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KYRGYZSTAN

TRACER STUDY

ANALYTICAL REPORT

JANUARY 2025

Funded by the European Union

Survey name/Title: Tracer Study for Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET)	
Country/region: Kyrgyzstan/Central Asia	**Leading Country Expert**: Johann Schustereder (EPRD)
Fieldwork implementation period: June 2024 – December 2024	**Parties responsible and contact details:** • Ministry of Education and Science, Department of IVET • IVET lyceums

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Acknowledgments

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Glossary of acronyms

DARYA	DIALOGUE AND ACTION FOR RESOURCEFUL YOUTH IN CENTRAL ASIA
EPRD	OFFICE FOR ECONOMIC POLICY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
ETF	EUROPEAN TRAINING FOUNDATION
EU	EUROPEAN UNION
MES	MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE
VET	VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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Tables and Figures

1. Introduction

The Pilot Tracer Study for Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) in Kyrgyzstan was launched to collect crucial data on the transition of IVET graduates into the labour market. Conducted between June and December 2024, it was initiated by the Ministry of Education and Science with support from the European Training Foundation's (ETF) DARYA project[1]. The primary goal was to generate evidence-based insights to enhance vocational education and training (VET) programs, ensuring they are more responsive to labour market demands and better equip graduates with relevant skills.

The study involved surveying final-year students and conducting a follow-up six months after graduation to assess their employment status, satisfaction with training, and alignment between acquired skills and job market requirements.

The findings are intended for policymakers, educational institutions, and stakeholders involved in vocational training and workforce development. By identifying gaps between training and labour market needs, the Ministry of Education and Science can refine VET programs, reduce skills mismatches, and improve employment outcomes for graduates. These insights also support the broader goals of the DARYA project in fostering future-ready skills, flexible qualifications, and inclusive teaching practices across Central Asia, contributing to a more effective and sustainable vocational education system in Kyrgyzstan.

1.1. Analytical objectives and scope

The analytical objectives of this study focus on evaluating the efficiency, effectiveness, and relevance of Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) programs in Kyrgyzstan. The study consists of two main phases: the first phase, the "exit survey," assesses teaching, learning, and study conditions at the end of students' studies, while the second phase, the "employment survey" targeted the same respondents 6 months after graduation.

The survey collected feedback from students and graduates of professional lyceums across Kyrgyzstan, with a particular emphasis on understanding regional differences and variations across fields of specialization. Respondents were asked to provide demographic information, including their gender, the sector of the economy related to their field of study, and the region where they studied. The survey also focused on their satisfaction with the quality of professional training, practical experience, teaching, and educational resources available at their institutions. In addition, students were asked about their career plans, intentions to pursue further education, and the improvements they believed were necessary in their educational institutions.

The follow-up survey for graduates delved into their employment outcomes, assessing their current job status, whether they work in the field they studied, and the relevance of their education to their current roles. Additionally, graduates provided insights into any job changes and how they utilized the skills learnt at the lyceum. The analysis also explored regional and field-based differences in these responses, aiming to identify specific trends and areas for improvement tailored to various regions and

[1] See: https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/what-we-do/darya-dialogue-and-action-resourceful-youth-central-asia

vocational programmes. This data will inform strategies to enhance educational practices, ensuring they are better aligned with student needs, career prospects, and regional economic demands.

Scope

The scope of the study encompasses graduates from all professional lyceums (IVET level) across Kyrgyzstan who completed their training in 2024. Data collection was conducted in two stages: the first survey was administered before graduation, and the follow-up survey took place six months after graduation to track employment outcomes and career transitions. The study aims to provide a comprehensive assessment of IVET program quality by analysing graduate satisfaction, job placement rates, alignment of acquired skills with labour market needs, and institutional performance. By covering multiple regions and institutions, the study ensures a representative dataset that can inform targeted policy decisions and improvements in IVET education.

1.2. Structure of the report

This report is structured into five chapters. The Introduction outlines the background, objectives, and scope of the analytical report. Chapter 2, Survey Design and Methodology, provides a brief overview of the study's design, data collection methods, and the sampling approach used to gather information from graduates, with more detailed information available in the technical report. Chapter 3, Data Presentation and Descriptive Analysis, presents the data collected from the pilot tracer study in table format and offers a descriptive analysis of graduates' perceptions of their VET training, their transition into the labour market, and how their jobs align with the skills gained during their courses. Chapter 4, Findings Interpretation, interprets the results in the broader context of VET governance and the labour market. Chapter 5 offers practical recommendations for improving the relevance and effectiveness of VET programs based on the study's insights.

2. Survey design and methodology (brief summary)[2]

2.1. Survey design

The survey of graduates, also known as graduates' tracer study, is one of the important instruments used to assess education and training outcomes as well as to anticipate skills and job trends. In Kyrgyzstan, this survey was conducted at the Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) level under the guidance of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic. The fieldwork was divided into two phases. The first phase, the "exit survey", primarily assessed teaching, learning, and study conditions, targeting students at the end of their studies. The second phase, the "employment survey," gathered information on current employment status, skills usage and further education or training, targeting the same respondents about 6 months after their graduation.

2.2. Methodology

This pilot study was designed to collect data from graduates of Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) programs to support evidence-based policy-making and enhance the quality of vocational education and training (VET) programs. The survey targeted all 2024 graduates from 93 VET lyceums,

[2] The detailed methodology and implementation steps of the survey are provided in a separate technical report for the Tracer Study.

aiming to assess various aspects of their educational experiences, including the relevance and effectiveness of their training.

The study achieved notable response rates, with 42% of graduates participating in the initial survey phase and 57% responding in the follow-up phase, from a total of 16,630 graduates. The primary objectives of the survey were to gather information on graduate satisfaction levels, their transitions into the labour market, and the alignment of VET programs with labour market needs. The findings from this study will provide valuable information to the Ministry of Education and Science, enabling them to refine training programs, reduce skill mismatches between qualifications and employment, and optimize the return on investment in the VET system.

3. Data presentation and descriptive analysis[3]

This chapter presents a descriptive analysis derived from two surveys conducted among students/graduates at the end of the studies and six months post-graduation. It addresses key sections and questions included in both surveys. The initial survey provides insights into study motivation, future plans, and an assessment of teaching quality, study conditions, and acquired skills. In contrast, the second survey examines the current labour market situation and evaluates the relevance of the studies to the respondents' current employment.

3.1. Study Motivation and Future Plans

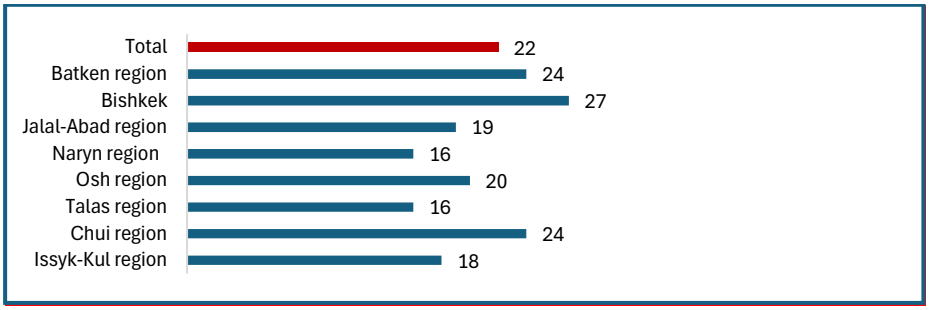
The majority of students selected their study programmes due to their interest in the specific specialisation (66%) or because they perceived it as relevant to current labour market needs (9%). Only 6% of respondents based their choice on career guidance they received.

Most students chose a profession that resonates with their personal interests, yet one fifth considered dropping out during their studies

Despite this, about one fifth of respondents considered dropping out at some point (see Figure 1). The data also highlights significant regional disparities in the percentage of students contemplating dropping out. For instance, the highest percentage of students considering dropping out is observed in Bishkek city, while the lowest is in the Naryn and Talas regions. Regarding study programmes, the highest share of students who considered dropping out is found among those studying programmes related to the sectors of Tourism, Metalworking or the Manufacture of Art and Jewellery. Among these students, 51% faced difficult family situations, 18% had study difficulties, another 12% did not like the study conditions, and about 15% doubted the prospects of their chosen profession.

[3] The analysis uses weighted data and report also on missing values.

Figure 1 Share of respondents who considered dropping their studies, by region (%)



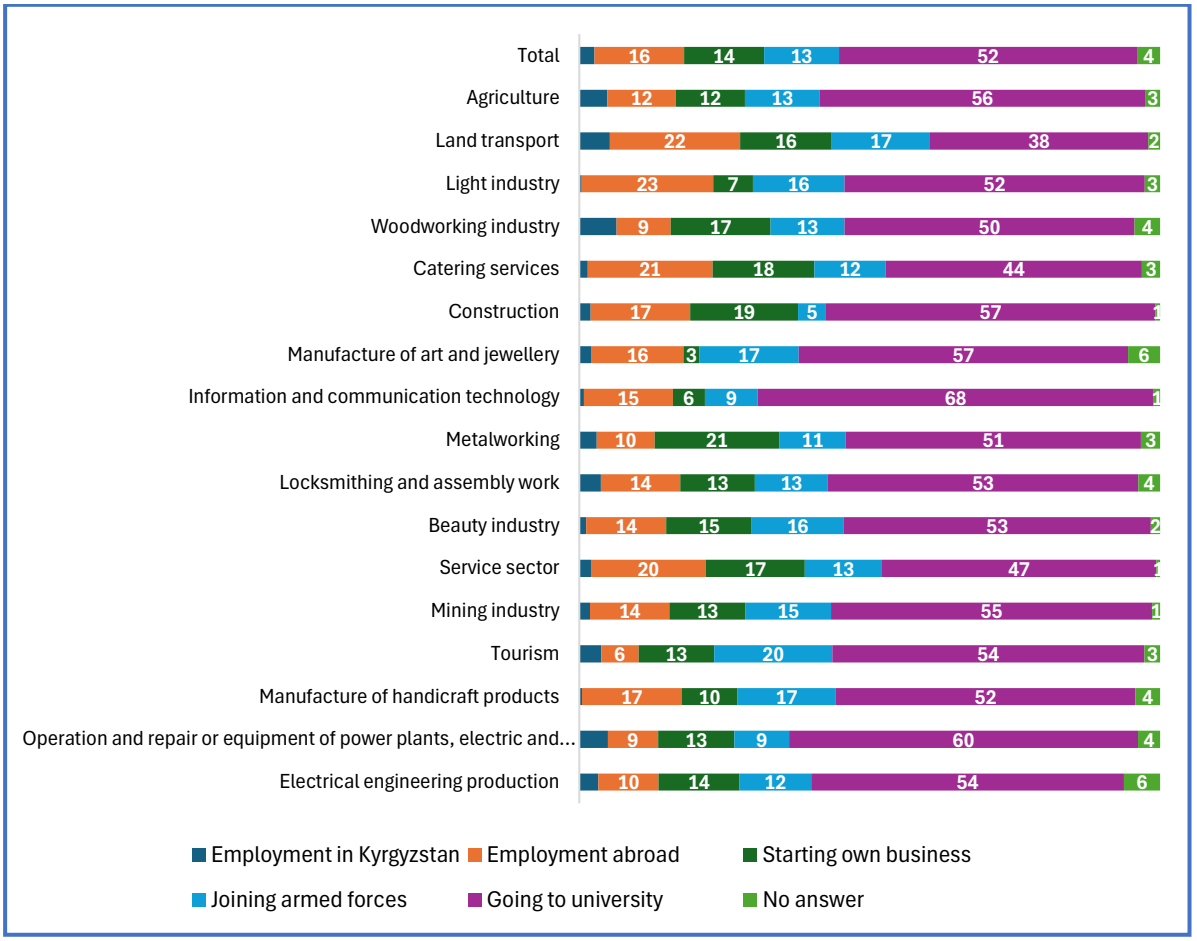
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Approximately half of respondents (52%) planned to continue their studies after graduation, 16% aimed to look for work abroad, and 14% wished to start their own business. Figure 2 shows that a significant proportion of students planned to continue their studies at a university across various study programmes, with the highest percentages observed among those studying Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Operation and repair or equipment of power plants,

Most students planned to continue their studies at the university or seek work abroad, and many also intended to work in their chosen profession in the future.

electric and communication networks. Additionally, a notable number of students from the Light Industry, Land transport and Catering Services sectors intend to seek employment abroad. The figure also highlights that a considerable percentage of students from the Metalworking, Construction, or Catering services programmes plan to open their own business.

