



# Mapping of VET Educational Policies and Practices for Social Inclusion and Social Cohesion

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Interim Report  
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## **PROJECT OVERVIEW**

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The aim of the project is to deepen our understanding of the main barriers and potential opportunities for building inclusive and equitable VET systems in the Western Balkans, Turkey and Israel, given the current social and economic challenges facing the region. It aims to provide new evidence on the role of VET in combating social inclusion and contributing to building more cohesive societies. The project also aims to assist capacity building of national stakeholders to establish appropriate policies and practises to enhance the contribution of VET to the promotion of skills, socialization, civic values, social inclusion and social cohesion. To achieve these aims, research teams in nine countries are investigating the impact of VET practice and policy on social inclusion and social cohesion taking into account the community effects of VET.

The research project uses the methodology of participatory action research, in which a wide range of stakeholders including national and local policy makers, school professionals, students, employers, researchers and civil society organisation representatives from the "community of practice" are consulted to ensure that the project addresses relevant issues related to the role of VET in social inclusion and cohesion. The research is based on the view that a school is an integral part of the community in which it functions and a key actor, along with others such as employers, local government, trade unions and NGOs in the local 'skill development system'.

### **Sequencing of research activities**

The first phase of the project aims to identify and analyse educational policies and practices in vocational education, highlighting specific transformative approaches to education policy and practice at the macro (VET system and

policy) and micro (vocational schools) level. It draws on information gained through three case studies of selected schools in each of the nine participating countries. The case studies are designed to identify successful approaches in vocational schools that foster the participation and achievement of all students. The research findings will support recommendations and conclusions on possible strategies and practices for vocational schools in promoting social inclusion and cohesion.

This Interim Report reflects the progress of the first phase of the research up to mid-November 2012. This first phase (country focused research) will be completed in March 2013. A second phase of the research will involve cross-country comparisons and syntheses of the research findings. The interim reports of the work carried out so far in the nine countries are included in this report in appendices. They report on the status of the project prior to the commencement of detailed field work in the case study schools and their local communities.

### **Research Tasks –report on progress**

In this section we set out the six key research tasks develop in the Inception Report (LSE Enterprise, 2012) and identify the key research findings that have emerged so far at this early stage of the research. .

*Research Task 1: to map the different policies towards VET, social inclusion and social cohesion in the WBTI countries and assess the relationship between them.*

This task will be carried out through documentary analysis followed by a series of focus groups and in-depths interviews with policy makers and policy advisors at national level including representatives of relevant government ministries and agencies, social partners, representatives of CSOs. Thus far a significant amount of documentary analysis has been achieved, providing a thorough understanding of current policy towards the VET system in each country and the relationship to social inclusion and social cohesion at a policy level. Most country teams have established National Advisory Boards and

initial meetings have been held with these with the aim to validate and guide the research process in each country. Some initial in depth interviews have been carried out and this element of the research is currently in progress.

*Research Task 2: to map the influence of selection and tracking on social inclusion in the WBTI countries.*

This will be done through face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the directors, other managerial personnel, and teachers in three case study VET schools in each country and with key informants at in the respective local communities including local employers, trade unionists community leaders, and NGO/CSO representatives. Where feasible, a student questionnaire will also be implemented and analysed in each case study school to identify reasons for choice of tracks and characteristics of students. This will be supplemented where possible analysis of relevant data at national and local level.

The vocational schools that are involved in the research have been selected in each country. Several Local Advisory Boards have been established in the case study communities based around the selected vocational schools.

*Research Task 3: To map the extent of drop-out from vocational education in the WBTI countries and assess the influence of drop-out on social inclusion*

This will be done through face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the directors, other managerial personnel, and teachers in three case study VET schools in each country and with key informants at in the respective local communities including local employers, trade unionists community leaders, and NGO/CSO representatives. This will be supplemented where possible analysis of relevant data at national and local level.

Thus far fieldwork has not yet begun at school level and so no specific information about the dropout problems in the case study schools is available. However, several country teams have gathered information about drop out rates at national level.

*Research Task 4: To map the different patterns of school-based vocational education and apprenticeship systems and assess their influence on social inclusion in the WBTI countries*

This task will be carried out through documentary analysis followed by a series of focus groups and in-depths interviews with policy makers and policy advisors at national level including representatives of relevant government ministries and agencies, social partners, representatives of NGOs/CSOs. Where feasible, a teacher questionnaire will also be implemented and analysed in each case study school to identify patterns of school-based vocational education practice and work placement as well as teacher characteristics. This will be supplemented where possible by analysis of relevant data at national and local level.

So far, some initial exploration of school based education processes has been carried out at national level, but since the local field work has not yet begun there is little to report about education processes within individual schools. A teacher questionnaire and an associated student questionnaire have been developed and will be implemented in each country by the research teams in collaboration with the school Directors and their staff to gain a deeper insight into the processes within the school relating to the educational experience and its influence on social inclusion. The questionnaires will also be supplemented by in depth interviews with key informants within the schools and the local communities.

*Research Task 5: To map the transition from vocational education to work in the WBTI countries and assess the different ways in which this transition reflects differences in social inclusion.*

This will be done through face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the directors, other managerial personnel, and teachers in three case study VET schools in each country and with key informants at in the respective local communities including local employers, trade unionists community leaders, and NGO/CSO representatives. Where feasible, a student questionnaire will also be implemented and analysed in each case study school to identify

expected plans after graduation as well as student characteristics. This will be supplemented where possible by analysis of relevant data at national and local level.

So far, some initial exploration of the school-to-work transition has been carried out at national level through documentary and data analysis, but since the local fieldwork has not yet begun there is little to report about the school to work transition within individual schools. A teacher questionnaire and a pupil questionnaire have been developed and will be implemented in each country by the research teams in collaboration with the school Directors and their staff to gain an insight into the perceptions and expectations of the effectiveness of schools in preparing students for the world of work upon graduation. The questionnaires will also be supplemented by in depth interviews with key informants within the schools and the local communities.

*Research Task 6: to map the role of VET in promoting social cohesion in the WBTI countries*

This task will be carried out through documentary analysis followed by a series of focus groups and in-depth interviews with policy makers and policy advisors at national level including representatives of relevant government ministries and agencies, social partners, representatives of NGOs/CSOs. The effects of vocational education practices on social cohesion will be further investigated where feasible through analyses of national level administrative data on educational processes and outcomes. These in depth interviews are currently being carried out and there are as yet no results from the fieldwork.

## **METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

The research is framed through the methodology of participatory action research (PAR), adopting a holistic-school approach towards inclusion in education. PAR involves both the researchers and the subjects of research in a joint endeavour designed to make the research findings relevant and

applicable. PAR tries to be a genuinely democratic or non-coercive process whereby those to be helped are enabled to influence the purposes and outcomes of the research.

Key stakeholders such as school directors, teachers, students, employers, community leaders and others have been invited to participate in the research in an advisory and consultative capacity. National Advisory Boards (NABs) have been established with the relevant key actors at national level. Local Advisory Boards (LABs) have also been established at each case-study site around the three VET schools in each country. The ETF research teams in each country lead the advisory boards in an open and collaborative style.

The first meetings of national advisory boards have identified relevant issues concerning the relationship between vocational education, social inclusion and social cohesion, and have agreed on an appropriate research strategy to be implemented by the ETF country research teams. Following the research and analysis carried out by the ETF research teams, the advisory boards will reconvene to discuss and comment on the research findings and their significance for improving VET policy and practice. These comments will be used as an input into the final country reports.

### **Box 1: Sequencing of Participatory Action Research**

#### **Sequencing of the Participatory Action Research Approach**

Step 1: Interviews with national policy makers, policy advisors and stakeholders to identify key issues relating VET to social inclusion and social cohesion in each country. Establishment of national advisory board (NAB) and first NAB meeting.

Step 2: Formation of local advisory board (LAB) of local stakeholders. Following initial LAB consultation meeting, research will involve in-depth interviews at three case study vocational schools in each country

Step 3: Focus groups and/or in-depth interviews will be carried out at local level at the three case study locations with community-based informants and

## stakeholders

Step 4: Presentation of research findings from focus groups and in-depth interviews to national and local advisory boards for discussion of the research findings and their significance for improving VET policy and practice.

Step 5: Writing up country reports, incorporating comments and reflections of advisory boards

The participatory action research will be carried out with the participation of three VET schools in each country. The research will adopt a holistic-school approach towards inclusion in education, taking into account the organisation and practices within the school as well as the relationships between the school and the local community. The research will be carried out as a reflective process of problem solving led by the ETF country researchers in consultation with practitioners at VET schools and community stakeholders connected with them including national and local policy makers, school professionals, students, employers, researchers and civil society organisations as part of a "community of practice" engaged in improving the role of VET in social inclusion and cohesion.

### **School selection**

VET schools taking part in the research have been selected in discussion between the research team and the ETF and taken from a list of schools identified through a prior round of consultations between the ETF and country stakeholders in the field of VET policy. Criteria applied to the schools selected in the prior round of consultation were as follows:

- (i) Presence of inclusive and/or segregation practices (new and/or longstanding)
- (ii) Consideration of diversity (accounting for economic, socio, cultural, religious, and linguistic differences, urban/rural)
- (iii) Instrumental learning (academic attainment and practical learning)
- (iv) Dialogic and/or cooperative learning
- (v) Family/community/employers collaborative involvement in the school
- (vi) Commitment of the school staff to inclusive approaches for all learners

- (vii) Level of motivation (of students, school staff and families)
- (viii) Academic expectations (of students, teachers, and family members)
- (ix) Inclusion of democratic values in the educational programme
- (x) School's capacity to contribute to the research (carrying out research activities)
- (xi) Reporting / participating in externally designed researches)
- (xii) Commitment from the government to support financially either through donor funded projects or state funds

The criteria were subjectively scored by country stakeholders on a 0-1 scale and aggregated scores, together with the judgement exercised by country researchers, were used in the final selection of three schools to be invited to participate in the research in each country. An additional criterion of school location was also used in making the final selection of schools from the list. In a limited number of cases, country researchers selected schools from outside the initial list of schools, reflecting special circumstances deemed to be important to enhancing the validity of the research.

Research methods to be used in fieldwork will be discussed with national and local advisory boards to ensure that they are appropriate to the aims of the research and consistent with local ethical standards. However, it should be noted that a key aim of the research is to ensure a consistency in research methods applied within and across countries in order to enable comparative analysis. Therefore, standard methods will be proposed to research advisory boards in each case study location. These will include a mixture of in-depth interviews with key actors, focus groups, and teacher and student questionnaires.

## **Involvement of stakeholders**

A key feature of PAR is the active involvement in the research process of relevant stakeholders. These include the members of the Advisory Board of the project in each country who are taking an active role in consultation on key research questions. Members of the National Advisory Boards include key policy makers at national level, while members of the Local Advisory Boards will include key local informants such as the school director, teacher representatives, parent representatives, and representatives of local

stakeholder groups (employers, trade unionists, local self-government, local NGOs/CSOs). The composition of these advisory boards has been made at the discretion of the country researchers.

## **RESEARCH ACTIVITIES**

The fieldwork combines several distinct but mutually reinforcing and complementary approaches, as follows

### **Desk research**

This has consisted of literature reviews on policies and practices in vocational education in each country, highlighting:

- (i) The situation concerning the relation between vocational education, skills mismatches, social exclusion and social cohesion at national level
- (ii) The institutional framework for vocational education at national level and where appropriate the extent and nature of decentralisation of competences and responsibilities to local level
- (iii) The policy process and the policy debate relating vocational education, social inclusion and social cohesion.

The initial findings regarding these issues are set out in detail in PART A of each of the attached Interim Country Reports.

Existing policy documents and administrative data have been analysed to investigate the relationship between VET policy and social inclusion and social cohesion. Data are being gathered on the structure and outcomes of the educational system as a whole including where available

- (i) Enrolment rates
- (ii) Resources available
- (iii) Teacher-pupil ratios
- (iv) The social composition of the student body and the teaching workforce
- (v) The degree of social differentiation between schools.

Additional data is being collected during the course of the research on a range of indicators of social cohesion in various areas such as the labour market,

poverty, housing, health, crime and social participation. Where possible, the intake policies of case study schools will be analysed through data on the social composition of first year students. Data on dropout rates will be analysed to identify the social composition of pupils who drop out of vocational education.

## **Focus groups**

Initial focus group sessions with key actors involved in the VET system

- (i) At national level with key policy-makers and policy advisors including representatives of relevant government ministries and agencies, social partners, representatives of CSOs
- (ii) At local level in and around the three case study sites (VET schools) including school directors/principals, teachers, local employers, trade unionists community leaders, and NGO/CSO representatives.

The aim of the focus groups is to identify and validate the key issues relating to social inclusion and social cohesion in each country. The findings of the focus group meetings will be presented to the research advisory boards at each case study location for reflection and consideration in the formulation of the local key research questions. The focus groups will be chaired by the lead researcher for each country accompanied by a research assistant who will record the meeting and produce a summary of the main issues discussed and views expressed.

## **In-depth interviews at national level**

A series of face-to-face interviews with the key decision-makers in the area of VET and social inclusion and social cohesion, including policy leaders will be carried out at various levels including

- (i) Central government level within the respective ministries of education, employment, social policy, economy and other relevant ministries, VET agencies, education agencies, public employment services, and welfare agencies
- (ii) Local government level with representatives of regional and local governments in the case study areas, being especially important where

competencies for vocational education have been decentralised to this level

- (iii) At national level with non-governmental actors from employers' associations, chambers of commerce, trade unions, and NGOs/CSOs working in fields related to vocational education and social inclusion and social cohesion.

The interviews will be designed to investigate the relationships between VET policy and practice and social inclusion and social cohesion from the perspective of the different actors in the system. The multi-faceted nature of the collection of interviews will provide a whole-system view of the inter-relationship between VET policy and practice and social inclusion and social cohesion in each country.

