training schools and curricula;
- to set up additional pilot schools and to modernise vocational education and training programmes;
- teachers' and trainers' education;
- the co-operation of social partners, vocational education and training reformers and Ministry; and
- the setting up of trade councils to work for consensus on the needs of society and the labour market.

2.3 Legislative framework

Several laws influence the provision of education and training in Estonia, including The Law on Education (March, 1993) , the Law on Private Schools (June, 1993), the Law on Basic and Upper-Secondary Schools (September, 1993), the Law on Adult Education (November, 1993), the University Law (January, 1995) and the Law on Vocational Education Institutions (June 1995). These are described in more detail in Annex 3.

Draft policy guidelines (including occupational competencies in key sectors), have been provided through the Phare vocational education and training programme to the Vocational Education Department and are currently being discussed by a wider audience, including social partners. These initiatives will eventually move towards the legislative phase.

2.4 Developments in specific areas

2.4.1 Administrative structure and level of decentralisation

The Ministry of Education is responsible for education in its entirety. It was restructured in 1996, with the Vocational education and training Department being re-established. Some institutions which offer vocational programmes fall under sectoral ministries, local authorities or private organisations (Annex 4). Although these schools act independently in matters of school management, the Ministry of Education lays down the policy and the rules. The MOE also grants licences to private educational institutions.

Local municipalities are responsible for the development and administration of pre-school, primary, secondary general education institutions. There are only 5 municipal education institutions where it is possible to acquire vocational education at II level.

Following a period of frequent re-organisation of research and pedagogical centres in 1993 the Estonian Teacher Training Centre was established. This has hosted the National Centre for Examination and Qualifications since January 1997.

Centralised control regarding funding, administration and curricula still exists. It is essential that a clear definition of responsibilities at national, regional, municipal and local level should emerge, along with the systematic involvement of social partners in decision-making.

The decision by national educational authorities to decentralise further responsibilities, such as financing, to regional and local authorities is put at risk by the fact that the latter are not yet fully equipped to perform this task.

2.4.2 Finance

Costs for education and training are fully met at the state level. Law provides for schools to receive private funding both from companies and individuals, but this is currently at a low level.

According to the Ministry of Education in the future municipal schools should be established with local financial contributions for initial equipment and subsequent maintenance. However, local governments claim not to have adequate means to undertake this. The state pays for teachers' salaries in all vocational education and training schools, based on student numbers, and meets the costs of maintenance in state schools. A new arrangement for funding vocational education and training provides for the payment to the school of a lump sum in proportion to the number of students. Given the scarcity of vocational education and training funds in general, hardly any funds are available for badly needed improvements to infrastructure and programmes.

Among the stated admission rate there are no tuition fees in public schools or state institutions of higher education, although for some tertiary level subjects fees are applied where numbers of qualifying students exceed admission numbers. Since 1992, students in the tertiary sector have been supported by state loans.

2.4.3 Adaptation of training to change

Changes within the economy and society are not sufficiently matched by vocational education and training adaptation. The supply of labour does not (yet) meet demand due to, for example, the lack of relevant skills. Change is occurring in all sectors of the economy at the same time as in the global economy. This has several consequences on economic development, for example :

- the rural sector, traditionally significant in Estonia, is undergoing the twin process of re-affirming private farms as the basis of agriculture along with facing the general problems of rural decline;

- the restructuring of industry involves not only overcoming Soviet patterns, but adapting to a post-industrial economy, based increasingly on services, information and communication technologies.
- The Phare report for 1996 indicates that the main foreign income earners will be (a) forestry products, (b) agricultural products, (c) information technology, (d) biotechnology and (e) tourism.

These factors will be obviously linked to vocational education and training priorities. As part of the adaptation and modernisation process the Phare vocational education and training programme has developed a modular, industry-based curriculum approach. This has been approved by the MOE and is being implemented in all Phare pilot schools. It involves the development and successful piloting of a series of national surveys with the active support of social partners in order to identify national occupation competencies. Two sectors have already been surveyed - construction and tourism. In order to achieve flexibility in the future the number and range of occupational competence surveys/ profiles so far developed will have to be expanded considerably and so will the development of modular-based curricula, which will then have to be evaluated and accredited at national level and disseminated to all other schools in Estonia.

2.4.4 Identification of skills needs

The MOE's aim is to complete as soon as possible the definition of occupational competencies, based on industry needs and international standards, for all key economic sectors. First steps have been taken in this respect. Selected employers are now being consulted on skill requirements and on draft job profiles, before modules for new courses are prepared. Contact with companies had previously almost ceased and schools were experiencing difficulty in defining future qualification needs. Currently there is no information planning system. Furthermore, most employers lack the necessary methodology to assess their current and future qualification needs in a manner in which the education and training system could respond to.

2.4.5 Quality standards and qualifications

A modular, industry-based curriculum approach has been developed under the Phare programme. Concerning the two sectors already surveyed (construction and tourism), the Estonian Construction Employers Association has formally approved these profiles for use within the construction sector. By the end of this programme four other key economic sectors will have been surveyed. This work will involve co-operation between the Phare programme and other bilateral programmes.

The Ministry of Education recently established the National Centre for Examinations and Qualifications (NCEQ) which co-ordinates training courses and training providers. Discussions are underway between the MOE, MOSA, NCEQ and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry concerning who should have the responsibility for assessment and certification of competencies and for defining standards for vocational qualifications. The centre will assume a key role in establishing mechanisms for quality assurance of vocational education and training delivery and will contribute to the mutual recognition of qualifications on both a national and regional EU scale, not only for initial but also for continuing vocational education and training.