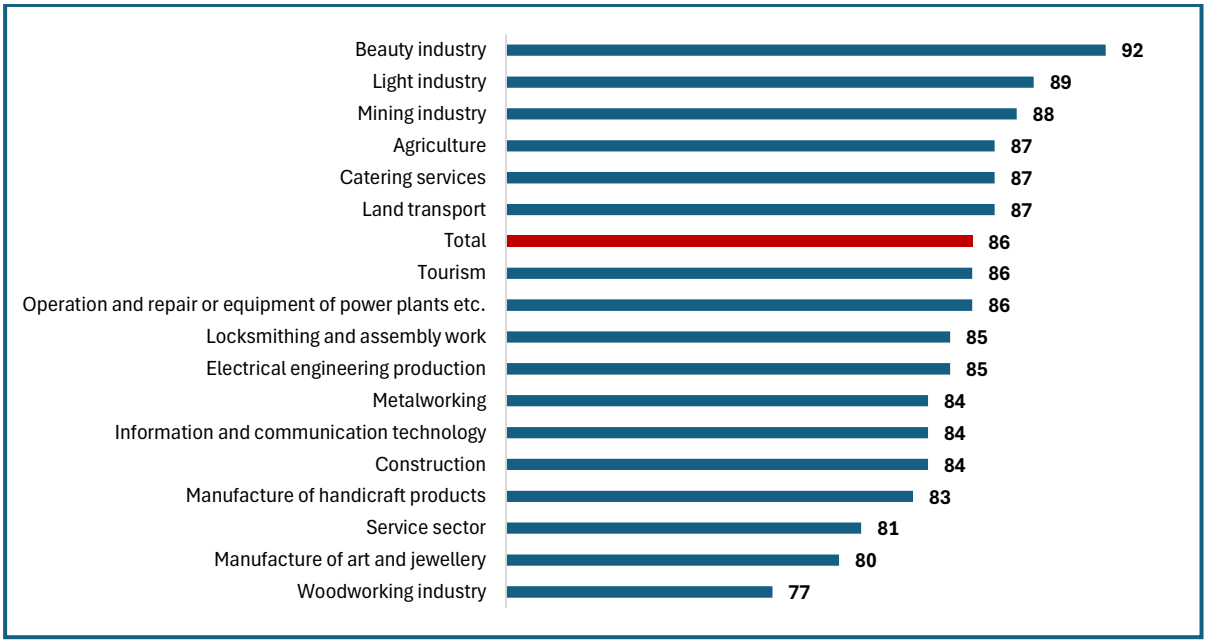
Figure 2 Plans after graduation, by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation (%)



Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Figure 3 illustrates the percentage of respondents intending to work in their studied profession, categorized by study programme or specialisation. The data reveals that a significant proportion of students from Beauty industry, Mining, Light industry, Agriculture, and Catering services programmes planned to work in their respective fields after graduation. This indicates a strong alignment between their educational choices and career aspirations. Conversely, graduates from the Woodworking industry or Manufacture of Art and Jewellery programmes were more likely, than other graduates, seek employment in other sectors. The primary reasons for this shift included a loss of interest in their field of study or a perceived lack of relevance to their career goals.

Figure 3 Percentage of respondents intending to work in their studied profession, by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation (%)



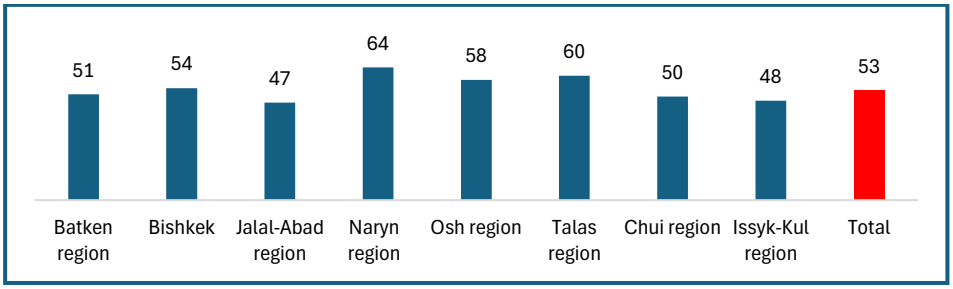
Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

3.2. Assessment of acquired skills (at the end of studies)

Approximately half of the respondents were fully satisfied with the training in their profession. The data indicates that the highest levels of (complete) satisfaction were observed among students in Naryn and Talas regions. Conversely, the lowest levels of complete satisfaction were reported by students in the Jalal-Abad and Issyk-Kul regions. This suggests that there may be areas for improvement in the training programmes in these regions to better align with student expectations and industry standards.

About half of the students were fully satisfied with their training, having gained sufficient skills in teamwork and the ability to take decisions.

Figure 4 How satisfied are you with the level of training in your profession (% of those completely satisfied), by region



Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Focusing on different study programmes (see Figure A.1 in the Annex), the highest levels of complete satisfaction were observed among students in the Beauty, Mining and Light Industry related programmes. In contrast, lower levels were reported by students in programmes related to the sectors of Tourism and Operation and repair or equipment of power plants, electric and communication networks programmes.

Regarding generic skills, 49% and 48% of respondents reported gaining very good skills in teamwork and decision-making, respectively, while a lower percentage indicated proficiency in problem-solving (45%), time management (44%), or prioritisation (43%). Table 1 also provides insights into how well respondents felt they had acquired various skills by study programme or specialisation. The data reveals that students in programmes related to the sectors of Beauty Industry and Mining reported the highest levels of proficiency in teamwork, with 59% and 64% respectively indicating they know how to work in teams very well, which is particularly relevant for these specialisations. Similarly, students in the Manufacture of Art and Jewellery, Mining, and Beauty Industry programmes also scored high in decision-making skills.

Conversely, students in the Woodworking Industry, Tourism, and Operation and repair or equipment of power plants, electric and communication networks programmes reported lower levels of proficiency, especially in case of skills related to time management, prioritisation and the ability to take decision.

Table 1 How well do you know how to….. (% of those responding "very well"), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation

	Teamwork	Time management	Problem-solving problems	Taking decisions	Prioritisation
Agriculture	46	44	45	49	42
Land transport	47	44	48	53	47
Light industry	54	48	48	53	49
Woodworking industry	47	40	41	39	33
Catering services	54	44	44	49	44
Construction	45	43	47	45	38
Manufacture of art and jewellery	52	51	51	61	44
Information and communication technology	48	42	41	47	42
Metalworking	44	42	47	47	39
Locksmithing and assembly work	46	43	46	49	43
Beauty industry	59	54	53	57	47

Service sector	54	48	50	54	44
Mining industry	64	49	46	57	52
Tourism	47	40	37	45	42
Manufacture of handicraft products	47	45	46	48	41
Operation and repair or equipment of power plants, electric and communication networks	45	37	39	42	37
Electrical engineering production	43	41	42	45	42
Total	49	44	45	48	43

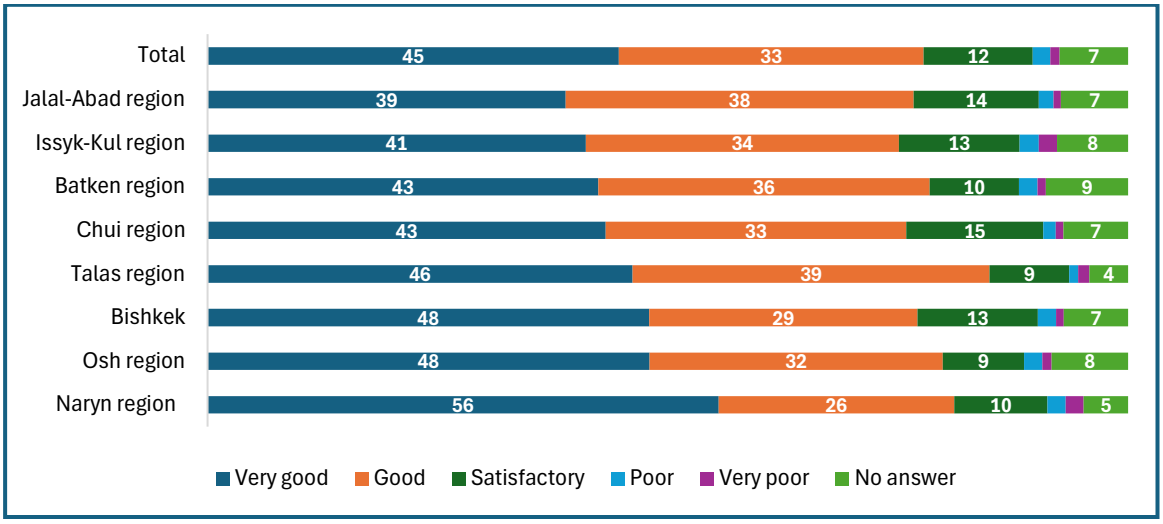
Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

3.3. Assessment of teaching and learning conditions

The data points to significant regional disparities in the perceived quality of teaching. For instance, students in the Talas and Naryn regions reported the highest levels of satisfaction, with a notable percentage indicating that the quality of teaching was very good or good (see Figure 5). In contrast, the Issyk-Kul region showed lower levels of satisfaction, suggesting potential areas for improvement in this region. The data also highlights the importance of regional context in evaluating educational quality, as factors such as local resources, teacher training, and institutional support can vary significantly across regions. In terms of study programmes, the Beauty industry stands out as the assessment of teaching quality by respondents was very high, in contrast to the programmes in Mining, Construction or Agriculture (see Figure A.2 in the Annex).

Satisfaction with the quality of teaching is high, yet differences among study programmes exist.

Figure 5 How would you assess the quality of teaching at your institution? (%), by region

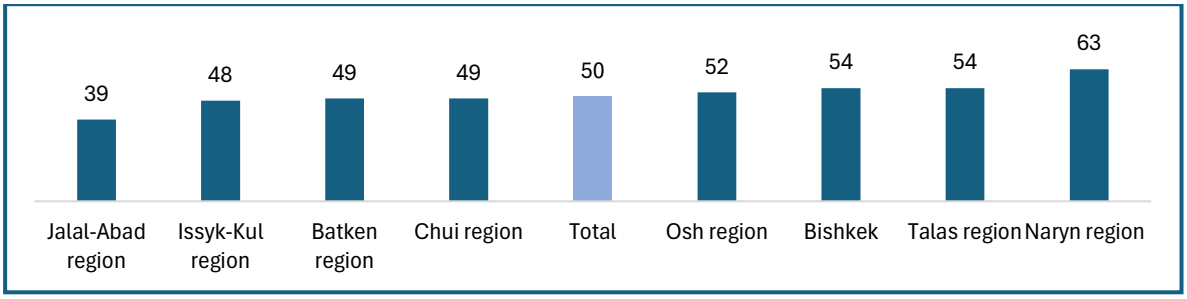


Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

The highest levels of satisfaction, with respondents rating the material and technical base as "very good," were observed in the Naryn and Talas regions as well as in Bishkek (see Figure 6). Conversely, the lowest levels of satisfaction were reported by students in the Jalal-Abad and Issyk-Kul regions, which may be linked to the overall low levels of satisfaction with the training received (see above). This holds also when asking about the availability of study material (see Figure 7).

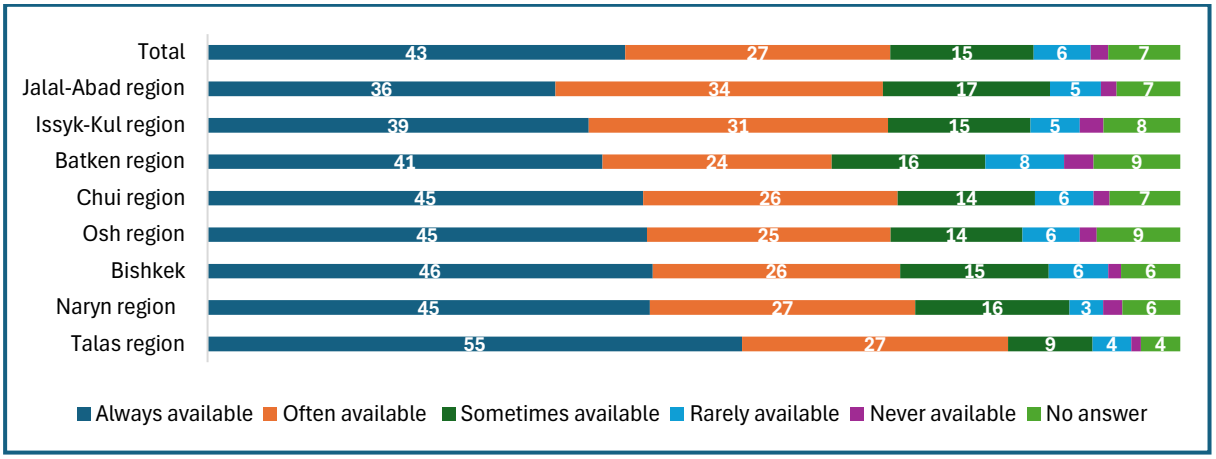
Satisfaction with the material and technical base varies across regions and is particularly low for construction and service sector programmes

Figure 6 How do you assess the material and technical base of your education institution? (% of those saying "very good"), by region



Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Figure 7 How do you assess the availability of training materials and other resources? (%), by region

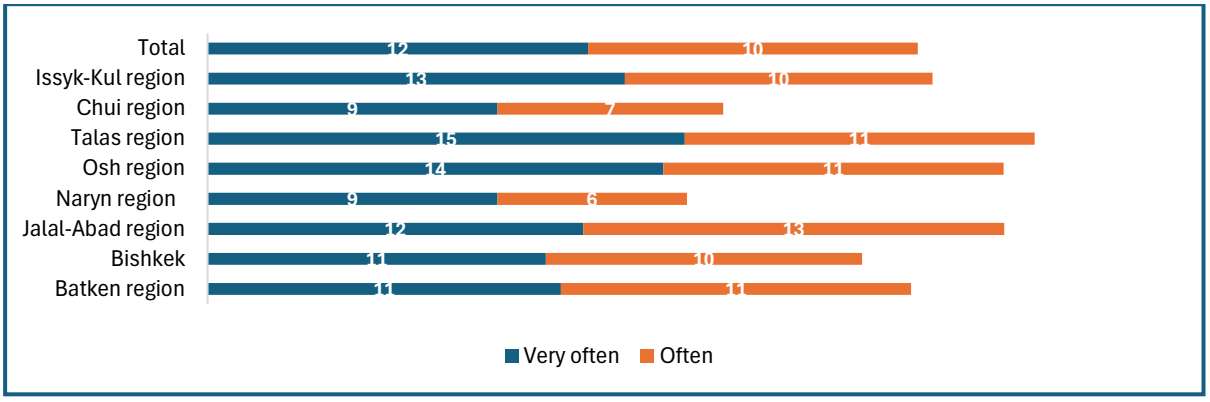


Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

The data also indicates that students in the Beauty Industry and Woodworking Industry report the highest levels of satisfaction with the material and technical base. In contrast, lower satisfaction levels were observed in study programmes related to Construction and Service Sector (see Figure A.3 in the Annex). In case of the availability of training material, the students from the Beauty industry programme again provided very positive feedback, in contrast to respondents from Tourism, Construction or Land transport (see Figure A.4 in the Annex).