Policy issues to be discussed during in-depth interviews include issues such as

- (i) The vision and strategy towards vocational education,
- (ii) The aims of policy towards vocational education
- (iii) The extent of autonomy granted to school principals
- (iv) The degree of delegation or devolution of authority to local government level,
- (v) The inter-relationship and linkages between government and business in relation to vocational education system,
- (vi) The relations between government and trade unions concerning vocational education policy,
- (vii) The finance of the education system and the distribution of public resources to vocational education and how this is perceived by policy makers,
- (viii) The design of incentives towards ensuring a greater degree of social inclusion in vocational education
- (ix) Policies towards discrimination and exclusion of vulnerable groups including those such as Roma and other ethnic or minority groups
- (x) The policy towards comprehensive versus selective education and how this is seen to affect social cohesion
- (xi) Policy towards tracking within schools and its perceived effect on social inclusion
- (xii) Policy towards the school to work transition and towards apprenticeship systems
- (xiii) Policy towards reducing school drop-out rates

The topics for inclusion in the semi-structured interviews have been agreed with the country research teams and are set out in the Appendix. Other policy areas will also be investigated following consultation with the country researchers and the local research advisory boards. A brief summary of each

interview will be provided to the central LSE research team for use in the second stage of the research to prepare the comparative report.

### **In-depth interviews at case study sites**

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews will be carried out with the directors, other managerial personnel and teachers in the three selected case study VET schools in each country and with key informants at in the local community including local employers, trade unionists, community leaders and NGO/CSO representatives. Issues to be addressed will include

- (i) The process of accessing vocational education (social background of the students, choice of schools, cost of school attendance, selection processes)
- (ii) The educational processes within the vocational schools (resources available including both finance and equipment, social composition of the pupil body, teacher-pupil ratios, teaching methods, tracking or streaming within schools, drop-out rates and causes of drop-out, degree of autonomy of the school in key areas including budgeting, course design and course mix, selection of students, choice of course by students in relation to gender bias, involvement of local community in life of the school, degree of social differentiation between schools)
- (iii) The transition from school to work (links of the school with local businesses, career guidance provided, employment rates and employability of graduates, destinations of graduates, matching of graduates between skills acquired and jobs attained).

The topics for inclusion in the semi-structured interviews have been agreed with the country research teams and are set out in the Appendix. The final definition of the question set will be made in consultation with the local advisory boards in each case study site as explained above. A brief summary of each interview will be provided to the central LSE research team for use in the second stage of the research to prepare the comparative report

### **Structured questionnaire for teaching staff and students**

While depth of research will be ensured by focus groups and in-depth face-to-face interviews, breadth will be achieved by a pair of questionnaire surveys conducted in each case-study VET school (i) a student questionnaire delivered

to up to 100 first and final year students in each school and (ii) a teacher questionnaire delivered to teachers. Ideally, where feasible, these would be balanced by a similar questionnaire to a control group of pupils and teachers from a local non-vocational secondary school.

(i) *Student questionnaire*

Issues covered by the pupil questionnaire include characteristics of the pupil (age, sex, ethnicity, year of study, courses enrolled, educational and social background), reasons for choice of vocational school, experience in the school, aspirations and plans for the future.

(ii) *Teacher questionnaire*

Issues covered by the pupil questionnaire include personal characteristics (age, sex, ethnicity, years of experience, level of educational attainment), courses taught, problems experienced in teaching practice, views about improvements needed to teaching practices and resources.

Copies of the teacher and pupil questionnaires are provided as an Appendix.

The design of the questionnaires has been centrally coordinated by LSE with inputs from the country research teams. Questionnaires are designed to be as short as possible, and have standard coding across countries. These will be translated into the respective languages and implemented in the schools. The data will be analysed by the country research teams to investigate the relationship between education practices and social inclusion in the three school communities involved in the study in each country. Data in Excel files format in English will be returned to LSE where they will be analysed to investigate the relations between VET practices and social inclusion variables on a cross-national basis.

## **Box 2: Example of a Case Study**

### **Example of a Case Study:**

1. Preparation of a set of standard questions for the in-depth interviews with various local actors and the questions to be included in the teacher and pupil questionnaires by the central LSE team.
2. Discussion and amendment of these questions at the initial kick-off meeting

of the LSE team with the country researchers in September 2012

3. Preparation of a standard set of interview questions for in-depth interviews and of the teacher and student questionnaires by the LSE team.
4. Circulation of the question set to the country researchers for comment
5. Revision of the question set, determining a core set of questions which will be retained for comparative purposes across countries and a non-core set which can be revised in discussion with local actors
6. Formation of local research advisory board including at least: school principal, a teacher, a student, a local employer, a local trade unionist, a member of the local government, a representative of a local NGO/CSO.
7. Meeting of advisory board to present the aims of the project, the nature of the problem of VET and social inclusion and its significance for the local community, and a discussion about the appropriate issues to be investigated at the case study site. Discussion of the questions prepared in points 1-5 above by the advisory boards. Revision of non-core questions and addition of a limited number of additional questions appropriate to the case study site
8. Performance of the in-depth interviews by the local research team.
9. Performance of the teacher and student questionnaire in close collaboration with the school Principal. This will be carried out by country researchers or members of the advisory board as appropriate.
10. Analysis of the findings of the research by the local research team and presentation of those findings at a meeting of the local advisory board. Where possible, a member of the LSE team will attend this meeting during a site visit to the country concerned. A discussion will be held concerning the findings. An action plan will be developed to address the causes of social exclusion in the school that are revealed by the research, for future implementation at the discretion of the school Director.

**APPENDIX 1: School Selection**

<b>Country</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Town or City</b>
Albania	Shkolla e Mesme Teknike Ekonomike (Technical Economic High School)	Tirana
Albania	Shkolla e Mesme Profesionale Beqir Cela (Vocational High School Beqir Cela)	Durres
Albania	Qendra rajonale e e Formimit Profesional (Regional Vocation Training Centre)	Elbasan
Bosnia	Srednja elektrotehnička škola (Secondary Electro-technical school)	Sarajevo
Bosnia	Elektrotehnička škola Ruđera Boskovića (Electro-technical school)	Mostar
Bosnia	Srednjoškolski centar Aleksa Šantić (Middle school centre)	Nevesinje
Croatia	Mješovita industrijsko - obrtnička škola (Mixed industrial-craft school)	Karlovac
Croatia	Gospodarska Škola (Economics school)	Čakovec
Croatia	Graditeljska škola za industriju i obrt (Construction school for industry and crafts)	Rijeka
Israel	Ort Adivi	Ashkelon
Israel	Amal Rahat	Rahat
Israel	Yeshiva of Kfar Zetim	Kfar Zetim
Kosovo	28 Nentori, Technical School	Pristina
Kosovo	Gani Cavderbasha, Technical school	prizren
Kosovo	Kadri Kusari, School of economy	Djakova
Macedonia	Riste Risteski-Ricko	Prilep
Macedonia	Vocational school Nikola Stein	Tetovo
Macedonia	ASUC Boro Petrusovski	Skopje
Montenegro	Secondary School of Civil Engineering "Ing. Marko Radevic"	Podgorica
Montenegro	Agricultural High School	Bar
Montenegro	Secondary mixed school "Beco Pasic"	Plav
Serbia	Chemical, Food-processing and Textile School "Uros Predic"	Zrenjanin
Serbia	Tehnoart" School of Mechanical Engineering and Art Crafts	Belgrade
Serbia	School of Design, Textile and Leather	Novi Pazar

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Turkey	Keçiören Technical and Industrial Vocational High School	Ankara
Turkey	Atatürk Technical and Vocational High School for Girls	Ankara
Turkey	Küçükyalı Technical and Industrial Vocational High School	Istanbul

## **Appendix 2: In Depth Interviews at National Level**

In depth face-to-face interviews (IDIs) are being carried out with key decision-makers in the area of VET and social inclusion and social cohesion, including policy leaders at various levels including

- (i) With central government within the respective ministries of education, employment, social policy, economy and other relevant ministries, VET agencies, education agencies, public employment services, and welfare agencies,
- (ii) With national non-governmental actors from employers' associations, chambers of commerce, trade unions, and NGOs/CSOs working in fields related to vocational education and social inclusion and social cohesion.

The interviews are designed to investigate the relationships between VET policy and practice and social inclusion and social cohesion from the perspective of the different actors in the system. The multi-faceted nature of the collection of interviews will provide a whole-system view of the inter-relationship between VET policy and practice and social inclusion and social cohesion in each country. Please note that not all these questions need to be asked of each interviewee – mix and match as appropriate. As a guide, up to 10 interviews should be sufficient.

Issues covered will include, but not be limited to, the following core discussion points:

- (i) The vision and strategy for vocational education
- (ii) The aims of policy on vocational education
- (iii) The link, if any, between VET strategy and sector strategies?
- (iv) Policies on discrimination and exclusion of vulnerable groups from VET including disabled people, refugees, and minority groups such as Roma
- (v) The policy on comprehensive versus selective education and how this is seen to affect social cohesion

- (vi) Policy on tracking within schools and its perceived effect on social inclusion
- (vii) How is the quality of education monitored?
- (viii) How is school inspection organised?
- (ix) Policy towards school drop-out rates and mechanisms to reduce it
- (x) Policy on school to work transition
- (xi) Policy on apprenticeship systems
- (xii) The degree of delegation or devolution of authority to local government level
- (xiii) The inter-relationship and linkages between government and business in relation to vocational education system
- (xiv) The relations between government and trade unions concerning vocational education policy
- (xv) The finance of the education system and the distribution of public resources to vocational education and how this is perceived by policy makers
- (xvi) The extent of autonomy granted to school principals to deal with issues of social inclusion; would greater school autonomy be helpful?
- (xvii) The design of incentives towards ensuring a greater degree of social inclusion in vocational education
- (xviii) Are there any opportunities for regional cooperation and specialisation (in Western Balkan countries)?

Other issues may be included following consultation with the national research advisory boards.

A brief one-page (or less) summary of each interview stating the position of the interviewee, the institution, and the place and date of interview should be provided to the central LSE research team for use in the second stage of the research to prepare the comparative report. The summary should include highlights of the interview that related to any of the six main research questions of the project.



### **Appendix 3: In Depth Interviews at Local Level**

In depth face-to-face semi-structured interviews (IDIs) will be carried out with the directors, other managerial personnel and teachers in the three selected vocational schools in each country and with key informants in the local community, including for example local employers, trade unionists, community leaders and NGO/CSO representatives. Interviews with representatives of local governments in the case study areas are especially important where competencies for vocational education have been decentralised to this level. The number of interviews carried out is at the discretion of the local research team, but as a guide up to 15 interviews should be sufficient for each case study area in most cases.

Issues covered should include, but not be limited to, the following core questions (for discussion with the appropriate interviewee):

- (i) The process of accessing vocational education
  - a. Social background of the students
  - b. Choice of schools
  - c. Cost of school attendance
  - d. The selection process
  - e. Barriers to access by social group and social class
  
- (ii) The educational processes within the vocational schools
  - a. Management structure and policy
  - b. Financial resources available
  - c. Equipment available
  - d. Social composition of the pupil body
  - e. Teacher-pupil ratios
  - f. Teaching methods
  - g. Tracking or streaming within schools
  - h. Drop-out rates
  - i. Causes of drop-out
  - j. Degree of autonomy of the school in key areas including
    - i. Budgeting
    - ii. Course design
    - iii. Course mix
    - iv. Selection of students by social group and social class
    - v. Choice of course by students in relation to gender and ethnicity
    - vi. Involvement of local community in life of the school
    - vii. Degree of social differentiation between schools

- (iii) The transition from school to work
  - a. Links of the school with local businesses
  - b. Career guidance provided and access issues (whether teachers have time to provide counselling and outreach to the local community)
  - c. Employability of graduates (by social group)
  - d. Destinations of graduates (by social group)
  - e. Matching of graduates between skills acquired and jobs attained
  - f. Methods of following up and tracing outcomes for school leavers

The issues covered in part (iii) are relevant also to the in depth interviews with the key informants from the local community.

Additional questions should be included as required in consultation with the local advisory boards in each case study site according to the decisions of the local research teams.

A brief one-page (or less) summary of each interview including the position of the interviewee, the institution, the role of the interviewee, and the place and date of interview should be provided to the central LSE research team for use in the second stage of the research to prepare the comparative report. The summary should include highlights of the interview that related to any of the six main research questions of the project.

**Appendix 4: Teacher questionnaire - draft**

This survey is being carried out by the University of \_\_\_\_\_. It is designed to gather information about the effects of vocational education on your society. The information you provide will be confidential. Please answer the following questions. Multiple answers are allowed if necessary. The survey should take you about 15 minutes to complete.

**I. Personal data**

- 1) What is your age?  
\_\_\_\_\_ [Years]
- 2) What is your sex?  
[male/female]
- 3) In which town or village do you live?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4) What is your ethnicity? [list of ethnicities]
- 5) What is your nationality? [list of nationalities]
- 6) What is your highest level of education? [Secondary school/College/University]
- 7) Which courses do you currently teach?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8) How many years have you been teaching
  - a. In total \_\_\_\_\_  
[number of years]
  - b. At this school \_\_\_\_\_  
[number of years]

- 9) Do you use computers to aid teaching in your classroom?  
[yes/no]

## II. Challenges experienced in teaching practice

- 1) Does your school put students in separate tracks based on ability?  
[yes/no]
- a. If yes, to what extent does this practice benefit disadvantaged students?  
[scale 1 to 5]
- 2) How many hours per week do you teach the students?  
\_\_\_\_\_ [hours]
- 3) How many hours per week does an average student who you teach spend on practical training using equipment in a workshop?  
\_\_\_\_\_ [hours]
- 4) How many hours per week does an average student who you teach spend on theoretical learning in the classroom \_\_\_\_\_  
[hours]
- 5) How many hours per week do you spend preparing classes?  
\_\_\_\_\_ [hours]
- 6) How many students do you teach in an average class?  
\_\_\_\_\_ [number]
- 7) How much do you agree with the following statements?
- a. The school is committed to creating an environment of care and trust for all students  
[scale 1 to 5]
- b. High standards of respectful behaviour are expected and are evident between adults in the community and the school  
[scale 1 to 5]

- c. High standards of respectful behaviour are expected and are evident between the students  
[scale 1 to 5]
  - d. The achievements of all students are recognized and valued by the school  
[scale 1 to 5]
  - e. The school has consulted with parents over problems arising in the school  
[scale 1 to 5]
  - f. The school provides a welcoming environment for all students irrespective of their social background  
[scale 1 to 5]
  - g. The school is provides a welcoming environment for all students irrespective of their ethnic background  
[scale 1 to 5]
- 8) How good are the schools relations with parents?  
[scale 1 to 5]
- 9) How obedient are students in the classroom?  
[scale 1 to 5]
- 10) How much bullying is there in this school?  
[scale 1 to 5]
- 11) What is your overall perception of the quality of vocational education in this school?  
[scale 1 to 10]

### **III. Social inclusion in the school**

- 12) In your opinion, what type of student does this school seek to attract?
- a. Students with a preference for applied studies  
[scale 1 to 5]
  - b. Students showing an interest in a particular profession  
[scale 1 to 5]
  - c. Students from a more privileged social background  
[scale 1 to 5]

- d. Students who would not succeed in academic schools  
[scale 1 to 5]
- e. Boys more than girls  
[scale 1 to 5]
- f. Students with learning difficulties  
[scale 1 to 5]
- g. Students from ethnic minorities  
[scale 1 to 5]
- h. Students from poor families  
[scale 1 to 5]
- i. All students without preference  
[scale 1 to 5]
- j. Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

13) How well do you think your school promotes social inclusion?