2.4.6 Promotion of continuing vocational training

Although the law provides for vocational schools to offer flexible short-term upgrading and retraining for adults, a coherent national training policy, comprising both initial and continuing training, does not yet exist. Continuing training is mostly taken care of by the private sector (commercial and NGO). There is at present no training system in place for the unemployed or adults who are facing changes in their job profiles or dismissal.

During recent years, over 40 state-supported adult education institutions have been established. Much of this is based on private initiatives. A voluntary umbrella organisation "ANDRAS" co-ordinates non-formal continuing training activities, and other associations such as the Adult Education League, the Adult Educators' Association, Open Education Association and Study Circles Association have been established. ANDRAS is also active in research and consulting work, which includes the analysis of continuing training needs, the determination of prerequisites for regional development, the assessment of training efficiency, etc.

The state budget of 1996 includes a small amount for funding complementary training of teachers, civil servants and unemployed retraining (financing of the latter being organised through the Labour Market Board). A few adult education and training centres exist in the cities, but no national system has been developed yet. In addition, further education courses can be provided and are available in 65% of the vocational training institutions and in most universities. However, there is, a need for these institutions to re-orientate towards the continuing training needs of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), as well as government bodies and utilities. This remains true for other adult training institutions in Estonia.

The quality of continuing training provision in private sector is variable. However some are proving very successful commercially and will have lessons to offer public providers and employers. To ensure the proper breadth of continuing training, it is essential that public institutions are better resourced, in both equipment and facilities in order to exploit emerging technologies and increase staff competence. The current emphasis on classroom-based instruction and didactic methodologies needs urgent change towards flexible learning methods, including all forms of open and distance learning.

2.4.7 Social partners

According to the 1995 Law on Vocational Education Schools, trade councils will be established to enable the Ministry of Education to consult with social partners in order to achieve effectiveness. The legal possibility of social partners being represented on school boards is not yet seen as being of benefit. Conversely employers, although prepared to participate, feel they do not have enough control of education and training reforms. Trade unions instead remain concerned primarily with workers' protection at enterprise level.

There is no national body representing social partners, key government ministries, education and other national interest groups. However, some employer organisations are taking part in the Phare vocational education and training reform programme.

2.4.8 Involvement of enterprises in vocational education and training

The traditional and well-established connection between vocational schools and enterprise has almost completely vanished. Thus, the involvement of enterprises in the provision of vocational education and training is marginal and has to be addressed in the immediate future.

2.4.9 Equal opportunities

While in the previous system the phenomenon of unemployment was virtually non-existent, women formed the biggest part of hidden employment and are now the first ones to be dismissed in the case of lay-offs.

Special programmes concerning for example access to training, woman in age-groups over 40 and women returnees are still insufficient.

2.4.10 Access to training

Ethnic minorities (in the case of Russians which account for 28.5% of the population) enjoy basically the same rights as Estonians, with special schools catering for their language needs. Application for Estonian citizenship, however, requires candidates to be able to write, read and converse in the Estonian language. National programmes which are co-funded by Phare provide the language training process.

Special programmes, in particular long-term unemployed, people older than 40 and for the handicapped are still insufficient.

In the absence of a balanced regional development programme and limited mobility of people due to high transport costs and income difficulties, people in rural areas cannot be considered to have equal access to training. This is also where the majority of unemployed people is registered.

2.4.11 Vocational guidance and counselling

There is currently no formal vocational orientation, counselling or guidance in the education system.

3. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND CO-OPERATION

3.1 Phare Assistance in the field of vocational education and training

The Phare 1994-97 vocational education and training reform programme (3 MECU), aims at enabling the vocational education and training system to train people with skills which will equip them to manage in the rapidly changing economic environment in Estonia. To achieve this it supports:

- curriculum development;
- teacher training and the upgrading of learning materials;
- partnerships with EU schools and policy development in the vocational education and training area.

13 pilot schools are involved in the programme. Government officials, as well as representatives from some social partner organisations, are also actively involved. The programme also promotes national policy initiatives which have led to discussions on the relationship between the education system and the economy.

Additionally, Phare is providing assistance through its sectoral programmes which often include training components. A Phare Cross-border Co-operation programme for the Baltic Sea region (approved 1995) mainly aims at infra-structural development and environmental protection. (See Annex 5).

The national "Tiger Leap" programme, launched in early 1996, aims to create access to computers and Internet for all school children, to develop Estonian language computer curricula and materials and to strive for improvements in the quality of education right into the 21st century. A Phare programme will assist efforts in this respect.

Phare and bilateral assistance to the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) have until now focused on developing the services of employment offices and improving their information systems. The MOSA, with the National Labour Market Board (NLMB) as its executive body, is now aiming to refine an active labour market policy to guide job-seekers back into gainful employment and to support employment creation.

3.2 Preparatory work for Leonardo

Work has only just begun concerning Leonardo in Estonia. The national Leonardo office has been established in the Foundation of Vocational Education and Training. During 1997 a series of preparatory measures will be organised including media events. The government will shortly have to confirm to the European Commission the means by which it intends to finance its participation. The Europe Agreement must also be fully ratified by EU Member States to allow Estonia to become a full partner in Leonardo programme.