The survey data further indicates that a significant percentage of students in the Talas, Jalal-Abad and Osh regions reported experiencing technical issues "very often" or "often" during the learning process, highlighting a potential area of concern for educational institutions in these regions. In contrast, students in the Naryn and Chui regions report fewer technical problems, suggesting better infrastructure and support systems in these areas. Technical problems that occur very often also seems to concern more technical programmes, such as Metalworking, Tourism and Electrical engineering production, which may be connected with the existing quality of the material and technical base (see also Figure A.5 in the Annex).

Figure 8 How often do you encounter technical problems during learning process? (% of those saying "very often" and "often"), by region



Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

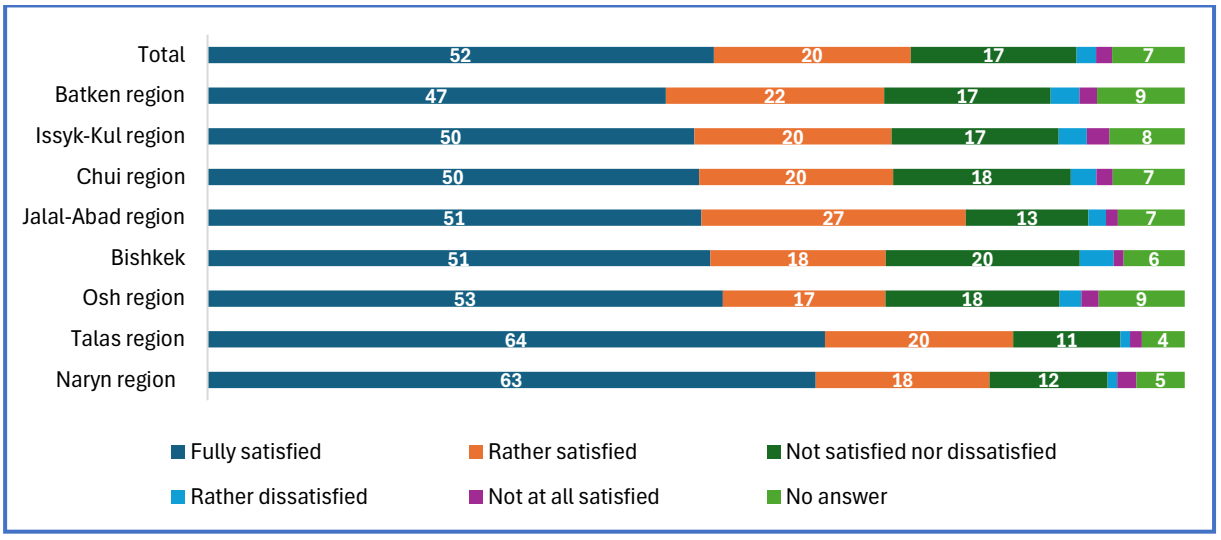
Figure 9 and Figure 10 provide insights into the level of communication between teachers and students, as well as the frequency of feedback received by students across different regions in Kyrgyzstan. The data indicates that students in the Talas and Naryn regions reported the highest levels of satisfaction with the communication between teachers and students, suggesting effective communication practices in these areas.

Most students were satisfied with the level of communication with teachers, receiving regular feedback on their work and progress.

In contrast, students in the Batken, Chui and Issyk-Kul regions report lower levels of satisfaction (if considering those reporting on being "fully satisfied"), highlighting potential areas for improvement in teacher-student communication. Similarly, students from the Talas and Naryn regions were also more likely to receive feedback from teachers after each session compared to other regions (see Figure 10).

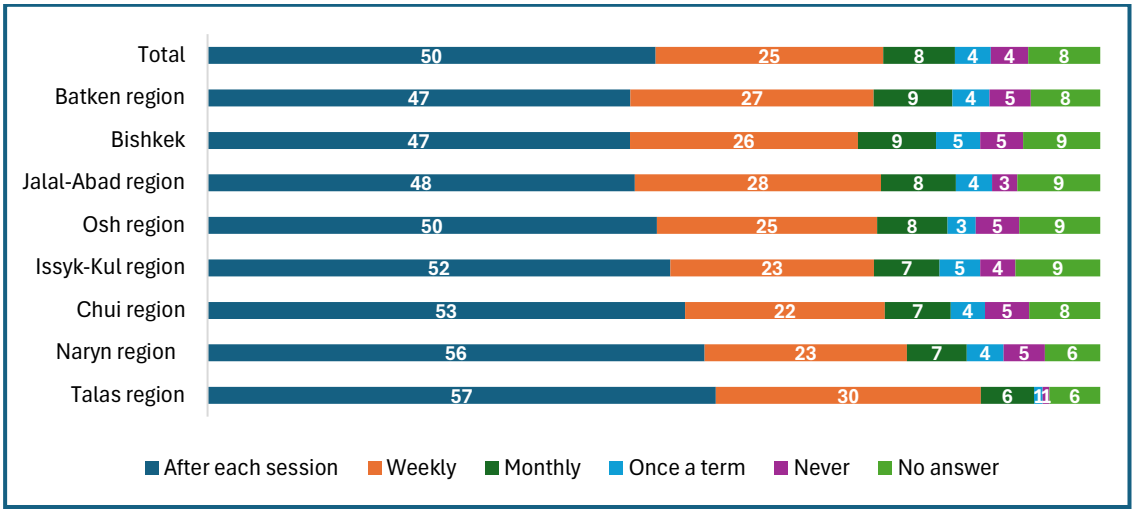
Regarding study programmes, data shows that students in the Beauty Industry and Light Industry programs reported the highest levels of satisfaction with the communication between teachers and students. In contrast, students in Electrical engineering production programs reported lower levels of satisfaction (see Figure A.6 in the Annex). Regular feedback was received by students across various study programmes, with the lowest values (if considering those reporting feedback after each session or weekly) for those studying Tourism or Woodworking (see Figure A.7 in the Annex).

Figure 9 To what extent are you satisfied with the level of communication between teachers and students? (%), by region



Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

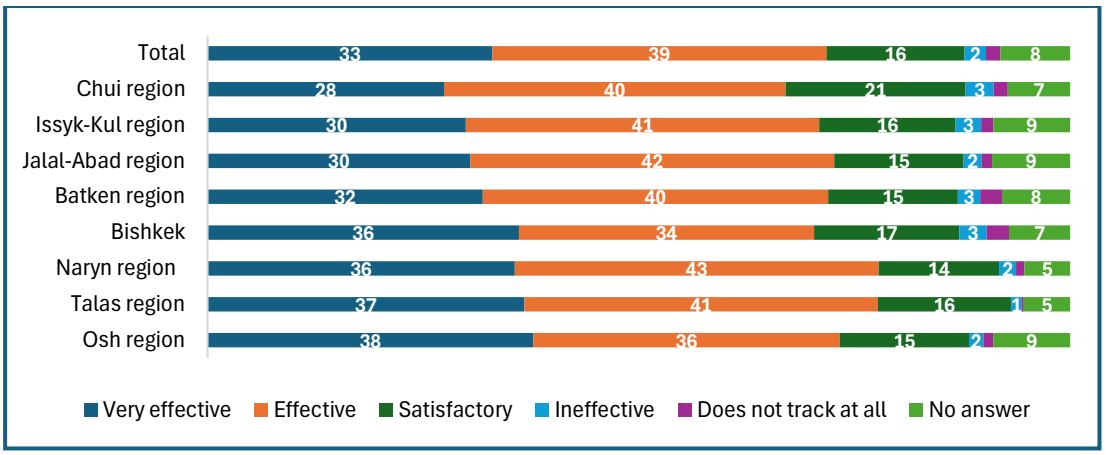
Figure 10 How often do you get feedback from teachers? (%), by region



Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Finally, Figure 11 provides insights into the effectiveness of educational institutions in tracking student progress across different regions in Kyrgyzstan. The data indicates that students in the Osh region reported the most positive feedback regarding their educational institutions' effectiveness in tracking student progress, suggesting that institutions in this area have effective monitoring systems in place. In contrast, students from the Chui region reported lower levels of satisfaction. Additionally, the data indicates that students in the Beauty Industry, Information and Communication technology (ICT), and Mining Industry programs reported the highest levels of satisfaction with the tracking of their progress (see Figure A.8 in the Annex).

Figure 11 In your opinion, how effective is your education institution in tracking your progress? (%), by region



Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

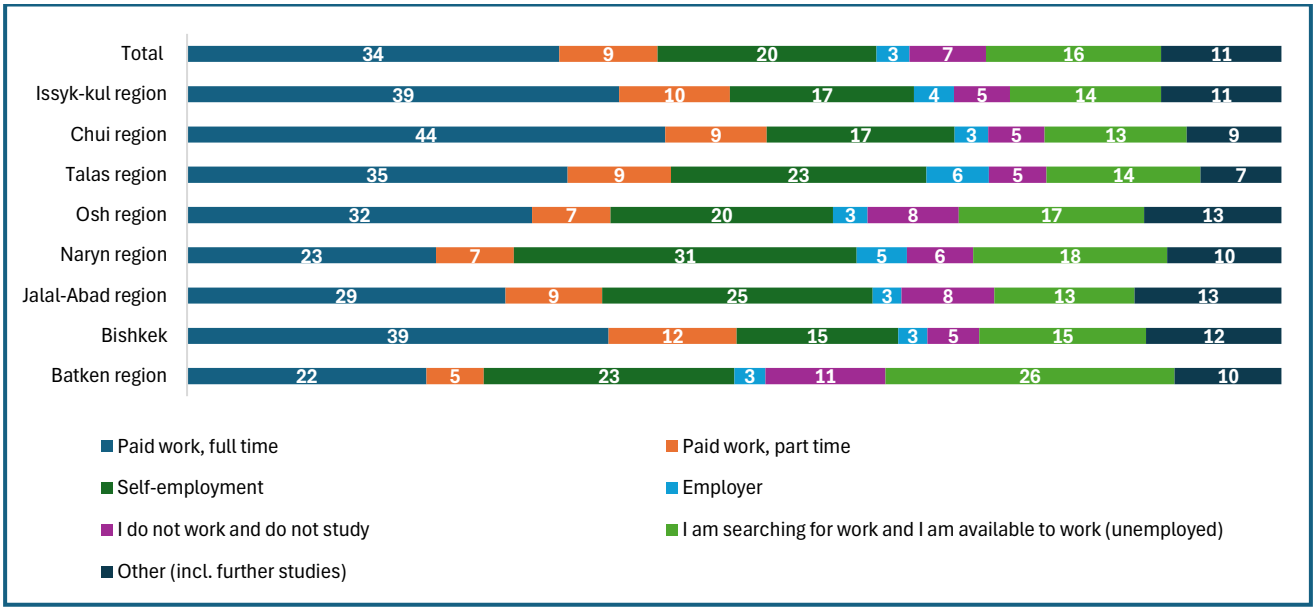
3.4. Employment situation after graduation

The data on current labour market status, collected 6 months after graduation, reveals that full-time paid work was the most common status across both regions and study specialisations, with the graduates from Chui (44%), Issyk-Kul regions as well as Bishkek (39%) (see Figure 12), and programmes related to Railway transport leading the way. Self-employment was prominent among graduates of programmes related to Agriculture (26%), Land transport (28%), and Manufacture of art and jewellery (30%), reflecting a strong entrepreneurial spirit.

The share of unemployed graduates (those seeking for a job and available to work) was higher among those graduating from programmes related to the sectors of Catering services, Tourism or Operation and repair services (19%). Part-time work was less common overall, with the highest proportions among those with specialisation in Information and communication technologies (13%). Graduates from the Batken region reported higher percentages of individuals who are neither employed nor studying (11%), as well as those who are unemployed and actively seeking employment (26%).