- a. Through the school's ethos and values  
[scale 1 to 5]
- b. Through the pastoral curriculum  
[scale 1 to 5]
- c. By developing sensitivity of the students to social justice  
[scale 1 to 5]
- d. Through special "school days" open to the community  
[scale 1 to 5]
- e. By providing extracurricular school activities  
[scale 1 to 5]
- f. Support for disadvantaged pupils  
[scale 1 to 5]
- g. Support for disadvantaged families  
[scale 1 to 5]
- h. Does not promote social inclusion  
[scale 1 to 5]

14) What extent does your school face challenges in the following issues ?

- a. Link between the vocational curriculum and local labour market  
[scale 1 to 5]
- b. Combining vocational and general instruction  
[scale 1 to 5]
- c. Status of vocational education in relation to academic subjects  
[scale 1 to 5]
- d. Adequacy of equipment  
[scale 1 to 5]

- e. Access to computers  
[scale 1 to 5]
- f. Maintaining high instructional standards  
[scale 1 to 5]
- g. Maintaining vocational enrolments  
[scale 1 to 5]
- h. Teachers' preparation in instructing students with special needs  
[scale 1 to 5]
- i. Support services for students with special needs  
[scale 1 to 5]
- j. Time available for working with students other than students with special needs  
[scale 1 to 5]
- k. Placing disadvantaged students into vocational education programs [scale 1 to 5]
- l. Student motivation  
[scale 1 to 5]
- m. Student discipline  
[scale 1 to 5]
- n. Student absenteeism  
[scale 1 to 5]
- o. Other (please specify)  
\_\_\_\_\_ [scale 1 to 5]

15) Does your school offer equal opportunities for admission to:

- a. Girls  
[yes/no]
- b. Students from poor families  
[yes/no]
- c. Students from ethnic minorities  
[yes/no]
- d. Roma students  
[yes/no]
- e. Disabled students  
[yes/no]
- f. Other socially excluded groups \_\_\_\_\_  
[yes/no]

16) Does your school offer equal opportunities for attending school to:

- a. Girls  
[yes/no]

- b. Students from poor families  
[yes/no]
- c. Students from ethnic minorities  
[yes/no]
- d. Roma students  
[yes/no]
- e. Disabled students  
[yes/no]
- f. Other socially excluded groups \_\_\_\_\_  
[yes/no]

17) Does your school provide equal opportunities for integration in labour market to:

- a. Girls  
[yes/no]
- b. Students from poor families  
[yes/no]
- c. Students from ethnic minorities  
[yes/no]
- d. Roma students  
[yes/no]
- e. Disabled students  
[yes/no]
- f. Other socially excluded groups \_\_\_\_\_  
[yes/no]

18) Does your school provide additional support to disadvantaged students?

- a. If yes, how effective is it?  
[scale 1 to 5].

**THANK YOU !!!**



## Appendix 5: Student questionnaire - draft

This survey is being carried out by the University of \_\_\_\_\_. It is designed to gather information about the effects of vocational education on your society. The information you provide will be confidential. Please answer the following questions. Multiple answers are allowed if necessary. The survey should take you about 15 minutes to complete.

### I. Personal data

- 10) What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_  
[Years]
- 11) What is your sex? [male/female]
- 12) In which town or village do you live?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 13) What is your ethnicity? [list of ethnicities]
- 14) What is your nationality? [list of nationalities]
- 15) Which year of year of study are you in? [first/final]
- 16) Which courses do you study? [list of courses]
- 17) How many years formal education have you had
- a. at kindergarten  
\_\_\_\_\_ [years]
  - b. at primary school  
\_\_\_\_\_ [years]

## II. Family background

18) Do you live with your parents?

[Yes/no]

- a. If yes is it [both  
parents/mother/father/neither]

19) Do either of your parents go out to work?

[Yes/no]

If yes,

- a. Who goes out to work  
[mother/father/both]
- b. What is your father's occupation? \_\_\_\_\_
- c. What is your mother's occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

If no,

- d. Is your mother [unemployed/retired/looking  
after children]
- e. Is your father [unemployed/retired/looking after  
children]

20) What is the size of your family at your home?

- a. Number of parents [2/1/0]
- b. Number of siblings [number]
- c. Number of other relatives [number]

21) What is the highest level of schooling completed by your father or mother? (tick the one which applies)

		a) Father	b) Mother
i	No education		
iii	Primary education		

iv	Secondary vocational education		
v	Secondary general education		
vi	Further education		
vii	University		
	Bachelor or equivalent		
	Master's or equivalent		
	PhD or equivalent		

22) Which of the following do you have at home?

- a. A desk to study  
[yes/no]
- b. A room on your own [yes/no]
- c. Another quiet place to study  
[yes/no]
- d. Any books to help with school work  
[yes/no]
- e. A computer you can use for school work [yes/no]
- f. An internet connection  
[yes/no]

23) How do you usually travel to school?

- a. Bus [yes/no]
- b. Train [yes/no]
- c. Car [yes/no]
- d. Motor bike [yes/no]
- e. Bicycle [yes/no]
- f. Walking [yes/no]

24) How far is it from your home to school?

\_\_\_\_\_ [km]

25) How long does it take you to get to school?

\_\_\_\_\_ [hours/minutes]

### III. Reasons for choice of vocational school

26) Did you choose this school:

- a. By yourself  
[yes/no]
- b. With the help and advice of your family  
[yes/no]
- c. With the help and advice of friends  
[yes/no]
- d. "Other (please specify)

27) If yes to any of the above, how important were the following reasons in your decision to go to *this* school?

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <i>i.</i> Distance from home              | [scale 1 to 5] |
| <i>ii.</i> Cost of travel                 | [scale 1 to 5] |
| <i>iii.</i> Reputation of the school      | [scale 1 to 5] |
| <i>iv.</i> I liked the courses on offer   | [scale 1 to 5] |
| <i>v.</i> Future employment opportunities | [scale 1 to 5] |
| <i>vi.</i> Further study opportunities    | [scale 1 to 5] |

vii. other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_  
[scale 1 to 5]

28) How important were the following reasons to choose a vocational school in preference to any other type of school?

- a. To learn skills to support my career in the future  
[scale 1 to 5]
- b. To obtain a prestigious profession [scale 1 to 5]
- c. To earn more money in the future [scale 1 to 5]
- d. To increase my chance to get a job [scale 1 to 5]
- e. Because my family expected me to do it [scale 1 to 5]
- f. Because my friends expected me to do it [scale 1 to 5]
- g. Other reason \_\_\_\_\_  
[scale 1 to 5]

#### IV. Experience in school

29) How happy do you feel in this school? [scale 1 to 10]

30) How much do you learn from the courses you are taking?  
[scale 1-5]

31) Do you think that what you learn at school will help you in your future job? [scale 1 to 5]

32) In your first few weeks at school how much did the teachers help you feel welcome in the school?  
[scale 1 to 5]

33) Have you ever experienced any bullying at school from other students?  
[yes/no]

34) How important is doing well in this school

- a. For you personally [scale 1 to 5]
- b. For your family [scale 1 to 5]
- c. For your future job prospects [scale 1 to 5]
- d. Other(please specify)

35)How many times per week do you skip classes? \_\_\_\_\_

36)In your view, how much improvement is needed in:

- a. School buildings [scale 1 to 5]
- b. Classroom equipment [scale 1 to 5]
- c. Teaching methods [scale 1 to 5]
- d. Knowledge of the teachers about their subject [scale 1 to 5]
- e. Friendliness of the other students towards you [scale 1 to 5]
- f. Friendliness of the teachers towards you [scale 1 to 5]
- g. Other \_\_\_\_\_ [scale 1 to 5]

37)How much time do you spend on homework each week? [no time / 1-5 hours/ 5-10 hours/ more time]

38) Do you participate in any of these extracurricular activities

- a. Sports [yes/no]
- b. Voluntary work [yes/no]

c. Youth clubs

[yes/no]

d. Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

[yes/no]

## VI. Plans for the future

39) What were your average marks last year? (for final year students only)

a. [top / middle / low marks?] (or, A, B, C...) (or 10, 9, 8, ....)

40) Do you plan to look for a paid job after leaving school?

[yes/no]

If no do you plan to,

a. Go to further education college?

[yes/no]

b. Go to university?

[yes/no]

c. Look after my family at home

[yes/no]

d. Work in my family's business

[yes/no]

e. Do voluntary work

[yes/no]

f. Emigrate

[yes/no]

g. Other \_\_\_\_\_

41) How likely is it that you will find a job after finishing this school?

a. Immediately

[scale 1 to

5]

b. Within a month

[scale 1 to

5]

c. Within six months

[scale 1 to 5]

d. Within a year [scale 1 to 5]

e. Longer time [scale 1 to 5]

42) How much help do you expect to get in finding a job when you leave school?

a. Family [scale 1 to 5]

b. Friends [scale 1 to 5]

c. School [scale 1 to 5]

d. Individual teachers [scale 1 to 5]

e. Public Employment Agency

f. Career Guidance Centers or Student Service Centers within the school?

[scale 1 to 5]

g. Youth Centres [scale 1 to 5]

h. Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_  
[scale 1 to 5]

43) How likely do you think it is that you will use the skills you have learnt at school in your first job after you leave school?

[scale 1 to 5]

44) How much do you expect to earn in your first job after leaving school?

i. Per week \_\_\_\_\_

j. Per month \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU !!!**

## ALBANIA

### Geographic distribution of public VET in Albania (2011)



## Acronyms

DCM	Decision of Council of Ministers
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
FASTIP	Theory Study Integrated with Practice Faculty
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LSE	London School of Economics
LSMS	Living Standards Measurement Survey
METE	Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
MoLSAEO	Ministry of Labour Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
NES	National Employment Service
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NQF	National Qualification Framework
PASO	Social Partners Relationship Coordinator
RED	Regional Education Directorate
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VTC	Vocational Training Center
VE	Vocational Education
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
YAPS	Albanian Youth Professional Services

## Introduction

Economic structural change during the transition in Albania has created demands for new skills which have not been adequately provided by education and training systems. The very high rates of youth unemployment and persistent long-term unemployment are the main causes of poverty and social exclusion in Albania. On the other side, the process of EU accession and the effects of open markets have increased the need for reforms in education and training systems to respond to the global technological change. In this context, it is important to identify how VET (Vocational Education and Training) systems could adjust appropriately to the changing demands for skilled labour; and what might be the role of VET in addressing social inclusion and social cohesion. These issues will be in the focus of this participatory action research, which is focused on the two selected VE (Vocational Education) schools in Tirana and Durrës, and another VTC (Vocational Training Center) in Elbasan.

The research will deploy an interactive inquiry process that balances practical problem solving with data-driven analysis in order to understand underlying causes of social exclusion in VET and generate new evidence for future policy actions adapted to the challenges facing Albania. The research aims to gather information on imbalances between labour demand and supply, especially for the new entries in the labour market such as the group age 15-19 years old. The focus of the report is on the approach to VET policy of the public agencies, social partners, civil society and donors and the practices of the VET schools within their local communities.

VET reform is part of the Education Strategy (ES) 2009-2013, which defines the objectives and priorities of vocational education and the ways it can be developed.<sup>1</sup> The Lisbon Strategy 2000 and the *Europe 2020 Strategy* approved in 2011, are the two main documents taken into account to define the new VET strategy 2013-2020 and action plans in the education, training and employment areas.<sup>2</sup>

Although the support of donors in policy, legislation, curricula, capacity building, and direct investment in school buildings and equipment has been significant, many vocational schools still lack of adequate infrastructure; the system is underfunded and lacks of sustainable financial mechanisms (Dibra, Memaj, 2012). The main problems are the limited choice of programmes and lack of flexibility with respect to course selection, a curriculum which focuses on academic content and is overburdened, alongside teacher-centred ways of teaching, which do not leave much space for the active engagement of learners and are not geared to developing the wider generic competences required today. The curricula inherited from the communist system have still not been

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<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education and Sciences, National Strategy for Education, 2008 – 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Referring to the draft Strategy on VET 2013-2020 presented in a round table with social partners and civil society on October 8, 2012.

adjusted sufficiently to reflect the new occupations which have emerged in the new service sectors. In addition, there is no special national program for in-job training. Graduates of vocational schools have about the same employment rate and unemployment rate as those from general secondary schools.<sup>3</sup> (ETF, 2010)

With the current investment in education and training, Albania will not be able to catch up with other fast growing economies. Basic education receives the biggest share of MoES budget accounting for 61%, secondary general education accounts for 13,3% and university education for 16,1%. Conversely, secondary vocational education takes by far the smallest share with 5,9%. Nevertheless, VE recorded the largest increase of the MoES budget which increased by 28,8% over the period 2011-2014. (See Annex Table 3)

It is the same situation in vocational training under the MOLSAEO, which is underfunded compared with other programs. (See Annex Tables). Adult Training is a relatively recent development for Albania as compared to vocational education. It has taken on increasing importance with the combination of high levels of skills and wage competition the country is exposed to after 1990. It means short-term courses offered by VTC, which includes also trainees of the age group 15-19, up to 24 percent of the total trainees, referring to the NES statistics of the year 2011.

Current policy is aimed at including in vocational training not only the registered unemployed, but also the other vulnerable groups such as Roma people, disabled, traficed woman, prisoners and returned emigrants. The same tendency is in the school level. VE Technical-Economic School in Tirana has prepared special strategies 2012-2013 for treatment of students with disabilities and returned emigrants who find difficulties even with the Albanian language. For the academic year 2012-2013 the MoES does not put limits in the number of new entrants in part-time VE system.

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<sup>3</sup> Veirtel, E., Nikolovska, M., (2010), "Albania Review of Human Resources Development", ETF.