3.3 Other assistance

Significant bilateral activity is taking place mainly with Baltic partners, including Denmark, which has assisted with vocational education and training reform and business education; Germany which is setting up, amongst other activities, a demonstration centre for training in commerce and another for metallurgy and electronics; Finland which is active at institutional level in the fields of agriculture, forestry and construction and the Nordic Council which has launched a large teacher training programme. (See Annex 5).

4. CHALLENGES AND FURTHER NEEDS

In order to achieve the previously stated objectives for vocational education and training system reform during economic transition, Estonia faces the challenge of further organising continuing reforms already underway and placing them within a coherent national strategy which also includes accession issues. These cover areas such as vocational education and training school auditing and curricula development; additional pilot school activities and vocational education and training programme modernisation; teacher and trainer education; achieving the involvement of all social partners, vocational education and training reformers and Ministry officials; and the setting up of trade councils to work for consensus on the needs of society and the labour market.

More precisely:

4.1 Skills needs analysis

It is necessary to define concretely professions and professional requirements by developing national occupational competence guidelines for all key economic sectors alongside an overall framework of formal training standards, assessment and certification, not only in the field of initial vocational education and training, but also for continuing vocational education and training. These need to be firmly linked to the requirements originating in the labour market, state economic development forecasts and consequent vocational training priorities. This will require that all related parties (educators, employers, state bodies etc.) be actively involved in labour market policy development.

4.2 Institutional arrangements

Continuous support will be needed to design and implement a coherent vocational education and training policy with a view to EU accession. This will include the development of educational research which has suffered as a result of frequent administrative change.

To create a strong inter-relationship between industry-led curricular reforms based on national needs, as well as EU standards, and the change-process underway in the vocational education and training system. This will require changes in the structure of financing in order to: increase efficiency; take into account the relative costs of different professions and the shift towards student-oriented financing and to match long-term strategy. These steps will require changes in school management and greater involvement from social partners.

A continuing education and training system should be established which is linked to market needs analysis. This will include labour market training provision combined with SME start-up and business support schemes. Furthermore, flexibility within retraining, complementary training systems and the promotion of lifelong learning in order to increase individual motivation will be needed. It must also be ensured that access to training and re-training and support to entrepreneurial activity is ensured, especially in rural areas.

The upgrading of equipment, under way in the Phare pilot schools is necessary over the whole system. Radical decisions will also be required on the use of an unfinished or depreciated building infrastructure.

4.3 Qualifications and training methods

The current draft framework for national curricula needs to be developed into an active, strategic plan with the involvement of the MOE as well as social partners. Preliminary work on a national system of qualification standards will need to be continued and will need to cover all identified professions.

The training programme for trainers and teachers in methodologies, curriculum development and new subjects needs upgrading. This will require substantial resources. The further development of teaching strategies will be needed in order to fully support these activities.

Career guidance and counselling provision is necessary as currently no overall national system exists although upon the initiative of the MOE development of such a system has recently begun.

5. POSSIBLE PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE ASSISTANCE

Future support should focus primarily on action which will further consolidate existing reforms. These include:

- strengthening and encouraging the involvement of social partners in training;
- developing a comprehensive national vocational education and training framework including professional, examination and qualification standards;
- information systems development.

Furthermore areas not yet addressed adequately need to be prioritised. These include: continuing training and its integration with initial training; management training and attention to SME development, counselling and guidance; and action related to disadvantaged and special groups and areas.

Within this context, the dissemination of the results of 1994 Phare programme, which has touched all the key areas of reform will be particularly productive.

The major priorities can be presented in the following areas:

Monitoring of the vocational education and training system and its links with the **labour market** is a priority with information gathering and analysis being needed in order to map the links between vocational education and training and the labour market on a national and regional basis. The results can then be fed into policy-making and planning. This requires setting up and maintaining **information systems**.

There is no **continuing training system** for adult unemployed people. Encouragement should be given to the development of an integrated initial and continuing training system. Intervention should concentrate on increasing horizontal and vertical mobility in the vocational education and training system.

There is no apprenticeship system and the links between schools and companies has all but disappeared. Although some **social partners** are involved in policy and trade councils are planned, support is needed to strengthen the infrastructure of the **social partners** as a whole.

A **vocational guidance and counselling system** needs to be established to enhance the overall effectiveness of the vocational education and training system.

Exchange programmes will be useful, specifically involving the intermediate and lower levels of staff, particularly from state vocational schools, which to date have had little international experience. Cross-European internships and practical placements for teachers and students will be productive in **experience building**.

Emphasis is needed on entrepreneurial training and vocational education and training initiatives in rural areas. **Young people in rural areas** increasingly risk being excluded. Structural fund -type solutions could address this. Similarly a group of long-term **unemployed** people is emerging for whom such an approach could help.

Occupational competencies in key economic sectors need defining together within a national framework with special reference to EU standards, the mutual recognition of qualifications and qualification upgrading of school managers and teachers. This involves the broadening of vocational education and training to include **continuing training** and lifelong learning aspects. High quality training in growth sectors are likely to raise the status of vocational education and training. This requires the **training of teachers and trainers**, especially in developing and applying European standard methodologies and curricula.