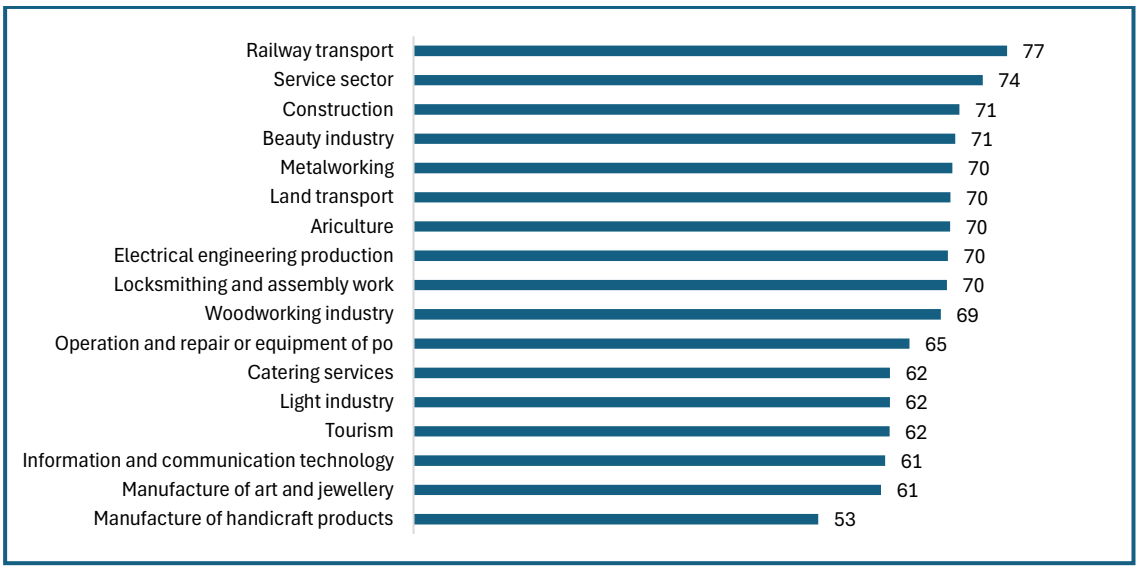
The highest share of employed graduates are those who studied in the Talas, Chui, and Issyk-Kul regions, as well as those who specialized in railway transport, the service sector, construction, or the beauty industry.

Figure 12 Labour market status of recent graduates? (%), by region



Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 2, 2024

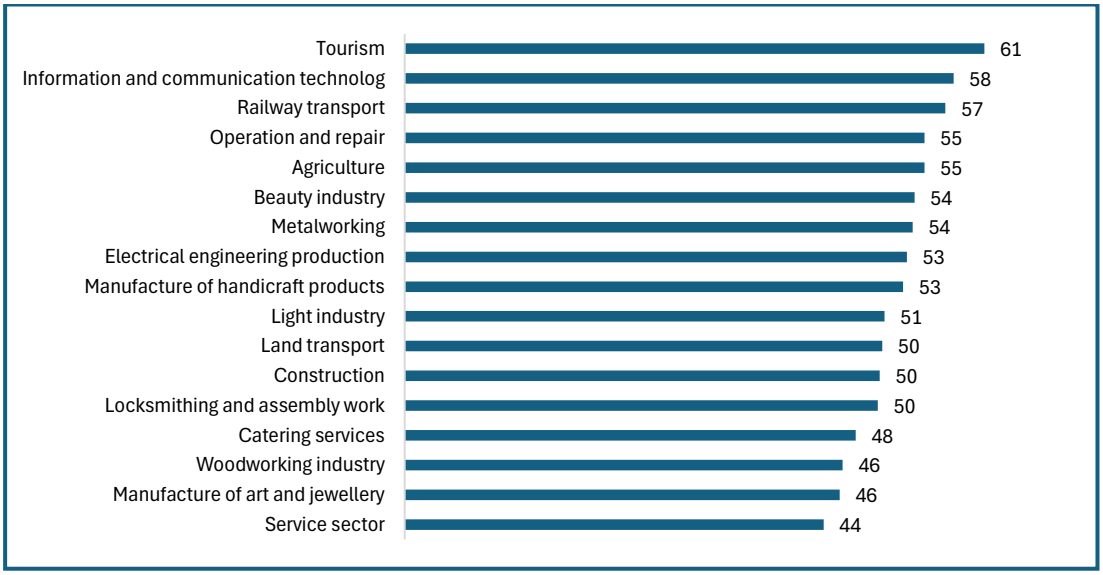
Figure 13 Share of employed graduates (incl. employees, self-employed and employers) (%), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation



Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Mining excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 2, 2024

The data also shows that around 51% of respondents across all regions were either pursuing or planning to pursue higher education, with Osh region (56%) showing the highest rate, followed closely by Jalal-Abad (52%). The graduates with specialisation relevant to the Service sector (44%), Woodworking industry and Manufacture of art and jewellery (46%) have the lowest percentages of higher education aspirations, while specialisations relevant to Tourism (61%), Information and communication (58%), and Railway transport (57%) report the highest interest in further education (see Figure 14).

Figure 14 Have you continued your studies at a university or are you planning to? (% yes)

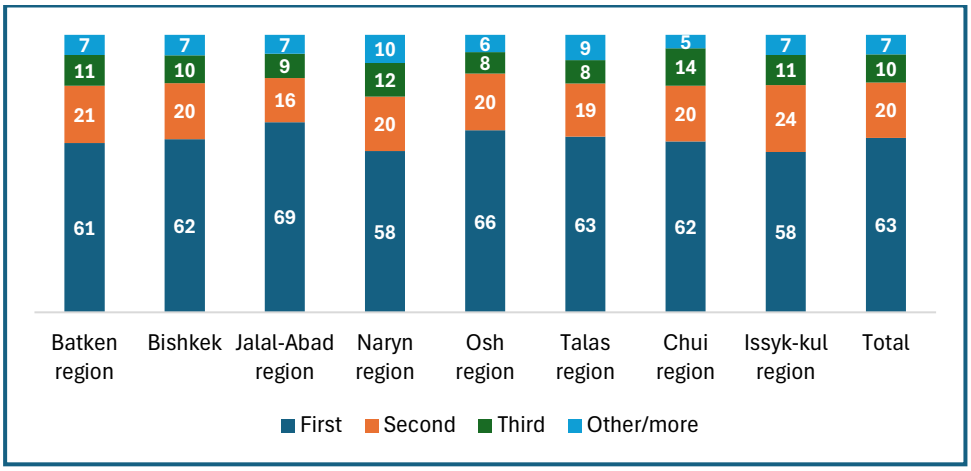


Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Mining excluded due to a small number of cases.

Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 2, 2024

When it comes to labour mobility, the data indicates that a majority of graduates across both regions in which they studied and specialisations were working in their first job post-graduation, with 63% overall in this category. Regionally, the respondents graduating in Jalal-Abad (69%) and Osh (66%) reported the highest proportion in their first job, Issyk-kul and Naryn regions (58%) show slightly lower figures (see Figure 15). In terms of specialisations, the graduates with specialisations related to the sectors of Construction (70%) and Railway transport (68%) have the highest proportion of individuals in their first job, while sectors like Woodworking industry (47%) and Tourism (55%) show lower percentages in first jobs but higher rates in second or third jobs. This suggests that while most individuals remain in their primary job role in the first months after graduation, there is some variation across regions and industries in terms of career progression and job shifts, with specific sectors such as Woodworking and Tourism seeing more movement into secondary or tertiary jobs.

Figure 15 My current job is……



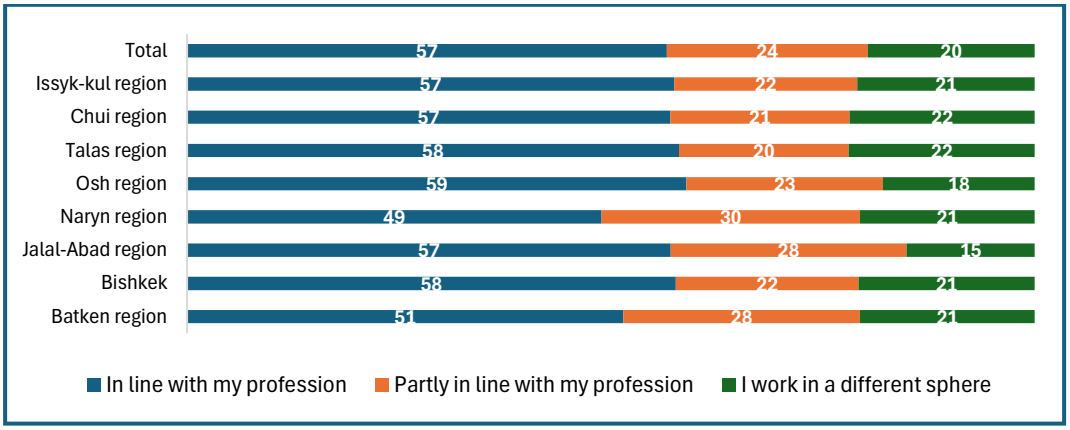
Note: Data restricted to the employed graduates.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 2, 2024

3.5. VET relevancy to current employment

The data on working in line with one's profession indicates that overall, 57% of employed graduates are working in their field, with the highest values among those who graduated in Osh region (59%), Talas region and Bishkek (58%). The lowest share of graduates working in their profession is reported among those who studied in the Naryn region (49%) (see Figure 16).

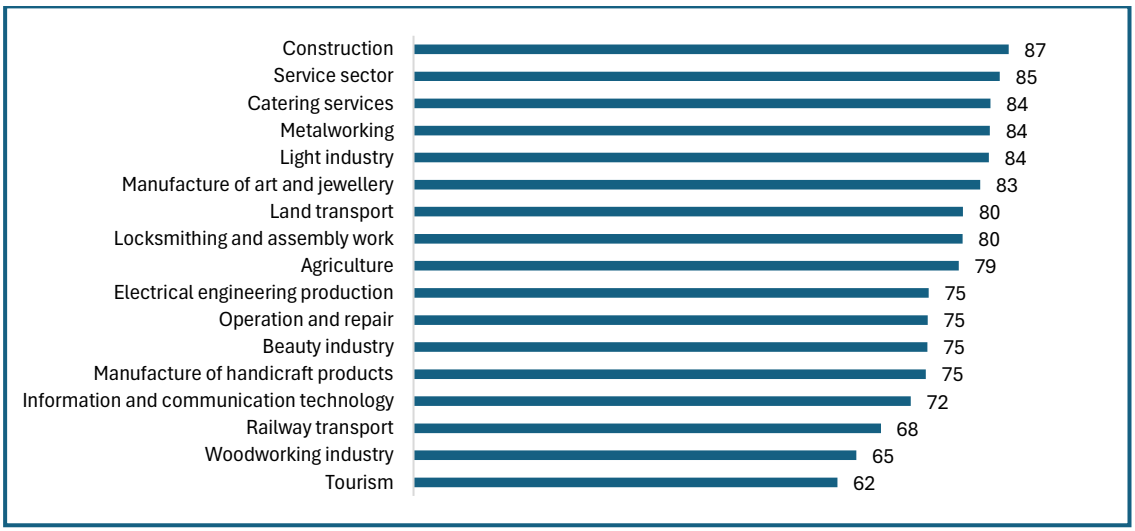
In terms of specialization, graduates from programmes related to the sectors of Construction (87%), Service sector (85%), Catering services (84%), Metalworking (84%) and Light industry (84%) show the highest alignment with professions (working fully or partly in line with own specialisation) (see Figure 17). On the other hand, the sectors like Tourism (62%) and Woodworking industry (65%) have relatively lower alignment, indicating that individuals in these fields may be working outside their area of study more often.

Figure 16 Do you work in line with your profession?, by region (%)



Note: Data restricted to the employed graduates.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 2, 2024

Figure 17 Do you work in line with your profession? (%), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation



Note: Data restricted to the employed graduates. Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Mining excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 2, 2024

The data on reasons for not working in line with one's specialization shows that the most common reason is difficulty finding work in the specialization (35%), followed by loss of interest in the field (21%). Realizing during practice that the specialization was not a fit (18%) and never intending to work in the field (13%) are also significant reasons. An additional 13% reported other unspecified reasons for not aligning their work with their profession. These findings highlight the challenges of job availability and personal disinterest as key factors influencing the mismatch between education and employment.

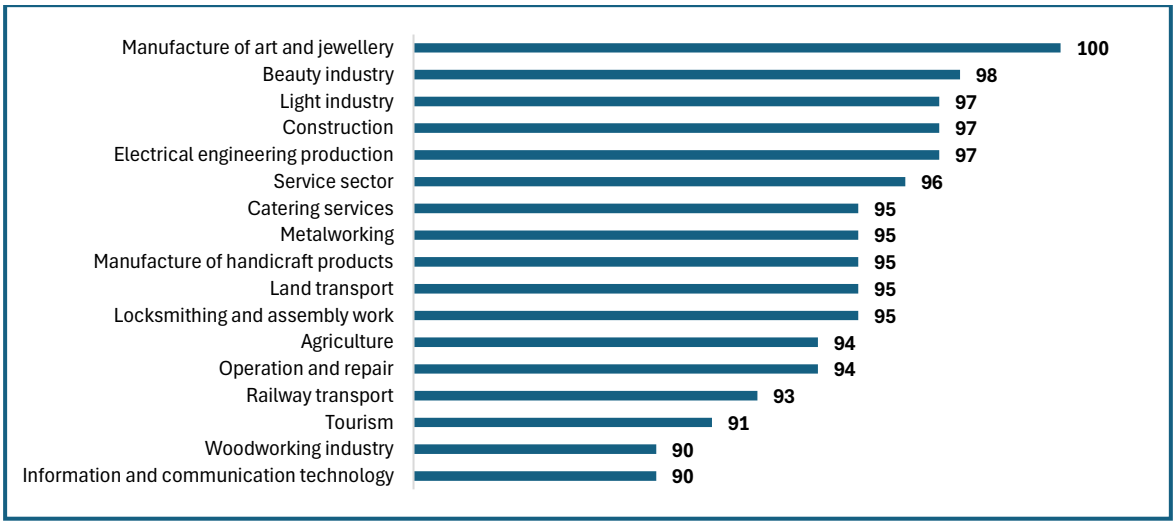
While the above is based on subjective assessment of the surveyed graduates, analysing the data on the match between employment sector and graduates' specialization reveals again notable regional and sectoral differences. Overall, the highest match between the sector of employment and the sector

to which one's specialisation belongs to can be found among graduates that studied programmes related to Construction (83%), Catering services (81%), and Light industry (80%), which exhibit the strongest alignment. On the other hand, the sectors like Tourism (49%), Operation and repair (50%), and Electrical engineering production (53%) show much lower alignment. These patterns reconfirm to a large the extent the results obtained based on subjective assessment of graduates, as presented above.