## 1. Institutional framework and the policy process at national level

### 1.1 Situation analysis

#### 1.1.1 Vocational education

Over the last decade, reforming VET system has been the main priority of collaborative efforts of two Ministries - the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MOLSAEO). Their policies are supported by the new executive agencies and by donors from the EU, UN, German-GIZ, Swiss Government, Austria, Italy, and USA.<sup>4</sup>

Since the start of the academic year 2009-2010, the vocational education system has been structured in three consecutive levels and has a maximum duration of 4 years teaching. Level I (2 academic years) prepare semi-skilled workers, level II (1 academic year) prepares qualified employees and level III (1 academic year) prepare technical/managers and provides professional matura, and the continuation of higher studies at universities or post-secondary studies. The new VE structure enables transitions to higher levels of study and to the labour market after completion of each level. In parallel with the new structure, by 2013 it will continue to function the previous VE structure (3+2).<sup>5</sup>

Vocational education in Albania is "school based" and is offered in 41 vocational schools, and only in specific cases in some general secondary schools. Of these, in rural areas there are 3 schools oriented towards agro-business. Schools are divided into 4 main fields: electro-mechanical (18 schools), economic (9 schools), construction and joinery (4 schools); agriculture, forestry, veterinary medicine (9 schools). There is a tendency to shift from manufacturing profiles to services, business, tourism, maintenance and repair, information technology and communication. Despite a recently modernized VE course structure (2+1+1) which in principle would allow for adequate vertical and horizontal flexibility with exit and re-entry points, vocational schools are still perceived as general education providers with technical or occupational profiles, but not as institutions which enable students to gain full employability. The VET system has a low level of enrolment (less than 20% of the pupils who finish basic education are registered in vocational schools), despite reforms regarding the curricula and Albanian Framework Qualification. The MoES orders "the *part-time vocational schools will have no limits in acceptance regarding the number of students*".<sup>6</sup>

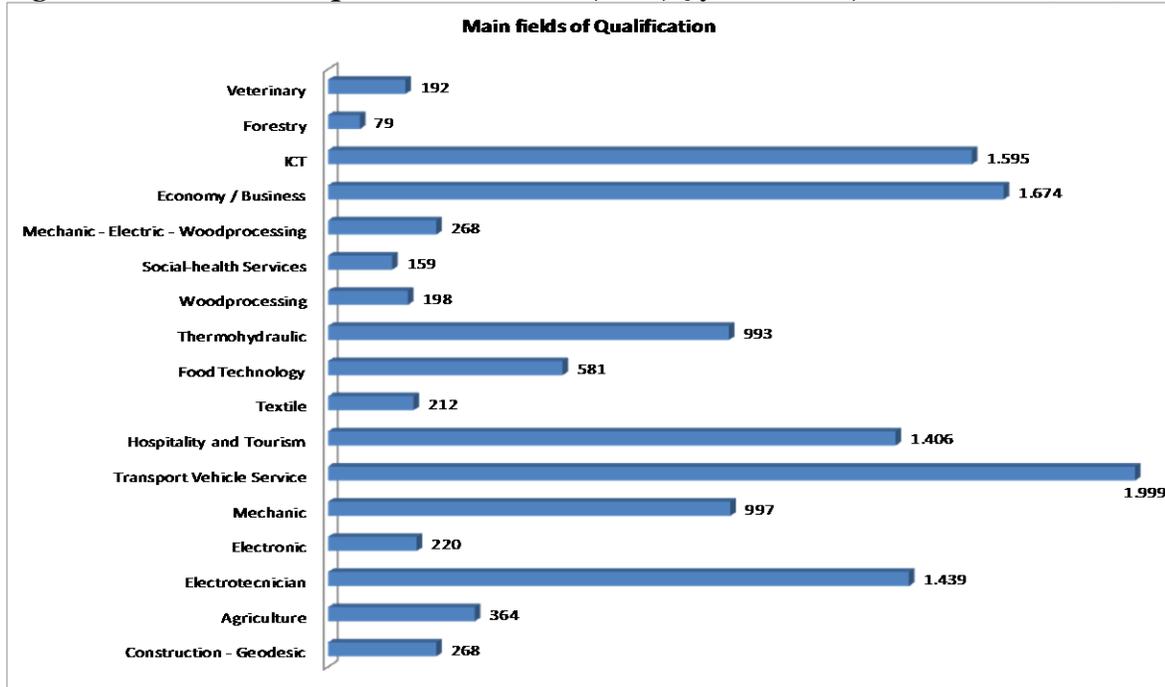
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<sup>4</sup>Veirtel, E., Nikolovska, M., (2010), "Albania Review of Human Resources Development", ETF.

<sup>5</sup>Act no 8872, dated 29.03.2002, for "For the Vocational Education and Training in Republic of Albania".

<sup>6</sup> Order of the MoES No.16, dated 24.07. 2012 "For the school year 2012/2013 in pre-university education"

**Figure 1. Main fields of qualification: 2+1+1, 2+2, 4 year tracks, Grade X-XII (2011)**



Source: MoES, 2011

### 1.1.2 Vocational Training

Public vocational training is delivered through 10 VTC centers in the main cities, offering short-term courses of 4-6 weeks and longer courses up to 7 months. VTC are training not only registered unemployed, but also other people in need. Vulnerable groups are trained free of charge, against 10 Euro fee for other unemployed and about 20 Euro for other people. The number of trainees is around 6,000 per annum over the last ten years. The non public VTC are filling the gap in vocational training.

**Table 1. Vocational Training for Vulnerable groups 2004-2011**

YEARS	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Certified in Total</b>	7004	6118	7029	7577	6611		<b>8949</b>
from which:							
Registered Unemployed	1005	1253	1683	1700	1857	2308	<b>2468</b>
Free of charge				148	131	345	<b>301</b>
from which:							
- Roma people			72	18	144	62	<b>217</b>
- orphans			35	82	67	48	<b>5</b>
- trafficked women			10	5	43	19	<b>27</b>

- ex- prisoners	29	26	10	934	1229
- disabled	2	0	81	36	<b>31</b>
- Returned emigrants					17

Source: [www.shkp.gov.al](http://www.shkp.gov.al)

**Table 2. Trainees from vocational training compared with registered unemployed in 2011**

	According to the groups ages			
	15-19 years old	20-24 years old	25-34 years old	above 34 years old
Number of trainees During 2011	2,085	3,249	2,088	1,527
% of the planned 2011 <sup>7</sup>	24%	37%	24%	18%
% of the registered unemployed	15.6%		22.9%	61.5%

	According to the level Education			
	8-9 elementary	secondary	vocational	University
Number of trainees during 2011	2,007	3,554	864	2,524
% of planned 2011	23%	41%	10%	29%
% of the registered unemployed	54.6%	12.9%	28.9%	3.6%

Source: The annual analysis report of NES, 2011.

**Table3. Trainees certified from private businesses in 2011**

No.	Districts	Persons Certified in Vocational Courses	Persons Certified in non-Vocational Courses	Female	Unemployed
1	Tiranë	1226	2039	2873	2166
2	Durrës	70	33	84	60
3	Elbasan	61	302	310	233
	Total	2101	3385	4516	3468

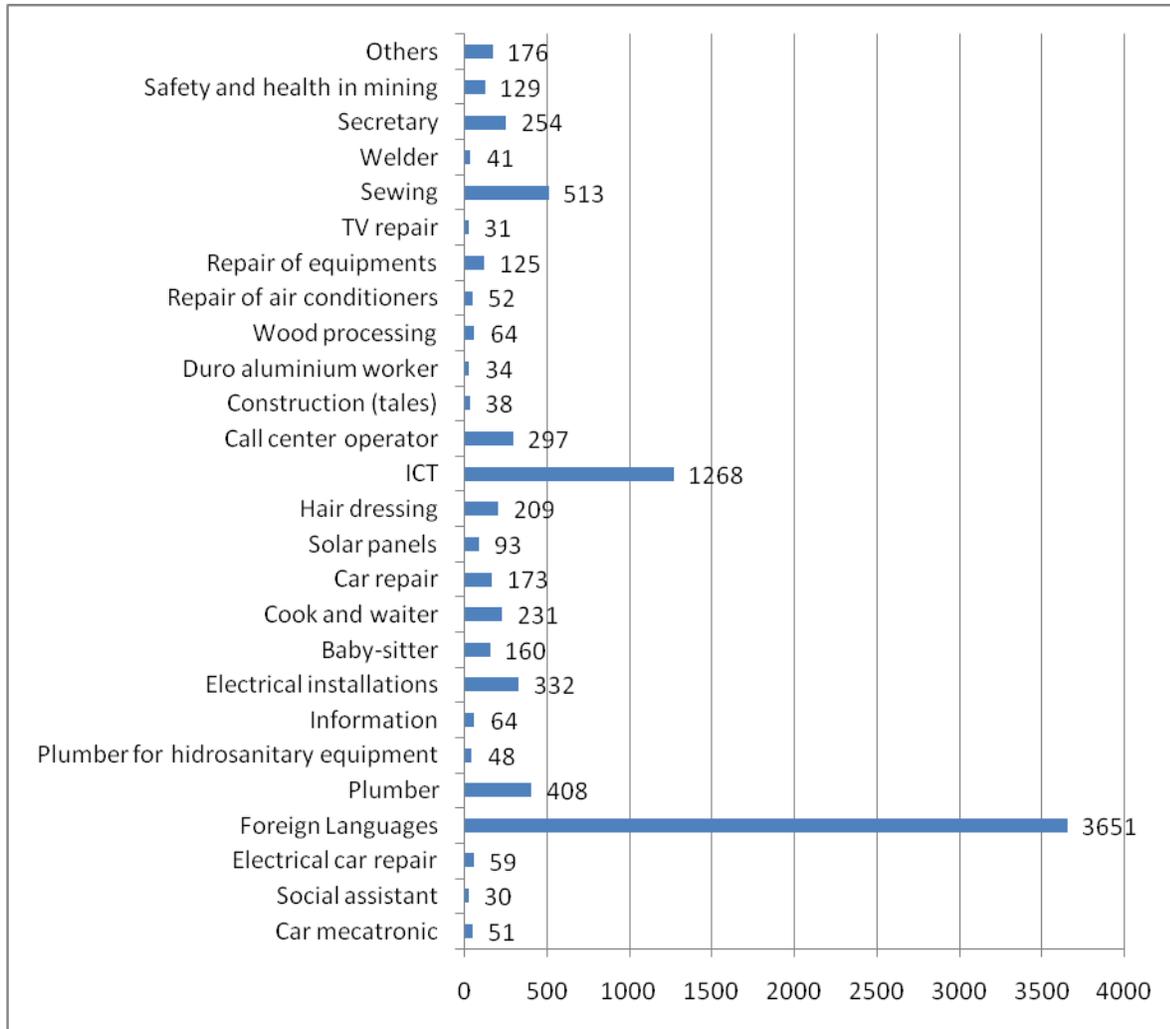
Source: [www.shkp.gov.al](http://www.shkp.gov.al)

During the year 2011 about 102 private companies offered *on the job training*, internships and employment for about 1170 unemployed job seekers. Based on a survey

<sup>7</sup> The total is more than 100% of the planned number as the VTC has surplus the plan for the year 2011.

of the National Employment Service, also the family business is involved in vocational training for their employees. (See in Annex Tables) Training curricula offered in public VTC, based on DCM no.196, dated 20.03.2003, are ordered, financed and approved at central level by the the MoLSAEO.

**Figure 2: Distribution of VT Centres graduates by areas of training (2011)**



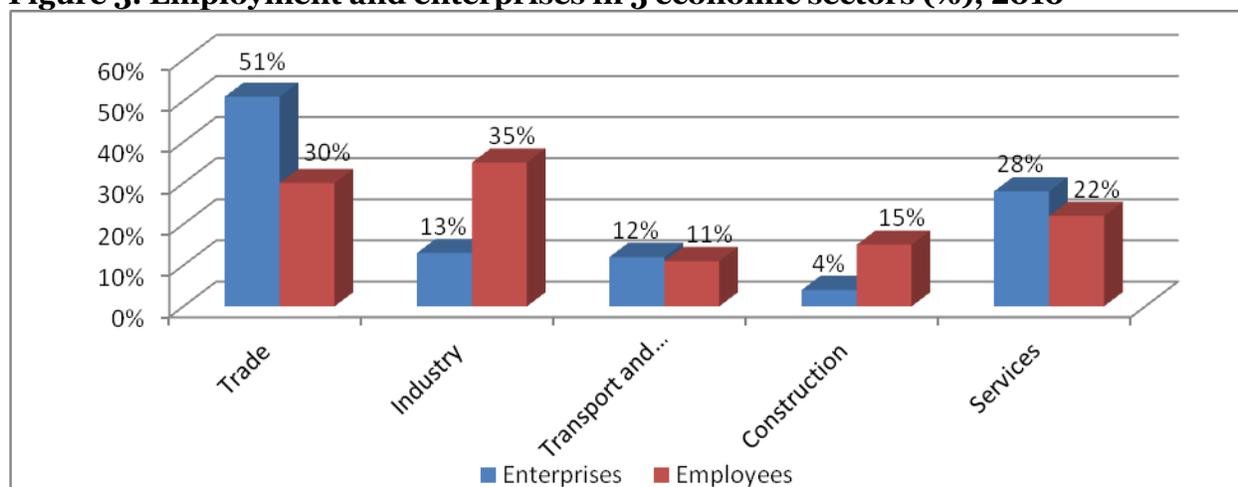
Source: MoLSAEO and NES, 2012

### 1.1.3 Skills mismatches

The primary goal of VET system is to increase the skills base for new entrants into the labour market. The private sector in Albania is mostly dominated by micro and small

enterprises (99.2%), with 95.7% of the active ones having between 1 and 9 employees. (See Figure 1. in Annex) The analysis of the distribution of enterprises by economic sectors (Figure 2) shows that there is a huge concentration in the trade sector. Although the sectors with the highest employment rate in Albania remain agriculture, forestry and fishery followed by other services, having tourism as the main component; trade and industry are the sectors with the highest number of enterprises, followed by hospitality services and manufacturing industry. On the other hand, the food industry is in its first steps and is showing high potential for growth. Business services, including ICT are growing sectors both in terms of the variety of services, as well as in terms of the employment rate. Comparing the proportion of active enterprises and existing jobs in trade, services, industry, construction, and transport and communications sectors (Figure 3) shows a clear inversion of the contribution of some areas, as the industry and construction sectors for the creation of jobs taking into account the proportion of the active enterprises in the Albanian economy. Thereafter there are other sectors as, for instance, the trade sector where the contribution to create a large number of jobs is very scanty - the proportion of enterprises is of 51% where the contribution for the employment is about 30%.