Annexes

1. Key indicators
2. Diagram of the vocational education and training system
3. Legislative framework
4. Responsible bodies
5. International assistance

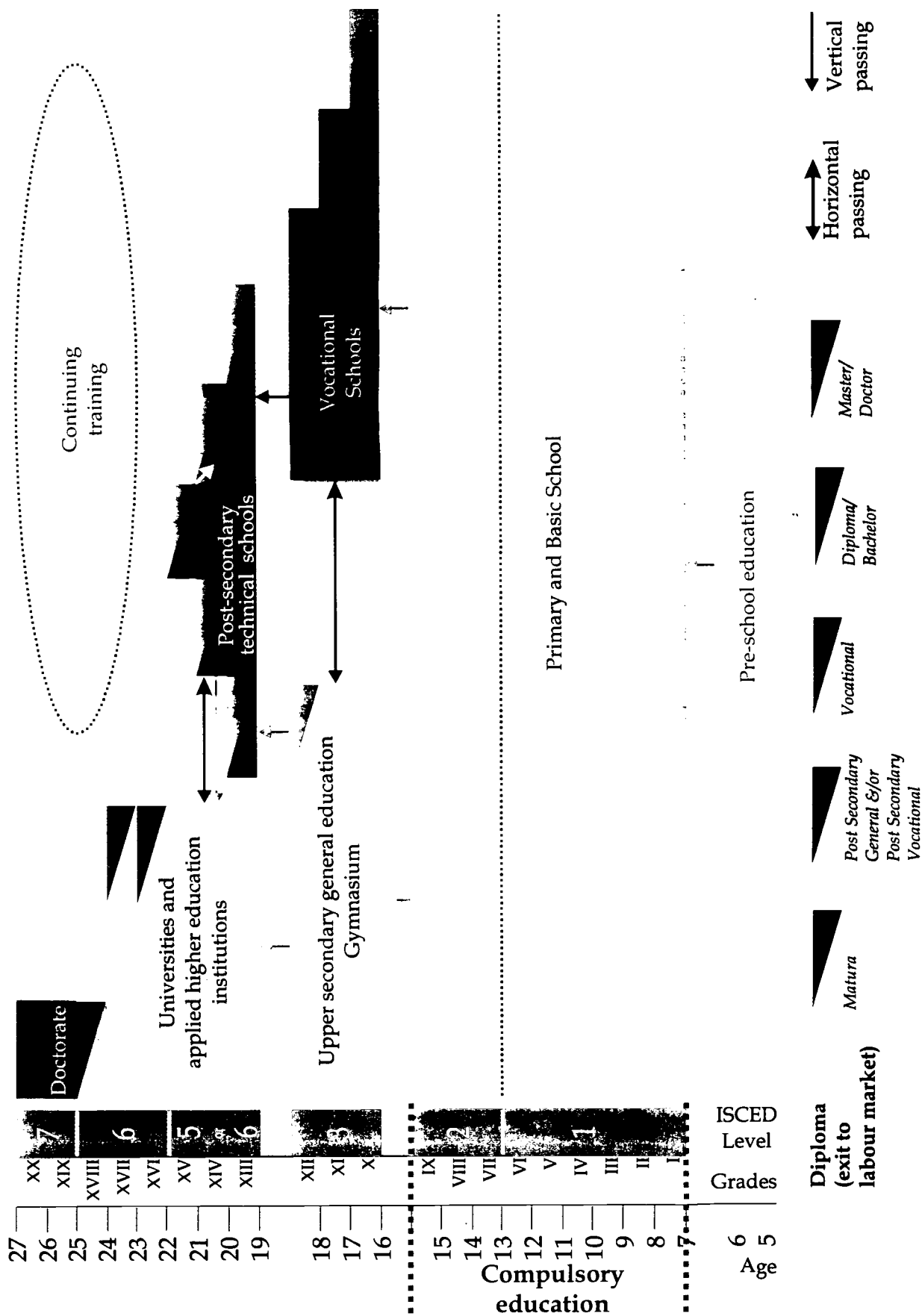
ANNEX 1

Key Indicators ¹.

Indicators	1995		
A. Access and Participation			
1. Participation in education and training of 16 year olds of which in vocational education and training	82.6% 27.85%		
2. Participation in education and training of 18 year olds of which in vocational education and training	49.48% 56.47%		
3. Relative importance of vocational education and training in secondary education (in terms of enrolment)			
Total	25.88%		
Males	33.83%		
Females	19.13%		
4. Educational attainment of the population (25-59 years old)	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3	ISCED 5-7
Total	15.79%	41.15%	43.06%
Males	18.80%	44.33%	36.88%
Females	13.14%	38.36%	48.49%
(25-29 years old)			
Total	7.57%	54.09%	38.34%
Males	10.53%	60.26%	29.21%
Females	4.93%	48.59%	46.48%
B. Finance			
5. Public Expenditure on Education as percentage of GDP	5.3% *		
6. Public Expenditure on vocational education and training as percentage of GDP	1.2%		
C. Labour Market Trends			
7. Number of employed	634.257		
8. Unemployment rates			
Total	8.59%		
Younger than 25	13.45%		
Older than 25	7.73%		
9. Unemployment rates by educational attainment of the population (25-59 years old)	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3	ISCED 5-7
Total	13.51%	9.30%	5.21%
Males	14.36%	10.06%	5.11%
Females	12.10%	8.42%	5.29%

- only current expenditure
- ¹ Data provided by National observatory.

Diagram of vocational education and training system



ERIC This diagram represents the first stage in the ongoing development of a standard graphical model for vocational education and training systems. Future refinement may include the further alignment of terms, student enrolment and dropout figure, and local language terms.

ANNEX 3

Legislative Framework

EDUCATION

Laws on education and other legislative acts as well as the State budget are decided on by *Saeima* (Parliament). Rules, regulations etc. of nation-wide importance are decided on by the *Cabinet of Ministers* after approval by the appropriate commissions in the Cabinet.