3.6. Satisfaction with current employment

The data points to consistently high job satisfaction across both regions and specializations, with an overall 95% satisfaction rate. In terms of specialisation, satisfaction is particularly high among graduates with specialisations related to the sectors of Manufacture of art and jewellery (100%), Beauty industry (98%), Construction, Light industry, and Electrical engineering (97%) (see Figure 18). Other sectors such as Service sector (96%), Locksmithing and assembly (95%), and Agriculture, Land transport, and Catering services (95%) also show strong satisfaction. While satisfaction rates are generally high across the board, Tourism (91%), Information and communication technology and Woodworking industry (90%) show slightly lower, yet still positive, satisfaction levels. Overall, the data reflects a broadly favourable view of current employment among graduates across both regional and industry contexts.

Figure 18 Are you satisfied with your current job? (% yes), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation



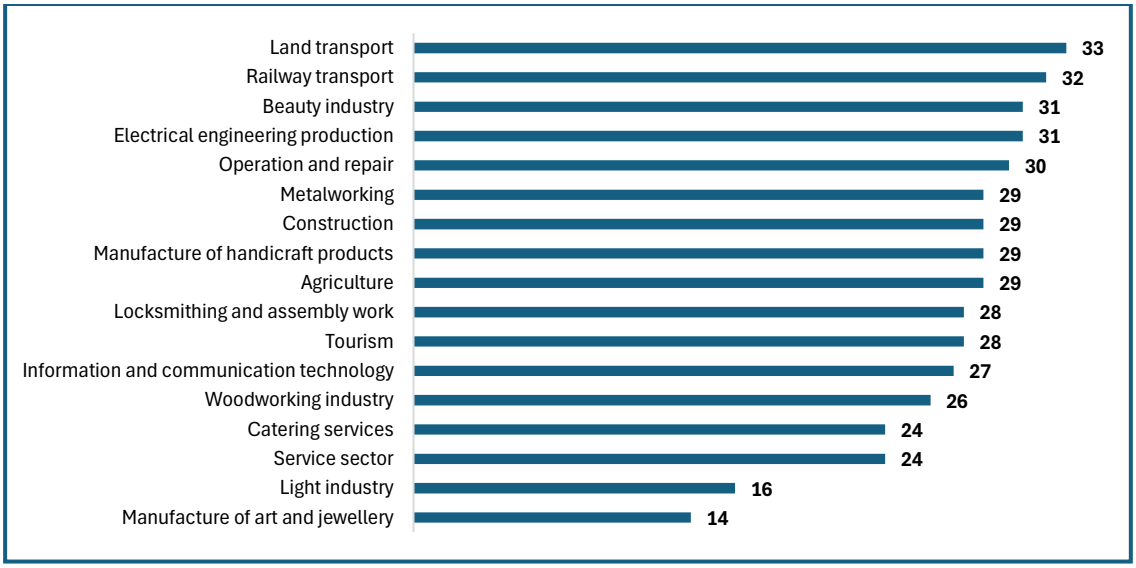
Note: Data restricted to the employed graduates. Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Mining excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 2, 2024

The data shows that 27% of employed graduates plan to change their jobs. In terms of specialization, those with specialisations related to Land transport (33%), Railway transport (32%), and Beauty industry (31%) exhibit the highest levels of job change intentions, while those with specialisations related to Manufacture of art and jewellery (14%) and Light industry (16%) show the least job mobility, suggesting greater satisfaction and stability in these fields (see Figure 19). Overall, job change intentions are more prevalent in technical, operational, and high-skill industries, while creative and service-oriented sectors show lower rates of job change.

Employed graduates report high satisfaction with their jobs. However, job change intentions are more common in technical, operational, and high-skill industries, whereas creative and service-oriented sectors experience lower turnover rates.

The data shows that the most common reasons for changing jobs are low salary (34%), followed by a desire to study (25%) and to find work in own profession (24%). Other reasons include bad workplace atmosphere (8%) and lack of career perspectives (6%). A smaller proportion of respondents (3%) indicated other reasons for job change. This highlights salary dissatisfaction and career development as the primary drivers behind job changes.

Figure 19 Do you plan to change your job (% yes), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation



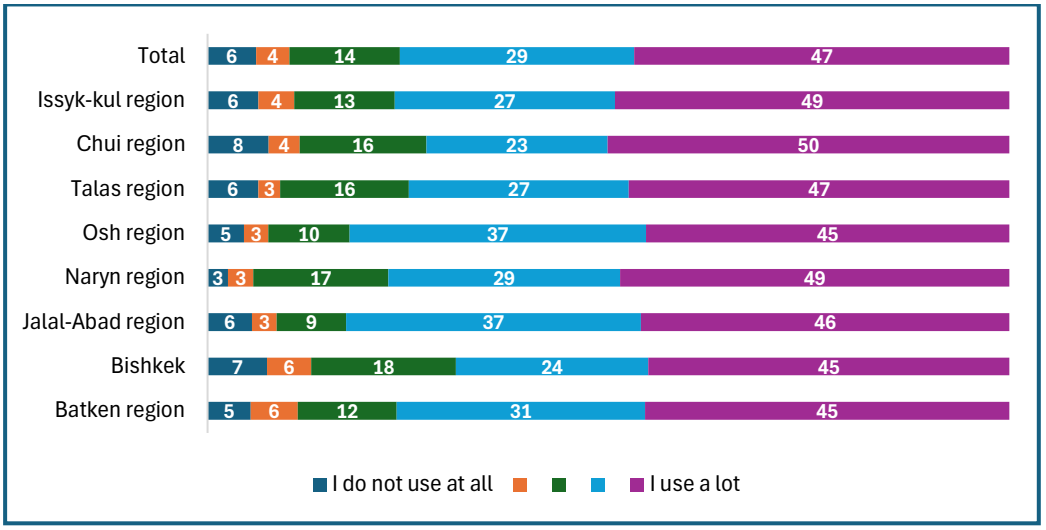
Note: Data restricted to the employed graduates. Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Mining excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 2, 2024

3.7. Graduate satisfaction with skills preparedness

The data shows variations in how graduates use the skills acquired at the lyceum based on region and specialization. Across regions (in which they studied), graduates from Chui, Naryn and Issyk-Kul regions report the highest usage of skills, with about 50% stating they use their lyceum-learned skills extensively (see Figure 20). In contrast, regions like Batken, Osh and Bishkek show slightly lower usage. Regarding study programmes, the graduates with specialisations related to the sectors of Service sector (61%), Manufacture of art and jewellery (59%), and Beauty industry (56%) report the highest levels of skill utilization. On the other hand, the fields like Agriculture (42%), Metalworking (43%),

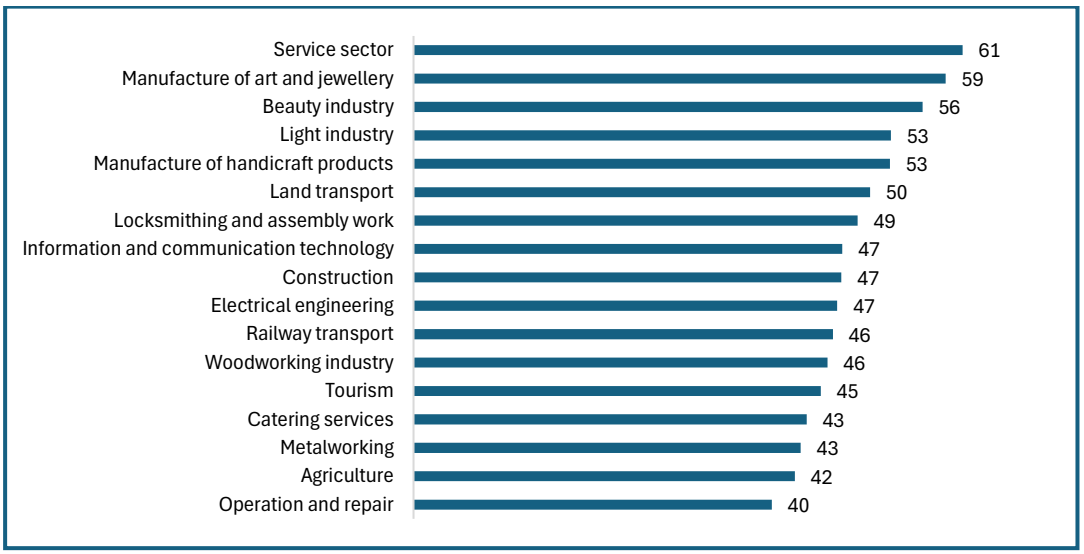
Catering services (43%) and Operation and repair (40%) exhibit relatively lower skill usage (see Figure 21).

Figure 20 To what extent do you use the skills you learnt at the lyceum in your current job (%), by region



Note: Data restricted to the employed graduates.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 2, 2024

Figure 21 To what extent do you use the skills you learnt at the lyceum in your current job (%), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation

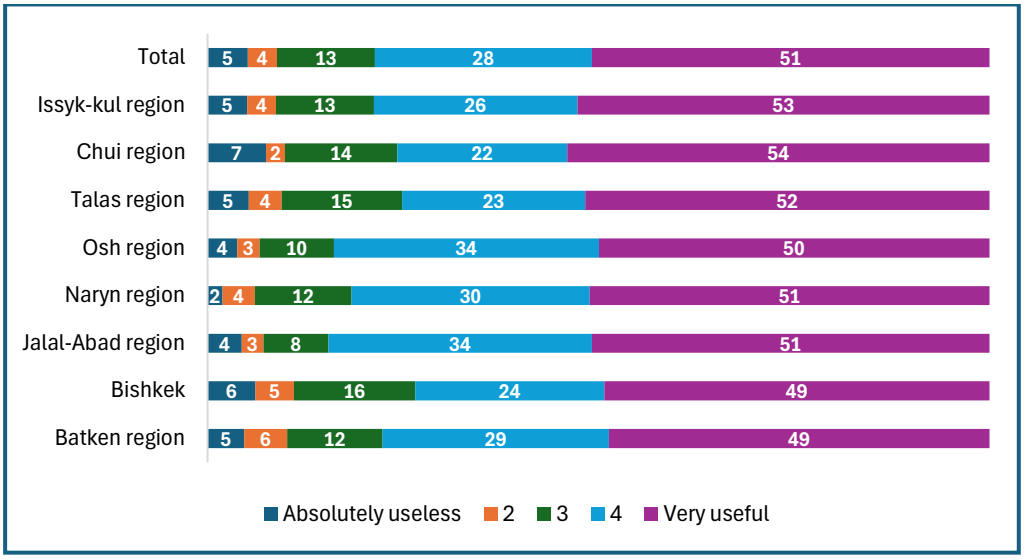


Note: Data restricted to the employed graduates. Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Mining excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 2, 2024

The findings indicate that graduates generally feel that their studies were useful in preparing them for their current jobs, with some regional variation. Regarding the regions where graduates studied, in Chui (54%) and Issyk-Kul (53%), a greater proportion of graduates rated their education as very useful. Similarly, Talas (52%), Jalal-Abad, and Naryn regions (51%) also reported high satisfaction (see Figure 22). In terms of specialization, fields related to the sectors of Service sector (59%), Beauty industry

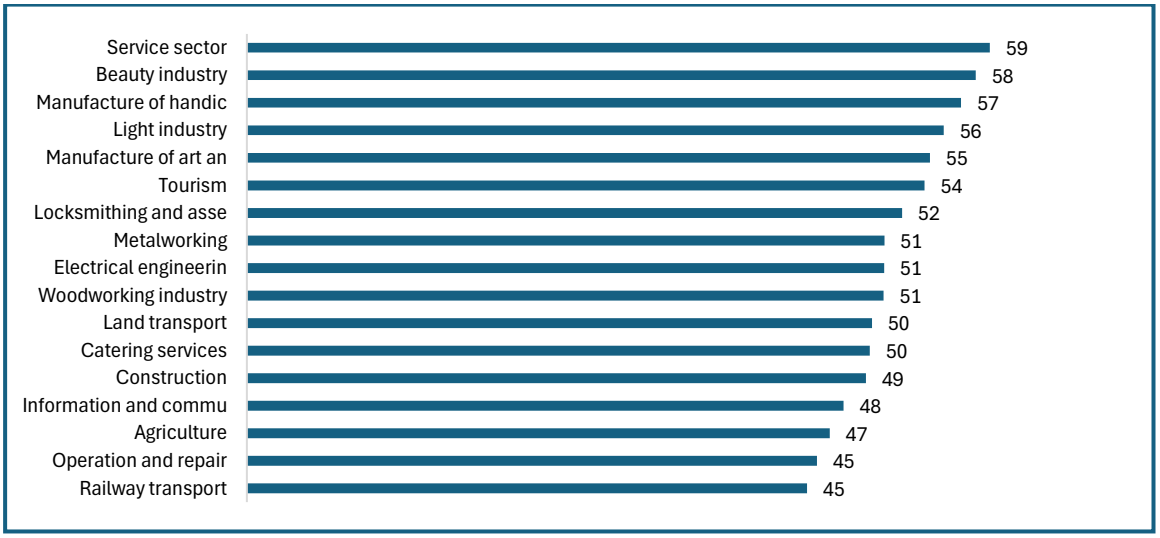
(58%), and Manufacture of handicrafts (57%) had the highest percentages of graduates who felt well-prepared. Additionally, Tourism (54%), Manufacture of art and jewellery(55%), and Light industry (56%) followed closely behind. Other sectors such as Electrical engineering production, Metalworking, and Locksmithing and assembly also had strong positive responses, with over 50% of graduates in these fields feeling that their studies were very useful.