**Figure 3. Employment and enterprises in 5 economic sectors (%), 2010**



Source: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy, 2010

The data below shows the rate at which new jobs are created and the employment is increased (decreased) in each sector in each year for the last ten years. The sectors with the highest rate of creating new jobs are manufacturing industry and hotels, restaurants, which for the 2011 compared with 2010 is increased by 41 percent.

**Table 4. Employed according to the economic activity** (NACE Rev.1)  
(in thousands)

Economic activity	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Albania</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>926</b>	<b>931</b>	<b>932</b>	<b>935</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>974</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>928</b>
<b>Agriculture, forestry,</b>	531	539	546	545	542	542	568	496	507	507

fishery										
Extracting industry	7	7	6	6	5	6	5	5	6	8
Manufacturing industry	47	46	56	56	58	54	56	53	53	63
Electric power, water industry	16	14	14	13	11	13	25	26	26	21
Construction	56	56	52	52	53	52	46	40	39	35
Trade	67	68	64	64	68	57	53	58	58	65
Hotels, restaurants	16	16	17	15	16	16	12	12	13	22
Transport, communication	32	32	20	19	19	24	26	23	24	26
Education	49	49	48	47	48	46	37	40	42	41
Health	26	27	28	24	25	24	28	26	27	28
Others	71	72	82	91	90	105	118	120	122	112

Source: INSTAT, [www.instat.gov.al](http://www.instat.gov.al)

Besides the large proportion of the agriculture sector in the economy, the limited size of the companies operating in Albania and its concentration in certain economic sectors, as trade and services raises a set of questions to be addressed by the VET sector, as the qualification of the ones that are already in the labour market and the preparation of the new generations and of the unemployed for their entry or re-entry in it. Comparing the structure of economy and VET, noted that at the national level, in general, there is a gap between VET supply with the demand of the labour market (with an exception in construction).

#### 1.1.4 Social exclusion and social cohesion at national level

The poverty rate in Albania is one of the highest in Europe.<sup>8</sup> The Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS) enables the monitoring of poverty trends and characteristics for the period between 2002, 2005 and 2008. As a result of high growth rates in recent years, there was a massive reduction in poverty. Absolute poverty rate fell from 25.4 percent in 2002 to 12.4 percent in 2008, depth of poverty also declined during the same period from 5.7 percent to 2.3 percent. The LSMS is also measuring the different aspects of social exclusion in the sense of “several types of deprivation and barriers, which alone or together, prevent the full participation in areas such as employment, education, health, environment, housing, culture, access to rights or family support, as well as training and job opportunities.”<sup>9</sup>

According to the general evaluation of the National Strategy on Social Inclusion, some of the main achievements are considered: increased responsibility of the central government through new programs and services; engagement of civil society and international organizations as well as capacity building at all levels.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Strategy for Social Inclusion 2007-2013.

<sup>9</sup> INSTAT, UNDP and the World Bank, Tendencies of Poverty in Albania, LSMS 2002, 2005, 2008, Tiranë, 2009.

<sup>10</sup> Draft Report Evaluation of the National Strategy on Social Inclusion 2007-2013 prepared by the ACER, supported by UNICEF, September 2012, not yet officially approved by the MOLSAEO, page 4.

Some of the main weaknesses of the National Strategy on Social Inclusion are considered: lack of necessary budget; of inter-institutional cooperation; lack of statistical data both at central and local level on the situation of vulnerable groups, and as a result have not all-inclusive and low social impact.<sup>11</sup>

Vulnerability in Albania is a result of numerous and varied processes that are closely linked to the social and economic problems encountered by certain groups of society such as low labour market accessibility in particular for women, people with disabilities, Roma people, lack of education and qualification, migration, and lack of infrastructure.

The labour market is characterised by low employment rates, and significant gender inequalities (See Table 5 in Annex). Among the 143,002 registered unemployed, the majority 54.6% has up to 8/9 years education, which is increased by 0.7% compared with 2010. The share of unemployed with secondary education is significant 41.8%, out of which 28.9% with vocational education and 12.9% with general secondary education level. University graduates consists only 3.6% of the unemployed. From the total number of registered unemployed, only 6.5% are beneficiaries of unemployment insurance, whereas the majority of 57.8% are beneficiaries of social assistance, the rest have no any kind social benefits. Long-term unemployment in 2011 comprises 62% from all registered unemployed. Almost 90% of them are beneficiaries of social assistance. The main reasons of the long-term unemployment are the low education level, about 56% have elementary education, more than 58% lack a profession, and 50% are above 40 years old.

The situation of the jobseeker unemployed from the vulnerable groups as a percentage of the total unemployed is: Roma and Egyptian 5.3%, orphans 0.16%, disabled 1.7%, returned emigrants 0.7%, trafficked women are only 55 persons.<sup>12</sup> *The people with disabilities* have significant accessibility barriers to the labour market and also to other social and public services, due to the improperly developed infrastructure, both inside and outside the VET system. Specialized vocational training centres and special courses for people with disabilities are lacking in the country. Some public vocational training centres are reconstructed in Fier and Elbasan<sup>13</sup>. In December 2009 the Albanian Government signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and is currently being worked on by the relevant institutions for its ratification. As a positive step towards protecting the disabled from discrimination may be mentioned the adoption of Law no. Nr.10221, dated 04.02.2010 "On Protection from Discrimination". Blind person as beneficiaries of disability is the only category of disabled stimulated in employment, while other categories lose some benefits if hired. Persons with disabilities

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<sup>11</sup> Draft Report Evaluation of the National Strategy on Social Inclusion 2007-2013 prepared by the Albanian Center for Economic Research, supported by UNICEF, September 2012, not yet officially approved by the MOLSAEO, page 5.

<sup>12</sup> MOLSAEO, referring the annual analysis of National Employment Service 2011.

<sup>13</sup> Other initiatives, such as Youth Albania Parcel Service (YAPS), run by the Don Bosco Social Centre in Tirana and funded by UNICEF, as social business train and recruit young people with disabilities.

only in hearing, who receive disability payments until the age of 7, have access only for elementary education.

In 2011, the number of Roma unemployed increased by 10% compared with 2010.<sup>14</sup> It is evident in the regions of Tirana, Gjirokastra, and Lezha. Most Roma have only an elementary level of education. There is a particularly low enrolment ratio at all school levels for Roma children, who represent the poorest groups of the population. Albania does not have accurate data on the number of Roma population, mainly because most of the children are not registered at birth. Approximately, one out of two Roma children who are at school age (6-16 years old) has dropped out of school. At least 43% of Roma children of the 15-16 age group are illiterate. Albania has adopted the Declaration of the Decade of Roma Inclusion by CMD No 437 of 08.04.2008 and is part of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015. For the treatment of the Roma population MOLSAEO does established a particular structure, the Technical Secretariat for Roma. In certain districts are local coordinators (not employed within their duty), enabling meetings Needs Assessment Committees at district level headed by chairmen of District Councils and within these committees are set up technical groups on Roma issues. The project "Empowering Vulnerable Communities" (UNDP) targets professional training and employment for the Roma. In the period 2008-2010 it trained 85 Roma/Gypsy, among them 40 women. Was signed an agreement for the project continuation 2010-2013.<sup>15</sup>

HIV/AIDS, abuse with drugs, alcohol and smoking, violence against youth and trafficking of young girls are some of the issues affecting vulnerable youth along with high rates of unemployment. Referring the NSGE-GBV 2011-2015, girls and women in these categories have a higher probability "to low level of education and non participation in the labour market".<sup>16</sup> For this reason empowering girls/women through various interventions such as VET and promotion of employment has special attention. There are some good examples of international actors involved in gender issues, for example, new initiatives in gender imbalance in future AlbVET project that aims to develop appropriate courses for women. VET is also considered as a policy of inclusion of minorities and is stated as such in the sectorial strategies of employment and Roma people. Still, these initiatives are considered as sporadic and isolated. VET policies focused on abandoned children are supported by UNICEF through the project YAPS (Albanian Youth Professional Services)<sup>17</sup> which is already a sustainable business project; Aptitude for Life project that aims to include specific groups (children away parental care; vocational training for Roma families with a direct impact on the quality of life of their children; and the integration of marginalized children such as drug abusers, victims of HIV / AIDS, children with disabilities or trafficked, etc..<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Annual analysis of the National Employment Service, 2011.

<sup>15</sup> Draft Report Evaluation of the National Strategy on Social Inclusion 2007-2013 prepared by the Albanian Center for Economic Research, supported by UNICEF, September 2012, not yet officially approved by the MOLSAEO, page 32.

<sup>16</sup> GoA. 2011. National Strategy on Gender Equality and Reduction of Gender Based Violence. Tirana

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.unicef.org/albania/YAPScasestudy.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> Programi Kombëtar i UNICEF për Shqipërinë (2006-2010), f.11

According to LSMS 2008, the results show a slightly higher poverty rate for women (12.9%) than men (11.9%) living in absolute poverty. Also the percentage of poor women living in extreme poverty (56%) is much higher compared to poor men of the same class (44%). Estimates also show that of all poor households, female-headed households are less poor (6%) compared to poor families with male head (8.9%).<sup>19</sup> In support of vulnerable groups and in particular to support women and women-headed serves signature agreement between MoLSAEO and German company "Yunus Social Business". Implementation of the "Social business movement in Albania" will begin implementation in 2012, based its allocation of micro for the poor and vulnerable groups, who are excluded from other credit sources by creating opportunities for employment and self-employment. Top priority will be women headed households, families with many children and the poorest ones.<sup>20</sup>

## **1.2 The institutional framework for vocational education**

### **1.2.1 Legal Framework**

The basic Act No.8872, dated 29.03.2002 "For Vocational Education and Training in Albania", amended by Act no. 10011 dated 30.10.2008, and Act no.10434, dated 23.06.2011 aims to support the development of a common system of vocational education and training which can adapt to social, economic and technological needs of the labour market, and enable an optimal use of financial and human resources, and infrastructure. In the today's discussion organized by the Ministries on the draft Strategy on VET 2013-2020, the main idea was to open the doors of the VET schools in Albania for offering also the short term courses, which until now have been under the domain of the VET centres and there has been not much cooperation between the MoES and the MoLSAEO. The new VET Strategy 2013-2020 will open the road for an integrated VET system, based on the cooperation of public institutions, social partners and other stakeholders interested in the field of VET. The Albanian Qualification Framework<sup>21</sup> defines all the types of qualifications while recognize all the respective diplomas/certificates. The new legal improvements allows for the vertical and horizontal movement of students in the system from one level to the other, e.g. from level 2 to level 3 of another field of study. Amendments to the basic VET law adopted in June 2011 consisted of the following:

- *Modernization of the VET system* in Albania and quality assurance.

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<sup>19</sup> National Report Position of Women and Gender Equality in Albania ", UNWOMEN, MoLSAEO 2011.

<sup>20</sup> Workshop on Social Enterprise in Albania, Tirana, October 23, 2012, organized by TACSO, Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organizations of the European Commission in Albania.

<sup>21</sup> Act No 10247, dated 04.03.2010, on "National Qualification Framework".

- *Changing of the vocational education structure* as provided for by the Albanian Qualifications Framework (AQF) in line with the certain standards of competencies.
- Diversification of VET curricula through the introduction of *post-secondary VET courses*. The main focus is on the vocational education rather than on the academic.
- Creates opportunities for providing a *dual professional education form*, which integrates vocational education with the practice in enterprises.
- Provides opportunities for the institutionalization of internships of the VET students or trainees in private or public companies.
- VE schools/centres have *a larger autonomy to make use of their resources*.
- VE schools/centres will be transformed into Multifunctional *VET providers* for different categories of students to achieve use their capacity throughout the day.
- *Establishment of the boards of public VET providers*, defining their main duties.
- *Restructuring of the VET National Council*, increasing representation of the social partners (6 members) as compared to that of the government (4 members).
- *Teachers' continuous training and qualification*.<sup>22</sup>

Detailed legislation is given on References.

### 1.2.2 Hierarchical Executive Structures

The MoES is the main structure responsible for Vocational Education (VE) system through the Pre-University Education Department, the Vocational Education Development Sector, National Agency for Vocational Education, Institute of Education Development, National Inspectorate of Education, as well as its Regional Education Directorate in district level and Education Office offered in the main cities.

The MoLSAEO is responsible for Vocational Training (VT) system with establishment of the National Employment Service (NES-1995) which includes a specific VT Department composed of two sectors: VT sector and the sector of Curricula. Vocational training is offered by regional vocational training centres as part of active labour market policies which in the last ten years have increased trainees of the group-age 15-19 years old, consisting on 1/4 of the total trainees.