A decision by the Cabinet of Ministers is needed in order to open a new state-funded higher, technical or vocational education institution.

The Education law adopted in 1991 regulates the educational system as a whole, determines the rights and duties of the state, municipal governments, public organisations, professional corporations and associations, private people, educational institutions, parents, pupils, students as well as determining the types of education and educational institutions. It was created as a legal framework with a series of laws regulating individual types of education.

Legislative acts in the framework of the Education Law are by-laws, statutes and template statutes.

Licensing regulations determine the order of issuing a licence to begin entrepreneurial activities related to education. *Accreditation regulations* determine the order according to which an educational institution is evaluated prior to being awarded the right to issue state-recognised education documents.

A Law on Higher Education establishments was adopted in 1995. It defines higher education and distinguishes the different types of higher education establishments.

This law also allows for the establishment of Colleges offering professional education.

Social protection and social policy

In 1995 several new laws were adopted which cover all aspects of social protection.

The umbrella law is the "Law of Social Security" which formulates the general principles of social protection in the state.

ANNEX 4

Responsible Bodies

The Ministry of Education is responsible for education in its entirety, in particular: administration, approval of admissions, system development and planning, national curricula development, approval of school courses of study and programmes, inspection of schools, supervision of final certificate issuing and organisation of research work. It was restructured in 1996, with the **Vocational Education Department** also re-established. The Department has three structural units - Educational Management Service, Curriculum Service and Adult Education Service.

Some institutions which offer vocational programmes fall under other ministries, local authorities or private organisations.

Ministry of Education (59 schools), **National Police Board** (2), **Ministry of Agriculture** (13), **Ministry of Transport and Communications** (1), **Municipalities** (3) and **Private organisations** (7). Although these schools act independently in matters of school management, the Ministry of Education lays down the policy and the rules.

The Ministry of Agriculture remains responsible for agricultural education and training.

Other groups which are responsible for vocational schools act independently in matters of school management, but follow state education policy. Decisions of principle are taken and confirmed by the Ministry of Education. The school courses of study are registered and approved according to the rules established by the Ministry of Education.

The VOT (*Vabariiklik Opetajate Täiendusinstituut*) institute, which was closed down in 1989 supported the ÜPUI (*The Institute of Voluntary Pedagogical Research*) which still exists, although also in danger of closure. The PTUI (*The Institute of Scientific Research of Pedagogy*), the most accomplished reference point for pedagogy and subject methodology, has also been closed down.

With the reorganisation of the combined Ministries of Culture and Education in March 1993, the research, counselling and evaluation functions were placed in a separate department of the National School Board which ceased to exist on 31 December 1995. Its activities were taken over by the Ministry for Culture and Education (since the beginning of 1996, split into two Ministries).

In 1993 the Estonian Teacher Training Centre was established which has hosted the National Centre for Examination and Qualifications since January 1997.

ANNEX 5

International Assistance

Phare vocational education and training programmes

Vocational education and training Reform (ES9409) 1994-97

- curricula revision; teacher training; equipment upgrading in 13 pilot schools; policy development; development of a national framework in vocational education and training
- 3.0 MECU

Aimed at enabling the vocational education and training system to train people with skills which will equip them to manage in the rapidly changing economic climate in Estonia. To achieve this it supports curriculum development, teacher training and the upgrading of learning materials, partnerships with EU schools and policy development in the vocational education and training area. 13 pilot schools are involved. Government officials, as well as representatives from some social partner organisations, are actively involved. The programme also promotes national policy initiatives which have led to discussions on the relationship of the education system and the economy.

Continuation of the above mentioned Phare programme via the Phare Higher Education and Science Reform programme (3rd allocation -) and the Information Systems in Education programmes (2nd allocation - both under negotiation). These programmes are expected to receive further Phare allocations.

Business Education Reform (ES9302/03 and as part of the IHRD programme - ES9502)

1995-98

- development of both a four-year business education cycle in one pilot institution and 2 to 3-year programmes in 8 other business schools
- development short-cycle adult education programmes in selected subjects
- 1993-95: 1.31 MECU
- 1995: 1.0 MECU

Social Safety and Health Programme (ES9503) 1995-97

- development of a labour market training infrastructure and programmes
- 0.5 MECU (for the training component)

Phare Higher Education and Science Reform programme (ES 9502.02 HE) (ES 9612.01).

- Integrating higher education and research institutions.
- Development and implementation of a national strategy on how to integrate science (teaching), research and support for industry.
- Two Centres of Strategic Competence in the fields of gene technologies and materials science established; Research equipment and training curricula upgraded; Contract research for industry.
- 1995: 0.5 MECU, 1996: 1.6 MECU

Phare Language Training programme(ES9502.02 LT);

- Integration of all ethnic minorities into the Estonian society.
- Design and implementation of a national Estonian language training strategy for non-Estonian speakers.
- Establishment of a national Language Strategy Centre; Launching, monitoring and evaluating a number of language training projects.
- Phare 1995: 0.2 MECU, 1996: 1.4 MECU

Phare Information Systems in Education programme (ES9612.02).