Figure 22 In your opinion, how well did your studies prepared you for your current job? (%), by region



Note: Data restricted to the employed graduates.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 2, 2024

Figure 23 In your opinion, how well did your studies prepared you for your current job? (%), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation



Note: Data restricted to the employed graduates. Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Mining excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 2, 2024

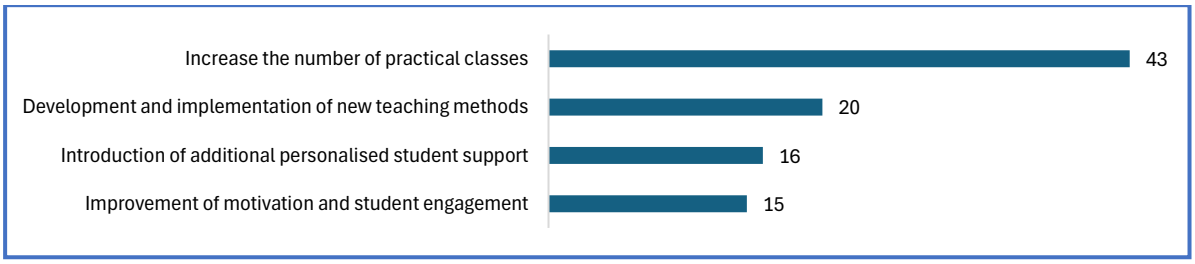
3.8. Way ahead….desired improvements and changes at a provider level

The survey indicates that most respondents consider increasing the number of practical classes as the most critical improvement (see Figure 24). This need is also linked to the desire for better study equipment and facilities (see Figure 25). These findings indicate that respondents are seeking more hands-on learning experiences and better resources to enhance their educational experience.

The results are fairly consistent across different study programmes/specialisations (see Tables A.4 and A.5 in the Annex). While the increase in the number of practical classes is the most desired improvement among respondents of all study programmes, better study equipment and facilities are particularly needed by those in the Construction and Land transport programmes. The improvement of student facilities, such as canteens, libraries or similar, is most desired by those in the Beauty industry, Light industry, Service sector, and Catering services programmes. While the improvement of study equipment and facilities is considered the most crucial by respondents in most regions, in Naryn region, it is the improvement of student facilities that requires more attention.[4]

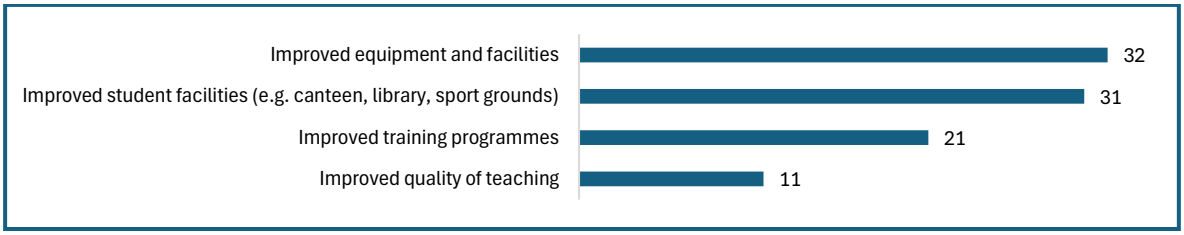
Respondents have identified more practical classes and improved study equipment as the key improvements needed.

Figure 24 In your opinion, what changes are most important in your institution to enhance student performance? (%)



Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Figure 25 In your opinion, what improvements are most needed in your education institution? (%)

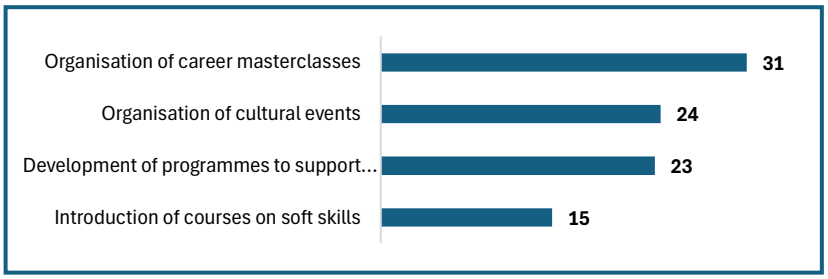


Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

[4] These findings were reconfirmed by the survey administered six months after graduation. Here the most frequently cited need for improvement is improved equipment and facilities, with a significant number of respondents, particularly in sectors like Land transport (42%), and Construction (46%), highlighting the importance of upgrading physical resources. Improved student facilities such as canteens, libraries, and sports grounds are also a priority for many, especially those with specialisations related to the sectors of Catering services (39%), Beauty industry (39%), and Manufacture of art and jewellery (54%).

The integration of masterclasses, interactive whiteboards, and educational applications is highly desirable for enhancing the teaching and learning process. Figures 26 and 27 highlight the additional services and technology that respondents find valuable in their education institutions. The data shows a strong preference for modern laboratory equipment and advanced software tools, such as interactive whiteboards and educational applications, especially among students in technical and scientific programmes (see also Table A.7 in the Annex). This suggests that respondents are eager to access cutting-edge technology to improve their learning and practical skills. Additionally, they are enthusiastic about incorporating career masterclasses, which is a common preference across most study programmes/specialisations (see Table A.6 in the Annex).

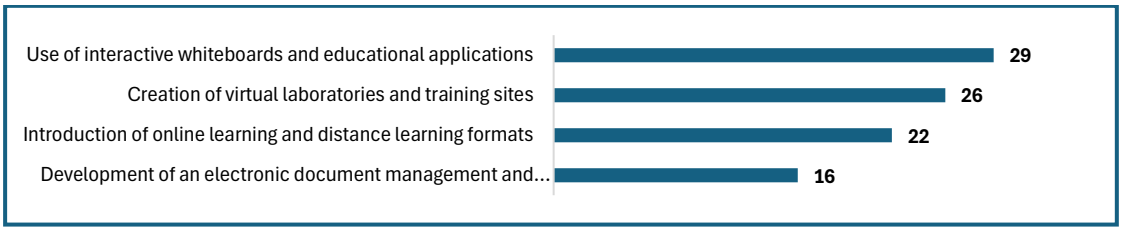
Figure 26 What additional services or activities do you consider desirable to be introduced in your education institution? (%)



Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Organisation of masterclasses, introduction of interactive whiteboards and educational applications are desirable to be integrated in the teaching and learning process

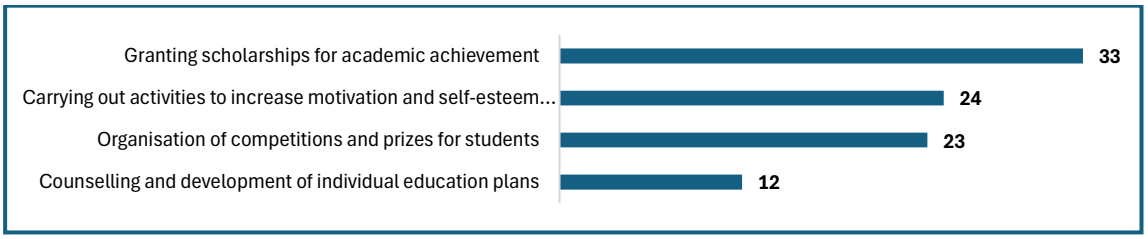
Figure 27 What technology/innovation would you like to see at your institution? (%)



Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Finally, providing scholarships for academic achievements is regarded as the most effective programme to support and stimulate student success (see Figure 16). This is followed by initiatives aimed at increasing student motivation and organizing student competitions and awards. Conversely, counselling and the development of personalised education plans are not deemed as crucial.

Figure 28 What measures to support and stimulate student success at your institution do you consider necessary? (%)



Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

4. Findings interpretation

The study found that approximately half of the students were fully satisfied with their training upon graduation, particularly in the regions such as Naryn and Talas. However, areas like Jalal-Abad and Issyk-Kul showed lower satisfaction levels, indicating room for improvement. Graduates from programmes related to the sectors such as Beauty, Mining, and Light Industry reported the highest levels of satisfaction and proficiency in skills like teamwork and decision-making. Conversely, students from programmes like Tourism and Operation and Repair of Equipment expressed lower satisfaction and skill proficiency. These findings suggest that vocational programmes in Kyrgyzstan are generally effective in equipping students with relevant skills. However, disparities in satisfaction and proficiency levels across different regions and fields of study highlight the need for targeted improvements.

Most students selected their study programmes based on personal interest or perceived relevance to the labour market. However, about one-fifth of respondents considered dropping out at some point, with the highest dropout rates observed in Bishkek. Many planned to continue their education at university or seek employment abroad. A significant number of graduates intended to work in their chosen profession, particularly in fields like Beauty, Mining, and Light Industry.

A follow-up survey assessed graduates' employment outcomes, examining whether they were employed, working in their field of study, and the relevance of their education to their current jobs. Findings revealed that a significant proportion of graduates started to work or continued their studies after graduation. While a majority worked in their field, alignment was stronger in some regions and specialisations, particularly in Construction and Service-related sectors, whereas fields like Tourism, Railway transport, Woodworking and also ICT show lower alignment. Key reasons for working outside one’s specialization included job scarcity and a shift in career interests. Despite these challenges, job satisfaction remained high across most fields, though some graduates expressed a desire to change jobs, primarily due to salary concerns and career growth opportunities. Skill utilization varied by region and specialization, with graduates in service-oriented industries more likely to apply their training. Overall, while graduates generally feel well-prepared by their studies, the extent of practical application depends on demand in specific sectors and regional job availability.

The findings highlight the need for more practical learning opportunities, better educational resources, and improved student facilities to enhance the overall learning experience. Across different specializations, hands-on training is the most desired improvement, with technical fields emphasizing better equipment and service-oriented programs prioritizing student amenities. The integration of modern technology, such as interactive tools and digital learning resources, is also widely supported, particularly in technical programmes. Additionally, career-oriented training, including masterclasses, is highly valued, reflecting a demand for sector-relevant skills. Overall, the findings suggest that students/graduates seek a more practical, well-equipped, and technologically enhanced learning environment to better prepare for their careers.

5. Recommendations (preliminary)

Based on the survey findings, several recommendations can be made.

For VET Lyceums:

- *Enhance curriculum and training quality*: Align curricula with industry needs, particularly in fields with lower satisfaction and proficiency levels. Focus on improving training quality in regions such as Jalal-Abad and Issyk-Kul by updating educational content, investing in modern equipment, and providing additional instructor training.
- *Continue strengthening career counselling and guidance*: Expand career counselling services to support students in making informed education and career choices. Organize workshops, career fairs, and one-on-one counselling sessions to better align student aspirations with labour market demands.
- *Increase practical training opportunities*: Emphasize hands-on learning and internships, particularly in programmes with lower proficiency levels, such as Tourism and Operation and Repair of Equipment. Collaborate with local industries to provide students with practical experience and skill development.
- *Implement targeted regional interventions*: Address training quality gaps in regions with lower satisfaction levels, such as Jalal-Abad and Issyk-Kul, through tailored improvements. These may include additional instructor training, updated curricula, and enhanced student support services.

For the Ministry of Education and Science:

- *Ensure quality VET education across all regions*: Strengthen quality assurance measures to maintain consistent training standards across all regions. This should include regular assessments, accreditation processes, and continuous improvement initiatives.
- *Strengthen Industry Partnerships*: Foster collaborations between VET institutions and industries to expand internship and apprenticeship opportunities. Engaging employers in curriculum development and skill training will enhance workforce readiness.
- *Monitor and reduce dropout rates:* Introduce targeted support mechanisms such as academic counselling, financial aid, and mentorship programs to improve student retention.
- *Enhance continuous professional development for teachers and masters*: Support continuous professional development to improve teaching methodologies and align training with sector requirements. Provide regular upskilling opportunities through workshops, certifications, and work placements.

For Employers:

- *Enhance collaboration with VET institutions:* Work closely with vocational training providers to ensure that curricula align with employers' needs. Establish structured internship, apprenticeship, and mentorship programs to provide students with real-world experience.

- *Provide sector-driven feedback on curricula:* Regularly communicate skill requirements and workforce demands to VET institutions to keep training programs up to date. Participate in curriculum development to ensure graduates are equipped with relevant skills.
- *Expand workplace training initiatives:* Implement structured on-the-job training programs to bridge gaps between education and employers' expectations.