**Table 5. The main public actors in VET system**

<b>VET Council</b>	<b>National</b>	VETNC is an advisory body to the Council of Ministers for the development of Vocational Education and Training system. The 14 Members of the council are representatives by MOLSAEO, MASH, MF, employer and employee organizations, and representatives from non-profit organizations. The purpose of this body is to establish a partnership and involvement of all social actors for
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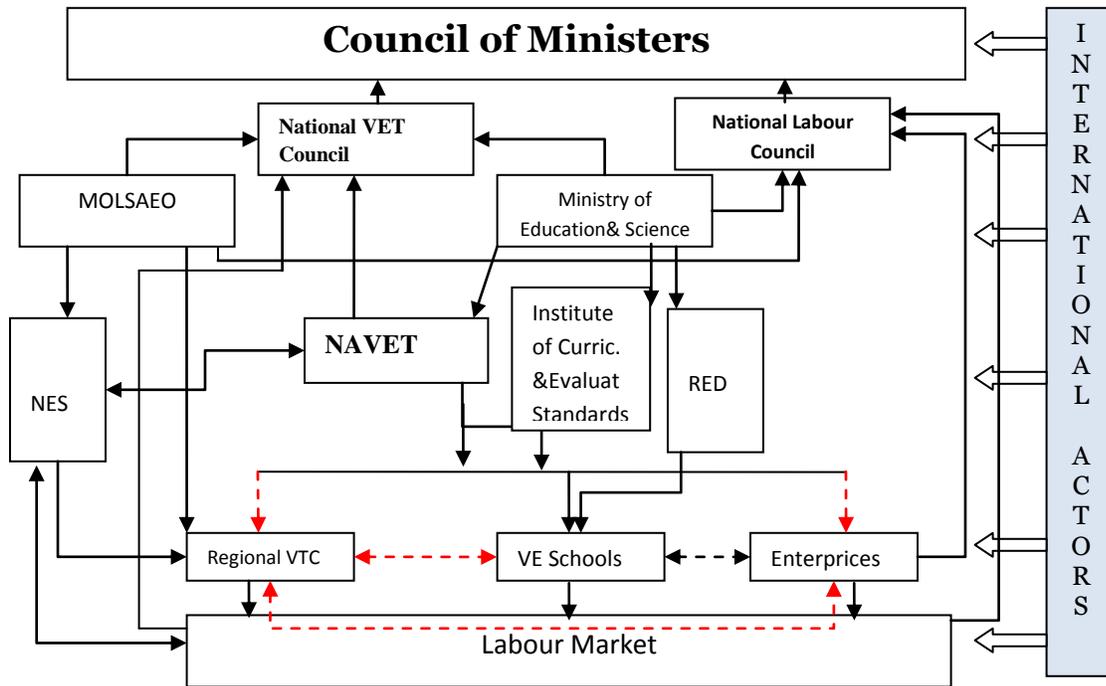
<sup>22</sup> Draft National Strategy on VET, 2013-2020.

		development, evaluation and monitoring VET system.
<b>National Council</b>	<b>Labour</b>	NLC is an advisory body to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, composed of representatives of the government and social partners, employers organizations and trade unions.
<b>Ministry of Education and Science (MoES)</b>	<b>of</b>	MoES is the most important institution responsible for vocational education policies implemented by subordinate institutions as Regional Education Directorate (RED)
<b>Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities</b>		MOLSAEO is the most important institution responsible for vocational training policies implemented by the National Employment Service and the Regional Vocational Training Centers.
<b>National Agency of VET (NAVET)</b>		National VET Agency established in 2007, is among the most important players in the politics of VET in Albania and is responsible for VET standards, qualifications, accreditation, assessment, curriculum and teacher training.
<b>Institute of Education Development</b>	<b>of</b>	National Agency under MoES offering all educational institutions expertise and studies on the development of programs and curricula.
<b>National Inspectorate of Education (NIE)</b>	<b>of</b>	NIE was created in 2010 <sup>23</sup> , with the main aim of inspecting university educational system.
<b>National Employment Service (NES)</b>		NES created in 1995 for implementation of the employment services and the active labour market policies, with its regional employment agencies in urban areas.
<b>District Authorities</b>		Social Needs Assessment Committees at district level headed by chairmen of District Councils and coordinator on social policies.
<b>Local Authorities</b>		Municipalities (urban areas) and communes (rural areas) responsible for the infrastructure of the pre-university education and social needs.
<b>Regional Vocation Training Centres</b>		10 VTC in the prefecture level for delivering the vocational training according to the labour market demand.
<b>Regional Education Directorate (RED)</b>		RED are decentralized offices of MoES, responsible for implementation of MoES policies in region. Altogether there are 13 DAR in the entire country, based on prefecture level which makes possible the financing of important VET inputs as teacher salaries, teaching materials, school funding.
<b>Education Offices</b>		EO are under the RED responsible and is supposed to perform a similar function to the municipality level, about 25 offices across the country.
<b>Enterprises</b>		Enterprises are another important actor in VET system where Pre-university education strategy <sup>24</sup> recognizes the active role of the business sector and their representation through the employer organizations, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, etc., in consultative decision-making VET bodies.
<b>Trade Unions</b>		Unions are considered as an important actor in the VET system and they are represented in consultative decision-making VET system, National Council of VET and National Council of Labour.
<b>Civil society organizations</b>	<b>society</b>	Include NGOs offering training activities, the associations of parents and others presenting the interests of vulnerable groups such as the associations of people with disabilities, orphans, Roma population, women, etc.
<b>Schools</b>		Represented by school management structures as Director and School Board (which consists of students, parents, teachers and representatives from all community stakeholders) who play an important role in VET system.
<b>Students</b>		Students are an important element of the VET system, which through their

<sup>23</sup> Decision of the Council of Ministers no.56, dated 03.02.2010, “For Creation of the National Inspectorate of Pre-University Education”.

<sup>24</sup>Ministry of Education and Sciences, Strategy of Pre-University Education 2009 – 2013.

representation in the school board made their modest part of decision-making and funding of the VET programs.



Llaci, et.al, (2009)

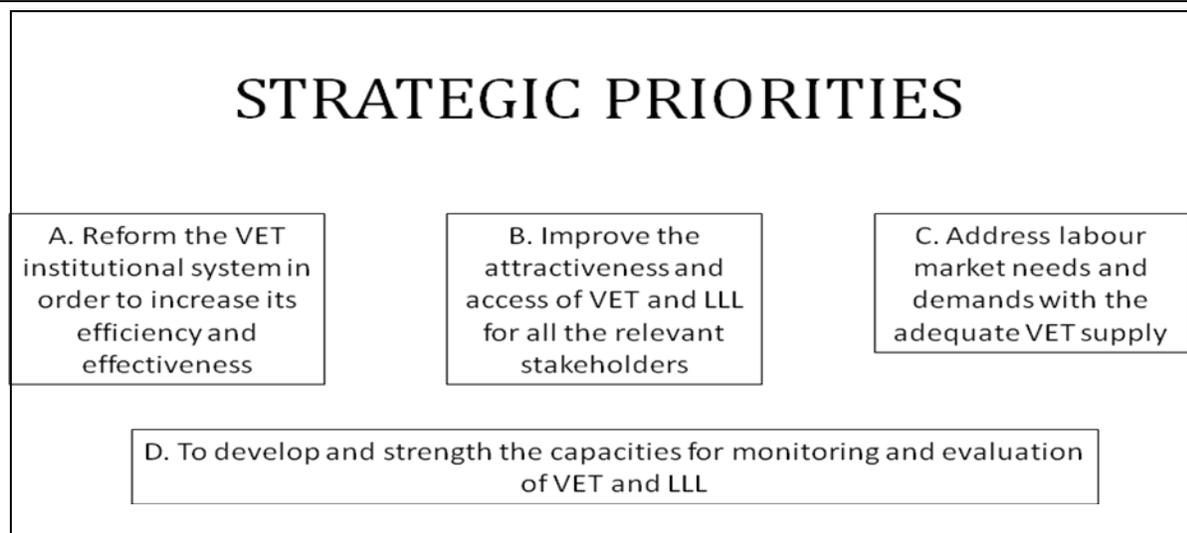
Among the VET institutions, the more effective are the ones where international actors intervene through short or long term projects. Apart from some examples in the banking sector, the FASTIP program, the participation of social partners such as employers' associations and trade unions is still weak. Other civil society organizations are donor's driven, and have had no other incentives to be actively involved in VET system.

### 1.3 The policy process and the policy debate

Through desk review of all the documentation on VET policy and practices, we realized that a participatory approach was followed by the Albanian government, which under the technical assistance of the international donors have institutionalized the relationships with the social partners and other interested organizations of civil society for realizing the strategic objectives of reforming the VET system. It was evident in the strategies consulted, prepared by the working groups with representatives from all the stakeholders, until the memorandum and agreements in national level and in the school levels of the public authorities with social partners and local business for implementation of the VET programs.

Currently, the Albanian government is developing a policy process with participation of all actors, from business organizations, trade unions, NGOs and other interested groups for discussing the draft National Strategy on VET 2013-2020. The main vision of the draft strategy was defined as:

*“To have a coherent, comprehensive and **feasible** VET and LLL system in Albania with a strong orientation **towards the needs of the labour market**”*



Source: Draft National VET Strategy 2013-2020

**Table 6. Scenario: Enrolment in Upper Secondary Education 2013-2020**

Year	Total	General school	VE school
2013	54.125	37.888	16.238
2014	52.153	36.507	15.646
2015	46.118	32.282	13.835
2016	48.855	34.198	14.656
2017	40.964	28.674	12.289
2018	42.311	29.618	12.693
2019	38.720	27.104	11.616
2020	35.651	24.956	10.695

Source: Draft Strategy on VET, 2013-2020, page 21.

Policy debate on VET system is emphasising its need to transform VE schools/centers in multifunctional and flexible, (a model is created in Kamza, suburban area in Tirana). offering a variety of courses with different duration, for different categories of adults. They will be used also an important hub linking VET students and potential employers

through internships and practical work in the premises of such local businesses. They will be the entry gate and operate as a one-stop shop responding to the needs of many beneficiaries and to the cross-cutting needs of the local community and market labour.

It was debate that the National Agency for VET to be restructured in a semi-autonomous Albanian Training and Qualifications Authority to implement the VET Strategy 2013-2020 and assist VET actors to develop best practice approaches. Other points of today's debate on VET policy and practices are as follows:

- Implementing a learning by working training approach based on partnerships with enterprises;
- Building professional capacity in managerial and teaching staff of VET providers; Equipping the workshops and laboratories in VET providers with modern teaching aids and equipment;
- Setting up and implementing innovative financing mechanism.
- Introducing occupational outcomes-based short-term and long-term VET programs for those threatened by social exclusion;
- Implementing an occupational guidance and counselling system based on strong labour market information;
- Promoting active labour market programs and services for those willing to establish their own small enterprise and become self-employed.

## **2 VET practices for social inclusion and social cohesion at the local level**

### **2.1 Methodology**

The Participatory Action Research (PAR) method has been adopted to identify and recruit the advisory boards, one at national level and three regional advisory boards in the three selected regions of Tirana, Elbasani and Durrresi. This was realized in close collaboration with the main stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Education and Sciences, VET sector, which provided us with a letter of invitation for the two VE schools directors selected for this project. The first point of contact in the MOLSAEO was The Department for Monitoring the Social Inclusion Strategy, which provided us with information on the social inclusion indicators implemented through the National Strategy for Social Inclusion 2007-2013.

The direct meetings were realized with the main senior staff of the respective executive agencies responsible for implementing VET policies such as the NAVET, IED and NES. Through discussions with experienced professionals we gathered the necessary information on the strategies, legal framework and the main structures operating at national level and in the three regions selected for the field survey with a special focus also on social inclusion role.

In this qualitative research on mapping VET policies and practices for social inclusion we are combining desk research with a fieldwork. All the documents, from the strategies, legislation and other studies and reports reviewed are presented in the References. Following the workshops organized by the two responsible ministries, MoES and the MoLSAEO with all the interested stakeholders involved in VET policy on the 8 and 10 October 2012, to discuss the draft strategy on VET for 2013-2020, where the participants shared their ideas on the challenges in VET policy and problems they are facing in VET practice. Participation in this activity was also used as an opportunity to meet and talk face to face with and establish contacts with the senior staff of the main executive agencies from MoES and MOLSAEO, directors of VE schools/ VTC, social partners, NGOs, interested groups and donors. All of them were ready to collaborate in our qualitative research to identify the key issues relating VET practices and social inclusion/cohesion outcomes.

So, we have identified the main representatives who will take part in our National/local advisory boards, in interviews and focused group discussions. (See Annex tables) Formation of local research advisory boards includes the school principal, a teacher, a student, a local employer, a member of the local government, a representative of a local NGO/CSO, a member of local employment office and local education office. We are planning to organize the first NAB/LAB meeting when the questionnaire to be ready and to discuss with them if any adaptation to the Albanian context will be necessary, a kind of testing the questionnaire before starting the application. In the initial LAB consultation meeting, the research team presents the aim of the research and the main topics of the in-depth interviews which are going to be developed through three case studies of VE schools in Tirana and Durres and VTC in Elbasan. Focus groups will be organized in schools with teachers/ trainers in VTC and in-depth interviews will be carried out at local level at the three case study locations with community-based stakeholders

### **Focus groups**

Initial focus group sessions with key actors involved in the VET system (i) at national level with key policy-makers including representatives of relevant government ministries and agencies, social partners, representatives of CSOs and (ii) at local level in and around the three case study sites (VET schools) including school directors/principals, teachers, local employers, trade unionists community leaders, and NGO/CSO representatives. The aim of these focus groups would be to identify and validate the key issues relating to social inclusion and social cohesion which the research should address. The findings of the focus group discussions will be presented to the research advisory boards at each case study location for reflection and consideration in the formulation of the local key research questions. The focus groups will be chaired by the lead researcher (M.XH) accompanied by the research assistant (S.D) who will record the meeting and produce a summary of the main issues discussed and views expressed.

### **In-depth interviews at national level**

Once the key research questions have been agreed upon, a series of face-to-face interviews with the key decision-makers in the area of VET and social inclusion and social cohesion, including policy leaders will be carried out at various levels including

- (i) central government level within the respective MoES, MOLSAEO, VET National Agency, National Employment Service,
- (ii) local government level with representatives of regional and local governments in the three case study areas,
- (iii) at national level with non-governmental actors from employers' associations, chambers of commerce, trade unions, and NGOs/CSOs working in fields related to vocational education and social inclusion and social cohesion.

The interviews will be designed to investigate the relationships between VET policy and practice and social inclusion and social cohesion from the perspective of the different actors in the system. The multi-faceted nature of the collection of interviews will provide a whole-system view of the inter-relationship between VET policy and practice and social inclusion and social cohesion in each country. Policy issues that will be investigated are described on the format questionnaire prepared for this aim (see Annex). A summary of each interview including the name of the interviewee, institution, role, location and date of interview will be provided to the central LSE research team for use in the second stage of the research to prepare the comparative report.

### **Data analysis**

Existing policy documents and administrative data will be analysed to perform an investigation into the relationship between VET policy and relating to VET and social inclusion and social cohesion. For example, in the social map of the two schools and the statistical data of the VTC in Elbasan, the directors provided the database with a variety of information on the social situation the students/trainees. So, researchers are planning to involve in the survey the students and parents who are beneficiaries of social assistance, pensions or minimum wages, Roma students, disabled and other trainees from vulnerable groups which would enable an assessment of the overall relationship between social exclusion and participation in VET school system.

The effects of vocational education practices on social cohesion will be investigated through analyses of national level administrative data on educational processes and outcomes. Data will be gathered on the structure and outcomes of the educational system as a whole including where available (i) enrolment rates (ii) resources available (iii) teacher-pupil ratios (iv) the social composition of the student body and the teaching workforce including their qualification and age (v) the degree of social differentiation between schools. Data will also be collected on a range of indicators of social cohesion in various areas such as the labour market, poverty, housing, health, crime and social participation.