- Integration of new information and communication technologies into the Estonian school system.
- Designing of a national policy and identification of appropriate strategies and resources; Development and implementation of a national and regional information system for compulsory education; Development and implementation of a school-based management information system.
- All information and communication technology initiatives in Estonia co-ordinated; Education database to provide management and planning information established; The use of information and communication technologies in some schools piloted to fulfil local, regional and national administration needs.
- Phare 1996: 0.6 MECU

Tempus

Estonia has been part in the Tempus programme since 1992. According to the priorities as defined by the Commission and the Estonian authorities, Tempus action has mainly focused on curriculum development in applied sciences and technologies, social sciences, natural sciences and mathematics, languages and teacher training, as well as Baltic cooperation. From a total allocation of 9.43 MECU over the period 1992-96, 31 Joint European Projects, 376 Individual Mobility Grants and 8 Complementary Measures have been supported.

(Tempus Priorities for Estonia for 1998-2000 are currently being defined by the European Commission together with the Estonian authorities.)

- 1992-1996: 9.43 MECU

Other activities

- Baltic Conference on "Vocational Education and Training - The Importance of European Co-operation", Tallinn, 22-23 April 1996;
- Baltic Vocational Education and Training Policy Advisors' workshop, Turin, 17-21 February 1997.

Leonardo da Vinci programme - preparatory measures

Measures to support the preparation for participation in the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

Output: country dossiers, thematic conferences, support for partnership-building

Budget: 67, 500 ECU from Commission Agreement no. 96-ETFO-LEO-0005

Other EU activities

The following Phare programmes include education and training components:

- Phare 1996 Cross-border Co-operation programme for the Baltic Sea region, aiming at infrastructure development and environmental protection;
- Phare Multi-country Distance Education and Higher Education programmes;
- Phare 1996 Regional Development programme and other sector programmes.

Other Assistance

The Estonian National School Board, (now closed), 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 (DEVS) 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 tailored to Estonian wishes and needs". It also included a development programme for school managers 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 to develop a four-year business education programme at one leading institution and shorter-cycle programmes at 8 other institutions. The project is now continuing with Phare support.

The **German-Estonian** pilot project at Tallinn School of Commerce began in 1993 and will run for 4 years. It aims at developing a model centre for training in the commercial area. The project introduces two new curricula - commercial training in materials management and banking, provides new equipment and familiarises teachers with innovative learning methods.

In the fields of metallurgy and electronics a German pilot project is establishing a model centre at Tallinn Lilleküla Mechanics School.

A new graphics centre has been established in a **Danish-Estonian** co-operation project at Tallinn Graphic School.

Many **Finnish** projects are currently active, mainly at institutional level (one Finnish institution has been twinned with another Estonian institution) and covering the fields of agriculture, forestry and construction, amongst others.

In addition, the **Nordic Council** launched a large teacher training programme in 1996, involving all three Baltic countries.

National Observatories Addresses

Central and Eastern Europe

Albania

Mr Kastriot Sulka
Team Leader of National Observatory
and Director of Host Institute

☒ INSTITUTE OF LABOUR &
SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Rr. Kavajes
ALB Tirana

☎ Tel. 355 42 37966
Fax. 355 42 27942

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Mr Robert Dimitrovski
Team Leader of National Observatory

☒ CENTRE FOR VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION, TRAINING
AND DEVELOPMENT

Partizanska str.
FYR Bitola

☎ Tel. 389 97 224090
Fax. 389 97 224050

Mr Konstantin Petkovski
Director of Centre

Poland

Mr Tadeusz Kozek
Team Leader of National Observatory
and Director of Host Organisation

☒ BKKK

79 Koszykowa
PL 02 008 Warszawa

☎ Tel. 48 22 6253937
Fax. 48 22 6252805

☒ e-mail: tadeuszkc@cofund.org.pl

Bulgaria

Dr Tzako Pantaleev
Team Leader of National Observatory

☒ MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY

Graf Ignatiev str. 15, floor 4
BG 1000 Sofia

☎ Tel. 359 2 809203
Fax. 359 2 9818146

☒ e-mail: 0516@main.infotel.bg

Ms Magdalena Ivanova
PMU Director

Hungary

Dr István Simonics
Team Leader of National Observatory

☒ NIVE, NATIONAL
INSTITUTE FOR
VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Berzsenyi D. u. 6
H 1087 Budapest

☎ Tel. 36 1 2101065
Fax. 36 1 3339361

☒ e-mail: isimon@nive.hu

Prof Antal Jekkel
Director General of Host Institute

Romania

Dr Cesar Birzea
Team Leader of National Observatory
and Director of Host Institute

☒ INSTITUTE FOR
EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

37 Stirbei voda, str. 1
RO 70732 Bucuresti

☎ Tel. 40 1 6136491
Fax. 40 1 3121447

☒ e-mail: ise@acc.usis.ro

Czech Republic

Ms Olga Ilyina
Team Leader of National Observatory

☒ NATIONAL TRAINING
FUND NVF

Vaclavske Namesti 43
CZ 110 00 Praha 1

☎ Tel. 420 2 24 22 87 32
Fax. 420 2 24 21 44 75

☒ e-mail: oli@observatory.nvf.cz

Ms Miroslava Kopicová
Director of Host Institute

Lithuania

Mrs Romualda Vilimiene
Team Leader of National Observatory

☒ METHODOICAL CENTRE
FOR VET

Gelezinio Vilko g. 12
LT 2600 Vilnius

☎ Tel. 370 2 250185
Fax. 370 2 250183

☒ e-mail: pmit@pmmc.elnet.lt

Dr Vincentas Dienys
Director of Methodical Centre

Slovak Republic

Mr Ivan Stankovsky
Director of Host Institute

☒ STATE INSTITUTE OF
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
AND TRAINING (SIOV)