Resources

European Training Foundation. International Labour Organization and Cedefop. 2016. Carrying out tracer studies - Guide to anticipating and matching skills and jobs Vol. 6. Available at: https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/carrying-out-tracer-studies-guide-anticipating-and-matching

European Training Foundation. Skills Anticipation and Matching Systems. 2012. in Transition and Developing Countries. Available at: https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/m/84E964F6CBD16532C1257AAD0038EC27_Skills%20matching%20systems.pdf

EU – VET Toolbox. 2022. Tracer studies for VET: supporting their creation and implementation. Available at: https://vettoolbox.eu/publications/tracer-studies-for-vet-supporting-their-creation-and-implementation/

ANNEX

Table A.1 Distribution of respondents by region

Region	%	Count
Batken region	13	887
Bishkek city	24	1,644
Jalal-Abad region	14	990
Naryn region	3	194
Osh region	17	1,204
Talas region	6	404
Chui region	10	705
Issyk-kul region	13	939
No Answer	0	13
Total	100	6980

Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024, unweighted data

Table A.2 Distribution of respondents by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation

Sector of economy of study programme/specialisation	%	Count
Agriculture	10	685
Land transport	3	210
Light industry	11	757
Woodworking industry	2	152
Catering services	18	1,255
Construction	3	234
Manufacture of art and jewellery	1	75
Information and communication technology	4	276
Metalworking	10	707
Locksmithing and assembly work	9	652
Beauty industry	3	243
Service sector	2	144
Mining industry	1	52
Tourism	1	91
Manufacture of handicraft products	6	402
Operation and repair or equipment of power plants, electric and communication	4	310
Electrical engineering production	6	399
Other	1	90
NA	4	246
Total	100	6980

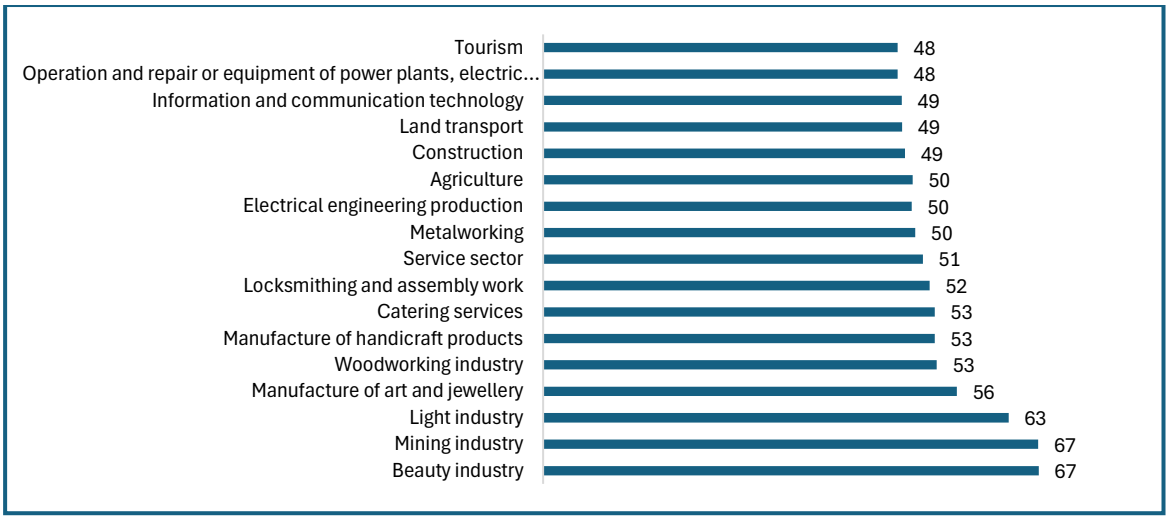
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024, unweighted data

Table A.3 Distribution of respondents by gender

	%	Count
Female students	38	2640
Male students	61	4279
No Answer	1	61
Total	100	6980

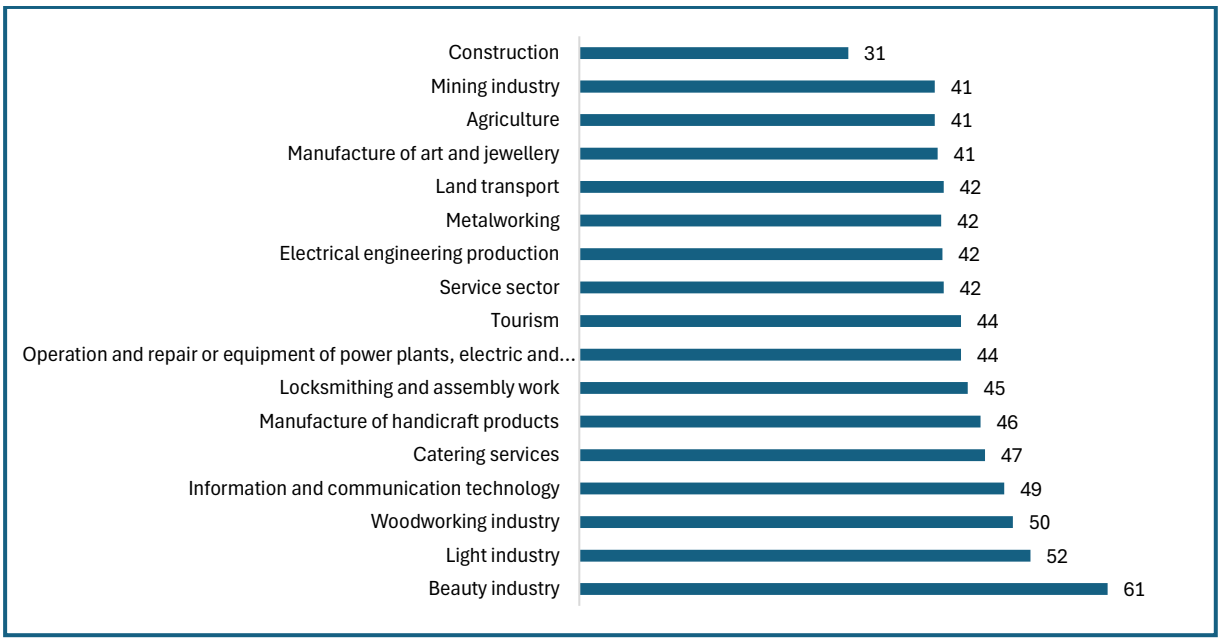
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024, unweighted data

Figure A.1 How satisfied are you with the level of training in your profession (% of those completely satisfied), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation



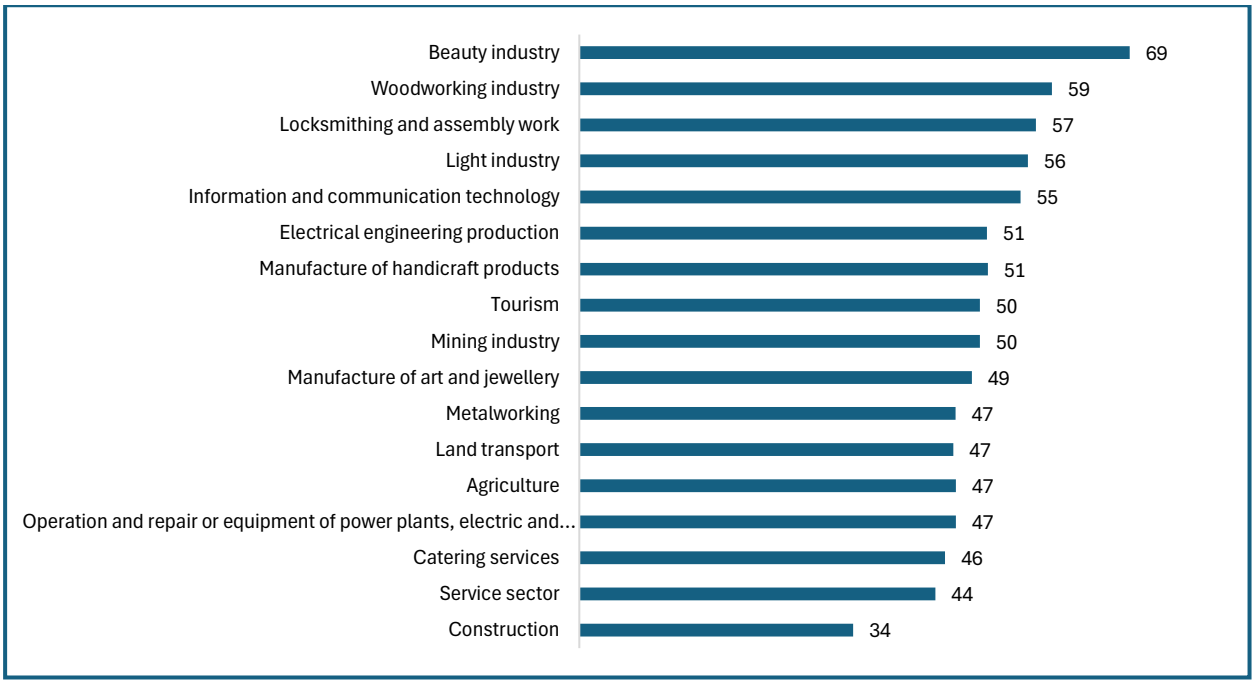
Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Figure A.2 How would you assess the quality of teaching at your institution? (% of those saying "very good"), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation



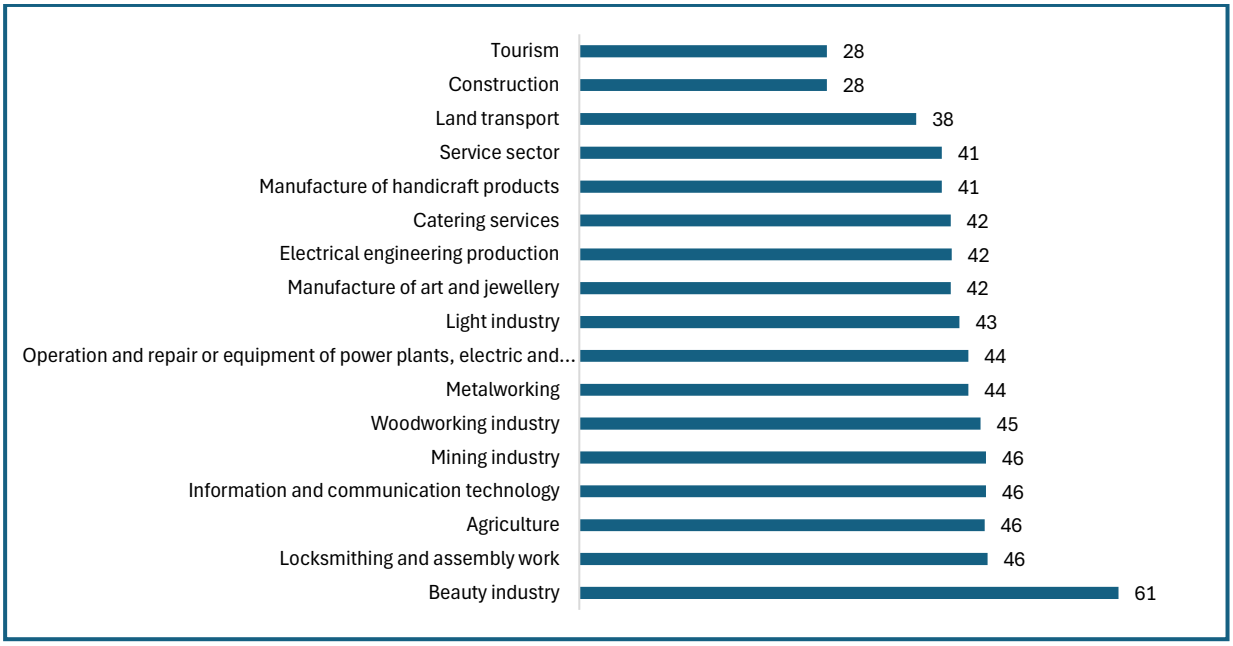
Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Figure A.3 How do you assess the material and technical base of your education institution? (% of those saying "very good"), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation



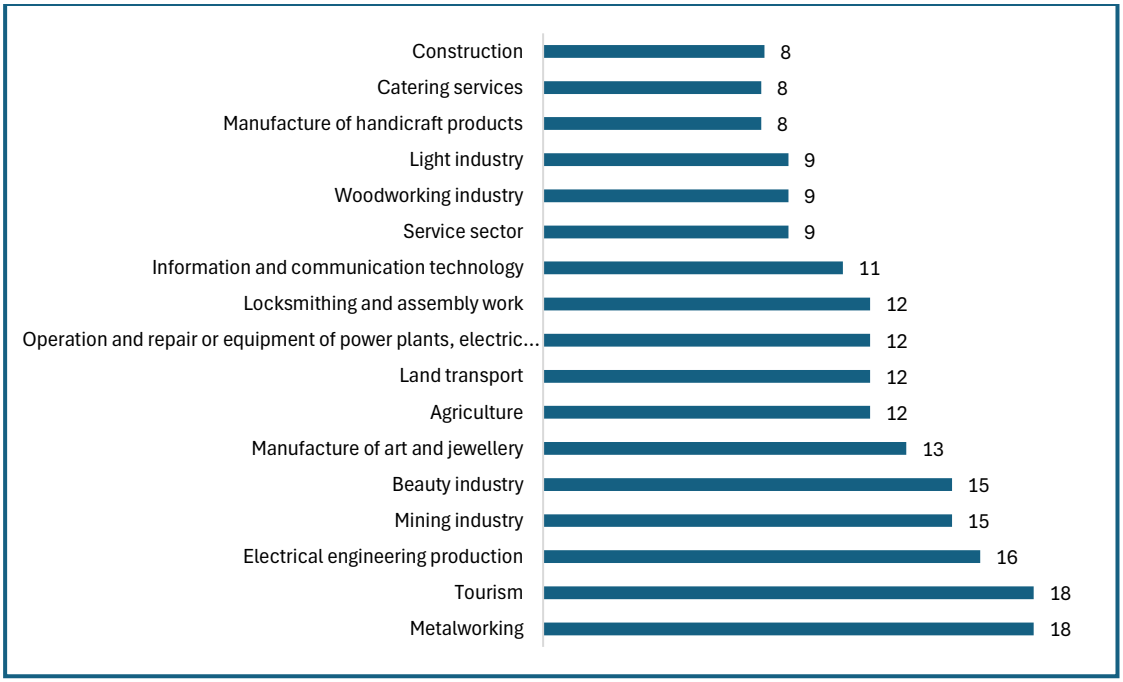
Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Figure A.4 How do you assess the availability of training materials and other resources? (% of those saying "always available"), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation



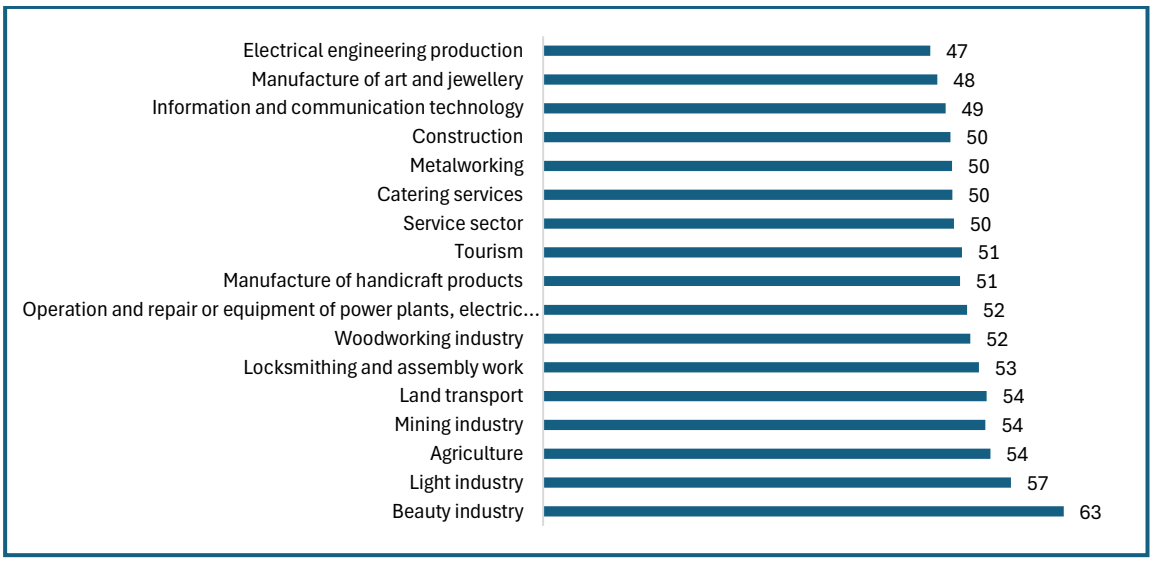
Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Figure A.5 How often do you encounter technical problems during learning process? (% of those saying "very often"), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation



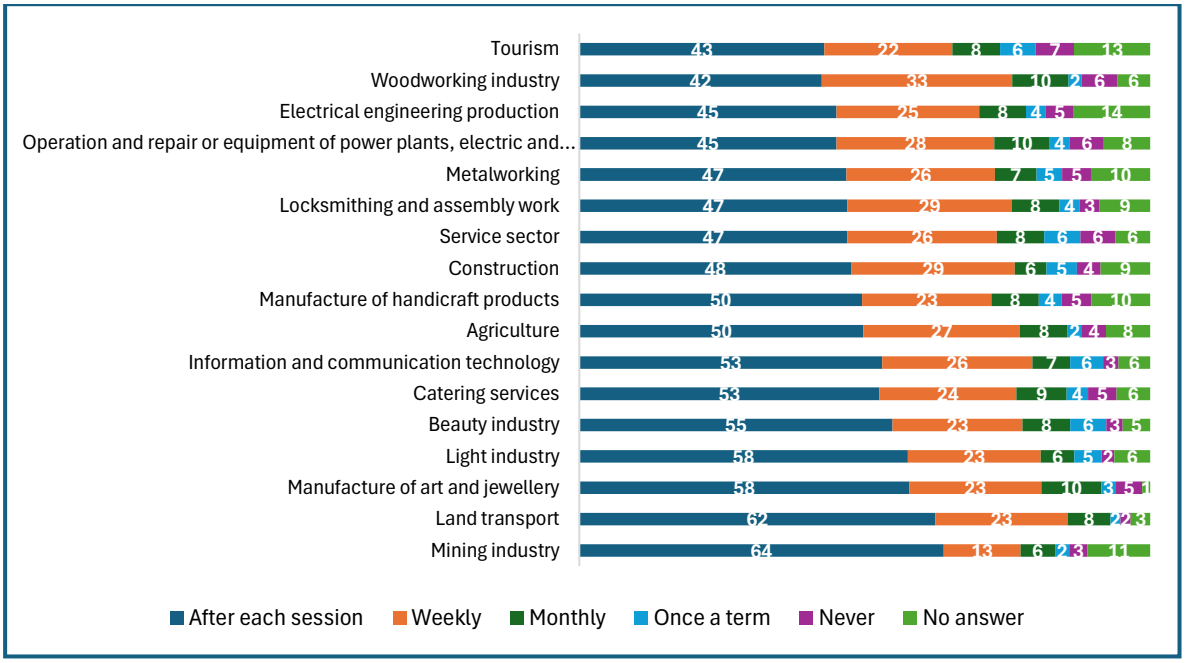
Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Figure A.6 To what extent are you satisfied with the level of communication between teachers and students? (% of those saying "fully satisfied"), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation



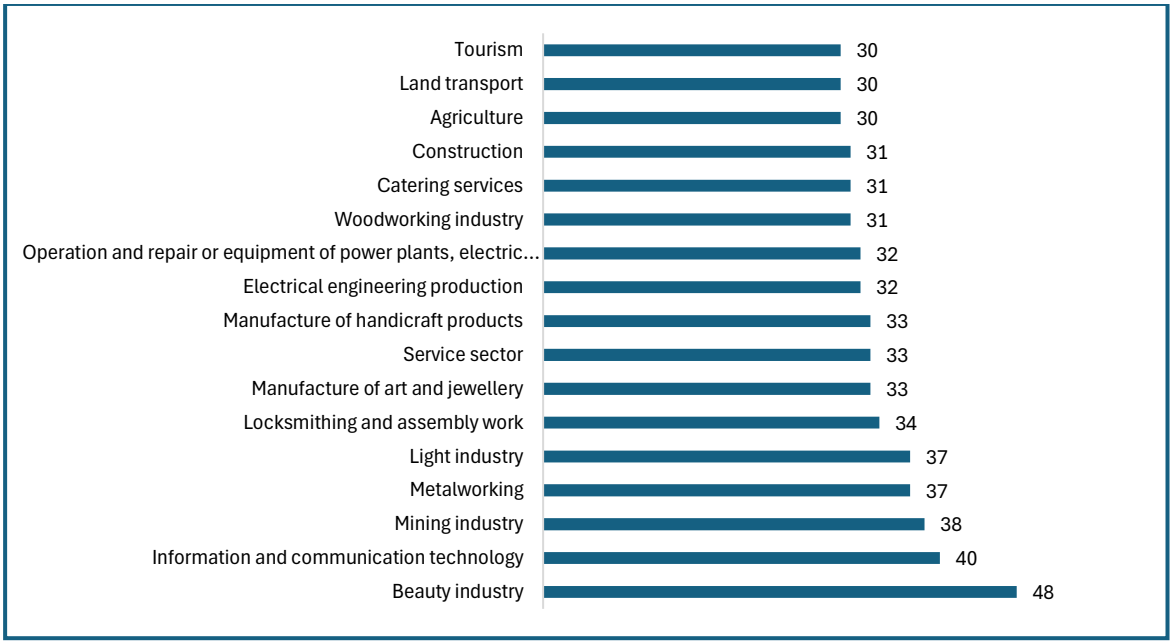
Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Figure A.7 How often do you get feedback from teachers? (%), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation



Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Figure A.8 In your opinion, how effective is your education institution in tracking your progress? (% of those saying "very effective), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation



Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Table A.4 In your opinion, what improvements are most needed in your education institution? (%), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation

	Improved training programmes	*Improved equipment and facilities*	*Improved quality of teaching*	*Improved student facilities (e.g. canteen, library, sport grounds)*	*No answer*
Agriculture	21	36	11	29	4
Land transport	13	41	14	27	4
Light industry	18	35	11	35	2
Woodworking industry	17	34	14	29	7
Catering services	19	32	10	35	3
Construction	16	42	10	28	4

Manufacture of art and jewellery	22	28	18	30	1
Information and communication technology	32	20	17	28	3
Metalworking	28	34	10	24	5
Locksmithing and assembly work	24	34	9	28	5
Beauty industry	24	21	10	43	3
Service sector	19	30	10	36	5
Mining industry	29	34	9	25	3
Tourism	21	22	17	33	7
Manufacture of handicraft products	14	36	10	35	5
Operation and repair or equipment of power plants, electric and communication networks	23	38	11	25	4
Electrical engineering production	27	28	14	25	6

Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Table A.5 In your opinion, what changes are most important in your institution to enhance student performance? (%), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation

	Increase the number of practical classes	*Introduction of additional personalised student support*	*Improvement of motivation and student engagement*	*Development and implementation of new teaching methods*	*No answer*
Agriculture	43	15	14	23	5
Land transport	52	10	18	18	2
Light industry	38	17	15	26	5
Woodworking industry	40	16	14	24	6

Catering services	42	13	18	22	5
Construction	39	21	14	18	7
Manufacture of art and jewellery	38	18	19	25	0
Information and communication technology	38	17	17	23	6
Metalworking	44	18	14	16	9
Locksmithing and assembly work	49	18	11	15	7
Beauty industry	46	15	16	19	4
Service sector	47	11	20	18	4
Mining industry	47	18	3	24	7
Tourism	41	19	11	18	11
Manufacture of handicraft products	39	17	12	25	6
Operation and repair or equipment of power plants,	49	14	14	17	6
Electrical engineering production	41	19	14	16	10

Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Table A.6 What additional services or activities do you consider desirable to be introduced in your education institution? (%), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation

	Organisation of cultural events	*Development of programmes to support student initiatives*	*Organisation of career masterclasses*	*Introduction of courses on soft skills*	*No answer*
Agriculture	27	24	24	18	7
Land transport	23	22	34	17	4
Light industry	21	20	33	21	4

Woodworking industry	18	35	29	12	6
Catering services	21	21	39	13	5
Construction	16	26	34	15	8
Manufacture of art and jewellery	14	38	39	9	0
Information and communication technology	19	24	34	17	5
Metalworking	29	23	25	13	10
Locksmithing and assembly work	25	25	28	14	8
Beauty industry	28	19	39	10	4
Service sector	26	14	39	16	4
Mining industry	30	18	25	22	6
Tourism	17	22	33	14	13
Manufacture of handicraft products	22	25	37	9	6
Operation and repair or equipment of power plants,	28	26	24	15	6
Electrical engineering production	27	25	23	15	10

Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Table A.7 What technology/innovation would you like to see at your institution? (%), by study programme/specialisation (%), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation

	Introduction of online learning and distance learning formats	*Use of interactive whiteboards and educational applications*	*Creation of virtual laboratories and training sites*	*Development of an electronic document management and online consultation system*	*No answer*
Agriculture	22	28	25	18	7
Land transport	27	29	29	13	2

Light industry	22	32	21	20	5
Woodworking industry	21	34	28	8	9
Catering services	25	29	27	14	5
Construction	17	40	19	15	8
Manufacture of art and jewellery	30	30	21	17	1
Information and communication technology	18	21	37	17	7
Metalworking	23	25	27	14	11
Locksmithing and assembly work	24	30	26	13	8
Beauty industry	22	28	28	16	6
Service sector	24	25	31	16	5
Mining industry	33	14	17	23	13
Tourism	25	24	24	16	11
Manufacture of handicraft products	18	31	24	19	8
Operation and repair or equipment of power plants	17	37	25	15	6
Electrical engineering production	24	26	23	17	10

Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024

Table A.8 What programmes to support and stimulate student success at your institution do you consider necessary? (%), by economic sector corresponding to study specialisation

	Granting scholarships for academic achievement	*Organisation of competitions and prizes for students*	*Counselling and development of individual education plans*	*Carrying out activities to increase motivation and self-esteem of students*	*No answer*
Agriculture	31	25	12	25	7
Land transport	34	22	16	23	5

Light industry	34	20	10	31	5
Woodworking industry	32	28	6	28	6
Catering services	36	24	10	25	5
Construction	43	17	11	21	8
Manufacture of art and jewellery	37	18	16	28	1
Information and communication technology	29	22	16	28	5
Metalworking	33	27	10	20	10
Locksmithing and assembly work	36	24	15	18	8
Beauty industry	28	26	15	28	4
Service sector	40	27	12	17	4
Mining industry	40	21	8	19	13
Tourism	35	19	13	20	13
Manufacture of handicraft products	25	26	10	31	7
Operation and repair or equipment of power plants	33	24	13	24	6
Electrical engineering production	31	23	14	21	11

Note: Printing production, Manufacture of radio and wire communication equipment, Water transportation, Stone processing industry and Railway transportation excluded due to a small number of cases.
Source: Survey of graduates from IVET in Kyrgyzstan – Phase 1, 2024