The policies of case study schools will be analysed through data on the social composition of first year students. Available data on drop-out rates will be analysed to identify the social composition of pupils who drop out of vocational education. An analysis of labour market outcomes will provide information on outcomes of the

vocational education system through labour force survey. This will be done through analysis of the composition of both employment and unemployment by educational level focusing on vocational education graduates and the employment composition of vocational school graduates, broken down by age, gender and occupation.

### **In-depth interviews at the case study sites, Tirana, Durrresi and Elbasani**

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews will be carried out with the directors, other managerial personnel and teachers in the three selected case study VET schools in Tirana, Durrresi and VTC Elbasan and with key informants at in the local community including local employers, trade unionists, community leaders and NGO/CSO representatives. The selection of different schools enables analysis of the relationship between VET practice and social inclusion in a variety of socioeconomic environments. Issues to be addressed will include but not be limited to (i) the process of accessing vocational education (social background of the students, choice of schools, cost of school attendance, selection processes) (ii) the educational processes within the vocational schools (resources available including both finance and equipment, social composition of the pupil body, teacher-pupil ratios, teaching methods, tracking or streaming within schools, drop-out rates and causes of drop-out, degree of autonomy of the school in key areas including budgeting, course design and course mix, selection of students, choice of course by students in relation to gender bias, involvement of local community in life of the school, degree of social differentiation between schools) and (iii) the transition from school to work (links of the school with local businesses, career guidance provided, employment rates and employability of graduates, destinations of graduates, matching of graduates between skills acquired and jobs attained). A summary of each interview including the name of the interviewee, institution, role, location and date of interview will be provided to the central LSE research team for use in the second stage.

While depth of research will be ensured by focus groups and in-depth face-to-face interviews, breadth will be achieved by a pair of questionnaire surveys conducted in each case-study VET school/center (i) a student questionnaire delivered to all first and final year students in each school and (ii) a teacher questionnaire delivered to teachers. These would be balanced by a similar questionnaire to a control group of pupils and teachers from a local non-vocational secondary school. The design of the questionnaires is centrally coordinated by LSE with inputs from all the country research teams. These will then be translated into the Albanian languages and before implemented in the schools can be revised in discussion with local actors and advisory boards. In this meeting of advisory board we will present the aims of the project, the nature of the problem of VET and social inclusion and its significance for the local community, and a discussion about the appropriate issues to be investigated at the case study site.

In-depth interviews will be carried out by research team (M.XH, S.D), whereas the teacher and student questionnaire in close collaboration with the school Principal or members of the local advisory board as appropriate. After analysis of the findings of the research by the local research team, the findings will be presented at a meeting of the local advisory board. A discussion will be held concerning the findings. An action plan

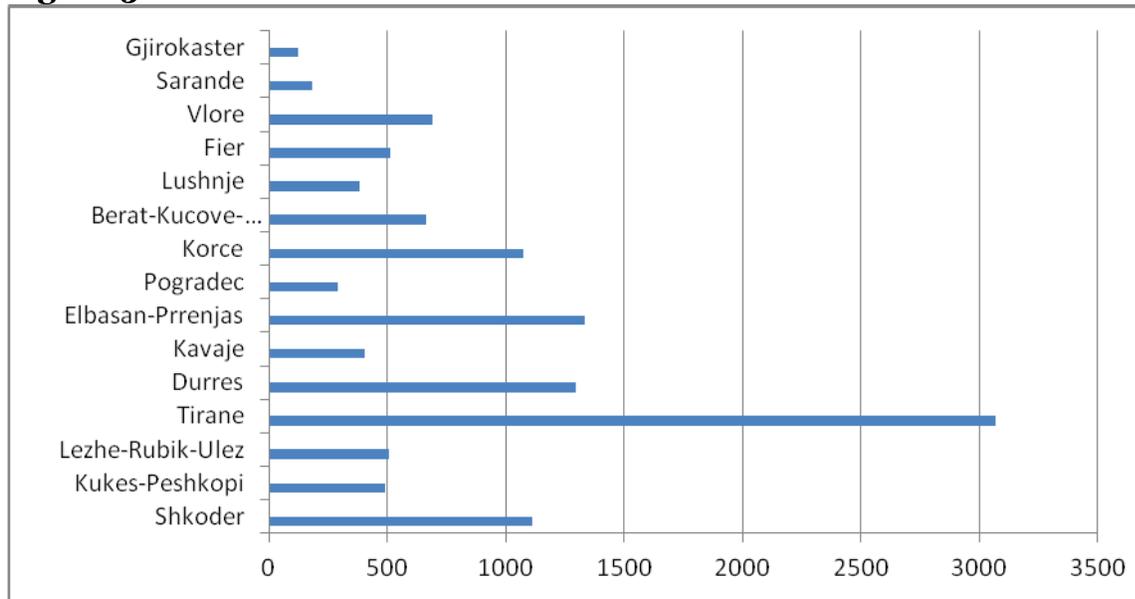
will be developed to address the causes of social exclusion in the school that are revealed by the research, for future implementation at the discretion of the school Director. At the end the research team is planning presentation of research findings from focus groups and in-depth interviews to national advisory boards for discussion and for incorporating their comments in the final report.

The research will be carried out as a reflective process of problem solving led by the country researchers in consultation with practitioners at VET schools and community stakeholders connected with them including national and local policy makers, schools, students, employers and civil society organisations as part of a "community of practice" engaged in improving the role of VET in social inclusion and cohesion.

### 2.1.1 Selection of VET and VTC

VET schools taking part in the research have been selected from a list of schools identified through a prior round of consultations between the ETF and country stakeholders in the field of VET policy. Criteria applied to the schools selected were subjectively scored by country stakeholders. In the final selection, three schools were selected to participate in the research in each country: one from the capital, Tirana, one from a rural area, Elbasani and one from an industrial area as Durresi. An important reason for the selection is that the highest number of students in VET schools is based in these three locations compared to other locations in Albania. Also around 58% of the graduated trainees from VTC have been trained at the VTC in Tirana, Durres and Elbasan, which are also the regions with the highest population in the country.

**Figure 5. The Distribution of students in the VET Schools in Albania**



Source: Ministry of Education, Report 2011.

### **2.1.2 Selection of the key interviewees**

Instruction given in the Concept Note of the research has been the basic leading instrument for orientation in selecting the key interviewed. We started with the national advisory board, whose membership was mostly defined based on their position in the two main Ministries, of the MoES and the MOLSAEO and in their executive agencies for VET, as well as from the social partners of the government in VET policy, such as the representative of the employers organization and the Federation of Trade Union of Education. People were selected from the tripartite institutionalized bodies, such as the National Council of VET and the National Council of Labour near the MOLSAEO. As it can be clearly noticed by the table at the Annex, there is a considerable number of actors listed at national level and a rather limited number of them at local level. This because it is planned that (following also the suggestions offered by the project lead researcher) the actors participating in focus group in national level will be different from those interviewed. The rich list of actors in national level is made possible also by the researcher rather consolidated knowledge and their previous experience.

While in regional level the list of actors suggested is less than 15, but the focus groups in respective regions will help us identify other possible important actors in VET social inclusion, such as businesses, NGOs etc. This way we will increase the number of interviews in regional level up to 15, as required in the suggested methodology. The Order of the MoES and the MOLSAEO nr.15, dated 23.07.2012 “For Functioning the Boards of the Institutions providing Vocational Education and Training” has been the leading document for establishing the advisory boards at local level. (See in Annex the tables with advisory boards and the selected people for interview)

## **2.2 Situation analysis (in the case study areas)**

### **2.2.1 Tirana region**

The region of Tirana is situated in central Albania and is the tenth biggest among 12 regions in the country. It is composed of 5 municipalities and 14 communes. Tirana, the capital city, is also located there.

#### **Demography and social situation**

The population in the Tirana region has rapidly increased in the last 10 years from 597,899 to 763,634 inhabitants, in urban and rural areas, representing 27% of the total population of the country (INSTAT, 2011, p.17). The population density in Tirana Region is the highest in the country, at 461 inhabitants per square kilometre, compared to the national population density of 98.5 inhabitants per square kilometre. The municipality of Tirana has the highest population at the regional level (421,286 inhabitants) with the highest population growth at both regional and national level. Most of Tirana population (70.3%) lives in urban areas and only 29.7% lives in rural areas. The gender ratio is almost equal with a slightly greater percentage of females

(50.3%) than males (49.7%). The population of Tirana has increased continuously during the last decade as a result of population migration from all Albania.

The poverty rate in urban areas is the lowest in Albania at 8.7% in urban areas. In this region 12% of families benefit from economic assistance, which has slightly increased in recent years due to population increase. Based on available data, the majority of the families who benefit from complete economic assistance is concentrated in urban areas as a result of population migration.

### **Education**

A considerable number of pre-schools institutions are situated in Tirana, approximately 12.7% in national scale. Around 15.3% of 9-year schools in Albania are situated in this region – in total 246 schools. There are 100 high schools (51 public and 49 private schools), composing 20% of the total number of high schools in Albania. Only 21 high schools are VE schools and most (77%) of high schools are situated in the urban areas corresponding this way with the population distribution in Tirana, concentrated in urban areas.<sup>25</sup>

### **Labour Market**

Tirana offers many employment opportunities compared with other regions of Albania, even though, due to the high population density the unemployment level is relatively high. Unemployment level in the first 9 months of 2012 was 15.5%, while at national level it was 13.8% (INSTAT, 2012, p.10). The unemployment rate is higher in the private sector.

### **Economy**

Tirana has an important role in the development of the country with a GDP index of 150. GDP per capita is 545,000 lek while GDP per capita at national level is 360,000 lek (INSTAT, 2009, p.1). The GDP structure is composed mainly by service sector (46.4% of economy), agro business (20,7%), industry (9.7%), construction (14,3%) and transport (8,9%) (METE, 2010, p. 5). A considerable part of active enterprises in the country (38,7%) operate in Tirana region (METE 2010, p 39) and according to the sectors, in Tirana are concentrated 41%of service companies, 39.5% of construction companies, and 33.3% of production companies.

### **Technical Economic School Of Tirana**

This school was opened in 1947 under the name “Economic Technicum” and during these years has encountered many changes adjusting the curricula and academic program to trade economy. Since 2009-2010 academic year, a new curricula is applied for the first level in Economy and Business and profiles of Banking Services, Accounting in third level. This academic year a new specialty was opened in Office Management and Business Administration in third level.

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<sup>25</sup> Region of Tirana Development Strategy

There are 874 students attending this school this academic year, slightly less than 5 years ago when 979 students attended the school. Female and male ratio is approximately the same with a small advantage of female students which compose 51.5 %. Since the school has also dormitories, students from other cities can come and attend the school. Actually 9% of students belong to this category.

Very interesting information can be retrieved by the school social map of this academic year. There are 17 students with special need, 11 of them blind, 4 of them physical/motor problems, 1 deaf and one mute. Since none of them is in the final grade (the XII<sup>th</sup>), more detailed analysis through interviews and questionnaires in the next stage will enable us to identify if there is a school drop situation of these kids, if the school has special treatment for these categories, if they attend classes in mixed or dedicated classrooms etc. According to this social map, only one student belongs to Roma ethnicity, around 2% (19 students) are more likely to use drug or smoke, 8 students tend to drop the school and a total of 66 students have very low results and 17 students are repeating the class while only 45 have excellent results, 11 students are in need for psychologist and 8 students show aggressive behavior. Data related to the family situation show that 6% of students come from families with low economic level, 4.2% have at least one parent dead, only 15 have the orphan status and 16 have divorced parents. Regarding the parents education level, data show that the majority of students parents (61.6%) have high school education level, 30.8% have a university degree and only 7.7% have finished only elementary school. More information regarding the students school map can be found in the school social map at appendix 1.

The school operates also as a training and information centre for all high school teachers of economic profile at national level. It is also as the centre of “ ALBIZ “- KulturKontakt project Austria – financed by Austrian Government in collaboration with the Ministry of Education in the frame of quality increase project in economic schools 2009 -2013. Based on this project, a teacher was selected in each school as PASO (Social Partners Relationship Coordinator) to ensure and enhance the collaboration between schools, social partners and other potential partners who can ensure professional practices. There are several agreements achieved between Economic School and big banks (such as Raiffeisen), retail companies, General Directory of Custom, Directory of Taxes and other medium sized companies where the students spend their professional practice hours. There are other organisations that the school collaborates with, but there are no formal agreements signed. PASO and the school staff has approved the 2012-2013 collaboration plan with Alfa and National Commercial Bank. Still this is a dynamic process and has not yet been officially formalised.

**Table 7. Social map of Technical Economic School of Tirana**

<b>Technical- Economic High School, Tirana - Social Map 2012-2013</b>						
Number of students in school	<b>874</b>	<b>Cl.X 336</b>	<b>Cl .XI 230</b>	<b>Cl XII</b>	<b>Cl XIII</b>	<b>Total 874</b>

				<b>179</b>	<b>129</b>	
Number of female in school		163	123	104	60	450
Level of Education of Parents		<b>University</b>	69	93	65	269
		<b>High</b>	232	122	105	538
		<b>Elementary</b>	35	15	9	67
No.	Situation					
1	With divorced parents	8	4	2	2	16
2	With orphan status	1	12	-	2	15
3	With one parent dead	13	10	10	4	37
4	Students repeating	15	1	1	-	17
5	Students with aggressive behavior	3	-	2	3	8
6	Students likely to use drugs/smoking	-	2	3	14	19
7	Students of the Roma ethnicity	-	-	1	-	1
8	Family with low economic level	18	13	6	16	53
9	Students coming from other schools	-	2	2	2	6
10	Students who tend to drop out of school	2	-	6	-	8
11	Excellent students	7	7	14	17	45
12	Students with very low results	19	18	20	9	66
13	Students in need for psychologist	2	6	-	3	11
	Special needs students: <b>(TOTAL)</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>17</b>
14	Mental	-	-	-	-	-
15	Physical /Motor	2	1	1	-	4
16	Mental+ Physical	-	-	-	-	-
17	Blind	7	3	1	-	11
18	Deaf	-	1	-	-	1
19	Mute	-	1	-	-	1
20	Autism	-	-	-	-	-

### 2.2.2 Durresi Region

Durres region lies in the center of the Western Lowland of Albania and consists of two districts: Durres and Kruja and has a total surface of 766 km<sup>2</sup>, 10 communes and 8 municipalities. One of the most important ports in Albania is situated in the Durresi bay, in the coast of this region.