Bellova 54/A
SQ 83101 Bratislava

☎ Tel. 421 7 376774
Fax. 421 7 376774

Estonia

Ms Tiina Annus
Team Leader of National Observatory

☒ NATIONAL OBSERVATORY
ESTONIA

Sakala 23
EE 0001 Tallinn

☎ Tel. 372 2682770
Fax. 372 2682770

☒ e-mail: katrin@tallinn.astronet.ee

Mrs Lea Orro
PMU Director

Latvia

Dr Andrejs Rauhvargers
Team Leader of National Observatory
and Director of Academic Information
Centre

☒ ACADEMIC INFORMATION
CENTRE

Valnu iela 2
LV 1098 Riga

☎ Tel. 371 7 225 155
Fax. 371 7 221006

☒ e-mail: enic@izm.gov.lv

Slovenia

Ms Martina Trbanc
Team Leader of National Observatory

☒ CENTRE FOR VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION AND
TRAINING

Kavciceva 66
SLO 1000 Ljubljana

☎ Tel. 386 61 448119
Fax. 386 61 448356

☒ e-mail:
observatorij@infosol.mss.edus.si

Mr Vladimir Tkalec
Director of Centre for Vocational
Education

New Independent States and Mongolia

Azerbaijan

Mr Yashar Gamzayev
Mr Ali-Aga Ismailov
National Observatory

☒ Ministry of Labour and Social
Protection of Population
Government House
AZB 370016 Baku

☎ Tel. 994 12 648047 (Mr Ismailov)
Fax. 994 12 939472 (Mr Gamzayev)

Belarus

Mr Edward Kalitsky, Team leader
Ms Olga Koljada, Assistant
National Observatory

☒ Karl Liebknecht Str. 32
BR 220004 Minsk

☎ Tel. 375 172 207446 (Mr Kalitsky)
Tel. 375 172 201915 (Ms Koljada)
Fax. 375 172 200992/209952

Georgia

Mr Kote Glonti
Mrs Eteri Gvineria
National Observatory

☒ c/o EC Tacis Coordinating Unit
State Committee for Science and
Technology
12 Chanturia Street
GEO 380004 Tbilisi

☎ Tel. 995 32 220241 (Ms Gvineria)
✉ e-mail Kote@ns.global-erty.net

Kazakhstan

Mrs Shajzada Tazbulatova, Team
leader
Ms Aigul Khasenova, Assistant
National Observatory

☒ Prospekt Abaya 107A, Apt. 12
KAZ 480008 Almaty

☎ Tel. 7 3272 643696 (Ms
Tazbulatova)
Tel. 7 3272 398127 (Ms Khasenova)
Fax. 7 3272 532525

✉ e-mail shaizada@kaznet.kz

Kyrgyzstan

Ms Anar Beishembaieva, Team
Leader
Ms Zulfia Abdullaeva, Assistant
Ms Damira Sydykova, Assistant
National Observatory

☒ White House
KYR 720003 Bishkek

☎ Tel. 996 3312 222867
Fax. 996 3312 218627

✉ e-mail. atd@prez.bishkek.su
e-mail. atds@rhl.bishkek.su

Moldova

Mr Victor Pitei
Mr Vasile Costea

☒ Piata Marii Adunari Nationale 1
MOL 277033 Chisinau

☎ Tel. 373 2 228164 (Mr Pitei)
Fax. 373 2 232472 (Mr Pitei)
Fax. 373 2 22 85 23 (Mr Costea)

Mongolia

Mr Bayanjargal Sugar, Team Leader
Mrs Duguer Bujinlkham, Assistant
National Observatory

☒ c/o Mr Bat Ederne, State Secretary
Government Building III
MNG Ulaanbaatar 11

☎ Tel. 976 1 320130
Fax. 976 1 323158

✉ e-mail. onon@magicnet.mn
www. http://www.etf.it/no.mn/

Russian Federation

Dr Olga Oleinikova, Team Leader
Mrs Anna Isaieva, Assistant
National Observatory

☒ Ministry of General and
Vocational Education
Ulitsa Lyusinovskaya 51
RF 113833 Moscow

☎ Tel. 7 095 1575266
Fax. 7 095 1575266 (DrOleinikova)
Fax. 7 095 3712423 (Mrs Isaieva)

Russian Federation

Mr Dmitri Liubich, Team Leader
Mr Sergei Ivanov, Expert
Regional Observatory

☒ Centre for Education and
Methodology
Ulitsa Mirgorotskaya 16/5
RF 198000 St Petersburg

☎ Tel. 7 812 2770733 (Mr Liubich)
Tel. 7 812 528 75 57 (Mr Ivanov)
Fax. 7 812 2775247

✉ e-mail. liubich@place.spb.ru
e-mail. emicent@infopro.spb.su
(Mr Ivanov)

Tajikistan

Mr Farukh Zaripov
Mr Rustam Zioyev
National Observatory

☒ Ministry of Education c/o EC
Tacis Coordinating Unit
Prospekt Rudaki 44-46
TAD 734025 Dushanbe

☎ Tel. 7 3772 212609
Fax. 7 3772 510100

✉ e-mail farukh@td.silk.org
e-mail zioev@td.silk.org

Turkmenistan

Mr Nursakhat Bayramov
Mr Nourmukhammed Chariyev
National Observatory

☒ Gorogly Street 2
TME 744000 Ashgabat

☎ Tel. 993 12 351049
Fax. 993 12 398811

Ukraine

Dr Valery Bykov, Team Leader
Mrs Elena Duchonenko, Assistant
National Observatory

☒ Artema Str. 52-A
UKR 254053 Kiev

☎ Tel. 380 44 2447198/2113774
Fax. 380 44 2132390

✉ e-mail nou@niit.kiev.ua

Uzbekistan

Mr Shukrat Abdullaev, Team Leader
National Observatory

☒ c/o Mr Mirzakhid Sultanov,
Deputy Director
Tacis Co-ordinating Unit,
Uzbekistan
Tarasa Shevchenko St. 4
UZB 700029 Tashkent

☎ Tel. 7 3712 394018
Fax. 7 3712 360652

✉ e-mail taciscu@cutacis.bec.com.uz

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NEDERLAND

Sdu Servicecentrum Uitgevers
Christoffel Plantijnstraat 2
Postbus 20014
2500 EA 's-Gravenhege
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PORTUGAL

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NORGE

NIC Info A/S
Ostenjoveien 18
Boks 6512 Etterstad
N-0606 Oslo
Tel. (47-22) 97 45 00
Fax (47-22) 97 45 45

SCHWEIZ/SUISSE/SVIZZERA

OSEC
Stämpfenbachstraße 85
CH-8035 Zürich
Tel. (41-1) 365 53 15
Fax (41-1) 365 54 11
E-mail: urs.leimbacher@ecs.osec.inet.ch
URL: www.osec.ch

ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA

NIŠ CR - prodejná
Konviktská 5
CZ-113 57 Praha 1
Tel. (42-2) 24 22 94 33
Fax (42-2) 24 22 94 33
E-mail: nkposp@dec.nis.cz
URL: www.nis.cz

CYPRUS

Cyprus Chamber Of Commerce & Industry
38, Grivas Digenis Ave
Mail orders:
PO Box 1455
CY-1509 Nicosia
Tel. (357-2) 44 95 00/46 23 12
Fax (357-2) 361 044
E-mail: cy1691_eic_cyprus@vans.infonet.com

MAGYARORSZÁG

Euro Info Service
Európa Ház
Margitsziget
PO Box 475
H-1396 Budapest 62
Tel. (36-1) 11 16 061/11 16 216
Fax (36-1) 302 50 35
E-mail: euroinfo@mail.mata.v.hu
URL: www.euroinfo.hu/index.htm

MALTA

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Malta International Airport
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LQA 05 Malta
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POLSKA

Ars Polona
Krakowskie Przedmieście 7
Skr. pocztowa 1001
PL-00-950 Warszawa
Tel. (48-2) 26 12 01
Fax (48-2) 26 62 40

TÜRKIYE

Dünya infotei A.S.
İstiklal Cad. No: 469
TR-80050 Tünel-Istanbul
Tel. (90-212) 251 91 96
(90-312) 427 02 10
Fax (90-212) 251 91 97

BĂLGARİJA

Europress-Euromedia Ltd
59, Bld Vitosha
BG-1000 Sofia
Tel. (359-2) 80 46 41
Fax (359-2) 80 45 41

HRVATSKA

Mediatrade Ltd
Pavla Hatza 1
HR-10000 Zagreb
Tel. (385-1) 43 03 92
Fax (385-1) 44 40 59

ROMÂNIA

Euromedia
Sir. G-ral Berthelot Nr 41
RO-70749 Bucuresti
Tel. (40-1) 210 44 01/614 06 64
Fax (40-1) 210 44 01/312 96 46

SLOVAKIA

Slovenska Technicka Kniznica
Námestie slobody 19
SLO-81223 Bratislava 1
Tel. (42-7) 53 18 364
Fax (42-7) 53 18 364
E-mail: europ@ttb1.sitk.stuba.sk

SLOVENIA

Gospodarski Vestnik
Založniska Skupina d.d.
Dunajska cesta 5
SI-1000 Ljubljana
Tel. (386) 61 133 03 54
Fax (386) 61 133 91 28
E-mail: belicd@gvestnik.si
URL: www.gvestnik.si

ISRAEL

R.O.Y. International
17, Shimon Hatarssi Street
PO Box 13056
61130 Tel Aviv
Tel. (972-3) 546 14 23
Fax (972-3) 546 14 42
E-mail: royil@netvision.net.il

Sub-agent for the Palestinian Authority:

Index Information Services
PO Box 19502
Jerusalem
Tel. (972-2) 27 16 34
Fax (972-2) 27 12 19

RUSSIA

CCEC
60-Ietiya Oktyabrya Av. 9
117312 Moscow
Tel. (095) 135 52 27
Fax (095) 135 52 27

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EGYPT

The Middle East Observer
41, Sherif Street
Cairo
Tel. (20-2) 39 39 732
Fax (20-2) 39 39 732

JAPAN

PSI-Japan
Asahi Sanbancho Plaza #206
7-1 Sanbancho, Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo 102
Tel. (81-3) 3234 69 21
Fax (81-3) 3234 69 15
E-mail: psijapan@gol.com
URL: www.psi-japan.com

SOUTH AFRICA

Safto
5th Floor Export House,
CNR Maude & West Streets
PO Box 782 706
2146 Sandton
Tel. (27-11) 883 37 37
Fax (27-11) 883 65 69

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Bernan Associates
4611-F Assembly Drive
MD20706 Lanham
Tel. (301) 459 2255 (toll free telephone)
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URL: www.bernan.com

MÉXICO

Mundi-Prensa Mexico, SA de CV
Río Pánuco, 141
Delegación Cuauhtémoc
ME-06500 México DF
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Fax (52-5) 514 67 99
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