#### Demography and social situation

Durrës region population like Tirana was increased in the last 10 years from 245,179 to 265,330 inhabitants, especially in urban area where is concentrated 79% of the total population. (INSTAT, 2011) Durresi region, especially Durresi district was affected by the internal chaotic and not controlled migration especially in rural area where the population

doesn't have equal opportunities to access social services in education and health. The rural population is reduced at 50 percent in the last 10 years. School drop is higher among kids in rural areas.

About 10.87% of the population (45,236 people) in this region live with pension, family pension and disability pension. Of these, 4938 live with a family pension, 5117 with a disability pension and the rest upon retirement. Also, in the district of Durres there are 2,261 beneficiaries of social assistance. The social housing has distributed Municipality of Durres, 10% of the beneficiaries come from the Roma community. Durres region has a ten year Regional Development Strategy (2005-2015) with 9 objectives, one of which is to "improve social infrastructure and increase the kids and youngsters in the region" (p. 103).

### **Education**

The district of Durres has an average of 5.5 gardens for each municipality and 6.3 gardens for each commune. In pre-school education, the public sector is dominant with a cover of 93.2% of the total number of gardens. Nine-year schools, spread throughout all the region of Durres, consist of 43,193 students. Less than 5% of students attend non-public 9-year education, which means that over 95% of students attend public education. 10,257 students attend general secondary education, while the rest of them (around 23%) attend professional education. Comparing this figure with the objective set for 2010 to increase the enrolment in VET schools to 45% (of students who finish 9-year education), leads us to the conclusion that enrolment is lower than expected. There are 615 teachers available for 13,395 students, which mean an average of 1 teacher for every 21-22 students.

The only post- secondary vocational school operates under the umbrella of Aleksander Moisiu University in Durres, the Faculty of Professional Studies offering 2 years study diplomas in nursing, legal assistant, construction manager, practical informatics etc. As part of the AlbVET-supported Swiss program, a new IT branch was opened during the academic year 2010- 2011. The theoretical curriculum is organized by the University of Durrës, while the practical curriculum is provided by the VE School Beqir Cela in Durrës. About 30 students are enrolled in this program. The VET law allows for a dual form of vocational education, which combines vocational education provided by the educational institutions, and the vocational education provided under companies of the respective profile. This form of education is provided by the Faculty of Integrated Studies with Practice in the Durres University and has three managerial branches of "Bachelor" studies: Bank, Tourism and Entrepreneurship Management.<sup>26</sup>

### **Labour Market**

Regarding to the employment rate of Durres district, it has a labour force of 74,927 people, which are divided into 45,465 males and 29,462 females. Of these, there are

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<sup>26</sup> Draft Strategy on VET, 2013-2020.

66,443 total employees that are divided respectively in 41,654 males and 24,789 females. The number of unemployed persons is about 8,484 people, where firsts on the list are ordinary workers, followed by high technical occupations and agriculture workers. Senior specialists and ordinary employees are professions with a small number of unemployment. Durres Municipality is implementing a project, which consists of the youth empowerment through community development by providing professional support for young people with social problems, to follow the development of a business plan for the purpose of employment in the future.<sup>27</sup>

## **Economy**

Durres is a region with a developing economy which has as its basis the tourism sector. However, in the district of Durres exert their activity a large number of businesses spread across the entire county. Only in Durres there are 6970 subjects. These subjects include trade activities, transport, construction, community services, social activities, as well as fishing and processing industry. If we will make a partition based on sectors and activities, we will have: in the manufacturing sector around 622 activities, in building 371 activities, 689 activities in transport, 3256 activities in trade and 2032 activities in services.

## **Beqir Cela Vocational School**

"BeqirCela" school is located in the neighborhood of Shkozet Durres, this school operates in the building of the ex- agricultural engineering school, which after the year 1990 as well as many other professional schools because of political changes, which were followed with changes in the economic structure, collapsed and went to closing. This school is among the best schools in the country and in 2009 was elected as the best technical school in Albania. The school was totally reconstructed in 1993 as a result of governmental agreement between the Albanian Government and the Swiss Government, implemented by Swisscontact. The goal was to restructure and adapt it to the market economy needs. The collaboration with Swisscontact continued 17 consecutive years.

Number of students has rapidly increased these years, i.e in the academic year 2009-2010 the number of students was 521, in the first year were enrolled 243 students. In the ongoing academic year 2012-2013 the number of students that attend this school is 1134 and in the first year are enrolled 446 students.

There are four specialties offered in this school auto-agro-mechanic, electro-mechanic, installers of plumbing and heating equipment, ICT, postsecondary for ICT. The school is composed of these workshops, where are offered practices and theoretical classes: 4 workshops for auto mechanic and one under construction, workshop of commanding

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<sup>27</sup> Draft Report Evaluation of the National Strategy on Social Inclusion 2007-2013 prepared by the Albanian Center for Economic Research, supported by UNICEF, September 2012, not yet officially approved by the MOLSAEO, page 28.

technique, electro domestic, installation techniques, mix electricity (under construction), working at the counter, welding, leather, agricultural, hydraulics, heating unit installations; 3 computer labs, 2 post-secondary lab, multimedia room, meetings and activities room, cabinet of autos, cabinet of technical drawing, electrical cabinet, electrical cabinet technology, cabinet of hydraulics, general cabinets as: mathematics, physics, chemistry, etc..Beqir Cela students are quite attractive to the business sector, it is this sector itself that requires the third year students to conduct the practice hours by them. This way the school has a very good collaboration with professional business. The school is actually collaborating with 37 businesses.

**Table 8. BEQIR CELA School, Social – Economic Map, 2012 - 2013**

Classes	Number of students	Parents	Level of Education				Employed					Asistance	Unemployed	Pensioner	Dead
			University	Secondary	Elementary	Primary	Owner	Intellectual		Worker					
								Public	Private	Public	Private				
I	446	Father	56	224	157	6	24	65	83	82	140	1	45	3	3
		Mother	41	95	160	149	5	5	78	20	22	7	308	-	1
II	276	Father	13	171	82	1	11	22	32	30	135	1	35	1	9
		Mother	27	120	127	2	-	8	25	6	82	-	153	2	-
III	235	Father	12	111	110	-	15	7	7	11	162	5	21	5	2
		Mother	23	98	89	25	4	4	3	7	37	10	164	6	-
IV	177	Father	13	103	56	1	6	9	6	23	112	6	9	2	4
		Mother	6	67	63	39	-	7	3	5	28	3	129	-	2
Total	1134	Father	94	609	405	8	56	103	128	146	549	13	110	11	18
		Mother	97	380	439	215	9	24	109	38	169	20	754	8	3

### 2.2.3 Elbasan Region

#### Demographic data

Elbasan region is located in the center part of Albania, in border with Tirana and Durrësi, with an area of 3,292-kilometre square and includes 7 municipalities and 43 communes. Its population is continuing to be reduced in the last ten years from 362,736 to 296,082 inhabitants with an average age of 32.8 years old, dominated by rural population (179,111). Most of the territory is comprised by mountains and hills (respectively 38% and 34% of territory).

### **Education**

There are education institutions of all levels in Elbasan: (i) kindergartens (a total of 182 kindergartens, out of each 6 of them are private ones, with 8520 children); (ii) 9- years schools providing the compulsory education (a total of 274 schools attended by 49506 pupils, out of each 549 pupils are attending the private schools) with approximately 61.6 % (30,524) of pupils in the rural area; and (iii) high schools.

The high school education level is offered by 53 schools and only 8 of them are vocational education schools with an attraction rate of only 14% of students (2310 students), compared with 86% (13953 students) who prefer general high schools. Based on this reality, a Strategy for Vocational Education is prepared in district level aiming to orient the VET offer in most required specialists such as in construction, hospitality, furniture, sawing artisans, etc. In 2009 a Regional Committee for VET was created with the mission of VET need assessment of VET and to develop a qualitative supply of VET.

In Elbasan region there is also the Aleksander Xhuvani University, a public one. Based on the 2010 statistics, there are a total of 9547 students enrolled (dominated by a 66% female students) in faculties of natural sciences, economic, human science, foreign language, education, social science and nursing. Other post-secondary programs are offered since the academic year 2010 -2011 for Laboratory Technicians by the University of Elbasan (about 50 students).

### **Labour Market**

Based on official data the unemployment in Elbasan region is one of the highest in country and the majority of employees result as self-employed in agricultural sector. Calculations of employability (without agriculture) show that the majority of employment is in public entities (56%), than self-employment or small businesses with one employee (24%) and 12% are employed in big enterprises. This last sector is very important for the region economy and will be discussed in further paragraphs.

### **Economy**

Based on INSTAT data of 2011, Elbasan region has a structure of economy oriented toward services and trade, respectively 42% and 22% of the enterprises. Other sectors such as producers of goods, hotels, coffee and restaurants, transport and communication compose a total of 22.3%. This region used to be an industrialized area before the 90s with the metallurgic factory processing steel and iron, employing approximately 16 thousand employees. These years only 5.2 % of enterprises operate in

industry sector (heavy, processing and light & food industry), producing construction materials (iron, cement, bricks etc.), furniture, food, fresh drinks etc.

### ***Vulnerable groups***

The poverty is spread in this region with about 9,19% of families living in poverty, 1 out of 6 children live in families benefiting from economic assistance. This region has a lot of social problems related with vulnerable groups such as children, women, limited abilities persons, elderly and Roma population. This is why a regional social plan is formulated with the involvement of interested stakeholders with the aim of reducing social exclusion. A Committee for Evaluation and Orientation on Social Policy was also created under the District Council with 15 member representative of district, municipality, SSS, NES, Regional Education Directory, media, business and NGOs.

### **Elbasan Vocational Training Center**

Elbasan Regional VTC offers different types of courses in auto mechanic, plumbing, electrician technician, brick layer, welding, TV-repair, hairdresser, cooking, sewing, social animator, foreign languages such as English and Italian, computer, household equipment repair, babysitting, computer repair, secretary. Below is provided a general overview of the social excluded groups of population following these courses in the last two years and specifically the tendency to be increased the age group 16-19 years old to 20 percent of the total trainees, during the first 9 months of 2012.

**Table 9. Statistical data from Elbasan VTC**

Year	Number of Trainees	Number of registered unemployed	% of the group-age 16-19 / total	Roma	People with Limited abilities	Prisoners	Male – female	Rural - Urban	Professional – Complementary courses
2011	970	221	15 %	116	13	31	60-40	65-35	65-35
2012	813	218	20 %	58	15	104	65-35	60-40	65-35

As it can be noticed from the above table, there are approximately 25% of unemployed following the courses, 12% of trainees in 2011 where from Roma population, a certain number of trainees with limited abilities and around 13% of trainees in 2012 were prisoners. Most of the trainees are male from rural areas. The majority of vocational courses belong to professional category versus complementary ones (computer and foreign language).

This centre was newly renovated and the investment fund during these 5 years was 1.5 million dollars transformed it into a modern training center close to European standards. There are 11-12 classrooms in the center and 14-15 workstations, a dormitory with 180 beds and a eating court and bar as well. A sports environment is in its final stage of construction with a basketball, volleyball and football field.

ERVC has a close collaboration with different actors such as EU (with CARDS project and GOPA consulting), University of Bologna, Forli –Cesena municipality, NGOs (such as World Vision, Other Vision, “A dream more”, “Help for children”, “In family for the family”, etc., and business in the area such as “DOKO” construction, “Asllani” clothing, “Flobest” etc.

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### *Legislation*

#### **Legislation on vocational education**

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- The Law No. 10 247, dated 04.03.2010, for “*National Qualification Framework*”;
- DCM No. 321, dated 21.04.2011, for “*Creating the National Agency of VET and Qualifications and Unit secretariat for NQF*”
- DCM No. 351, dated 21.04.2011, for “*Functioning the Council of NQF*”;
- “*Agreement between social partners for VET in Albania*”, signed on the 19th of March 2010;
- DCM No.627, dated 11.06.2009, on “*National List of Occupational*”;
- The Law No. 10171, dated 22.10.2009, on “*Regulated Professions in the Republic of Albania*”;
- The Instruction No. 3874, dated 14.07.2011, for “*Organization of professional teaching practices for teachers regulated profession in the Republic of Albania*”;
- The Instruction No. 7170/1, dated 22.11.2010, for “*Qualification of the school principal*”;
- The Instruction No. 1522/1, dated 09.03.2011, for “*Accreditation system of the training programme*”;
- The Instruction No. 21, dated 23.07.2010, on “*The work rates of educational-teaching and the number of students per class in pre university education institutions*”;
- The Instruction No. 22, dated 29.07.2010, for “*Nominated of teaching staff and school principals in the pre-university education*”;
- The Instruction No. 27, dated 09.06.2012, for “*The assessment of students with grades and credits*”;
- The Instruction No. 35, dated 31.08.2011, on “*The structure, curriculum and learning activities of part-time programme*”;
- The Order No. 326, dated 22.06.2010, for “*Opening new qualification on ICT in some vocational schools*”;
- The Instruction No. 957, dated 15.02.2011, for “*Development of Final Exam in Level I and II of vocational education*”;
- The Instruction No. 15, dated 23.07.2012, for “*School boards’ functioning in the VET providers*”;

- The Order of the Minister of Education and Science No. 300, dated 23.07.2012, for “Data Entry of Vocational and social culture schools”;
- Order of the Minister of Education and Science No. 16, dated 24.07. 2012 “For the school year 2012 – 2013 in Pre-university education system”.

**Vocational Training:** The main legislation was adopted further to the adoption of the Law 8872, dated 29.03.2002, as for the Vocational Training.

### Legislation on vocational training

- The **Instruction No. 867/1**, Dated 30.12.2002, focus on the registration procedures in the public vocational training centres. Requisites and guidelines for admissions were defined by this instruction.
- The **Instruction No. 867/2**, Dated 30.12.2002 establishes the basic requirements for initial preparation and qualification of Vocational Training Centres instructors.
- The **Instruction Nr. 867/3**, Dated 30.12.2002 defines the criteria and rules of examinations and tests in the final vocational training assessment.
- The **Instruction No. 867/4**, Dated 30.12.2002 defines the Content, form and procedures for the issuance of diplomas and certificates in vocational training provided by public and accredited private centres providing vocational training.
- **Instruction No. 2222**, dated 31.10.2002 focus on Vocational Training counselling and orientation establishes the framework of vocational training, career guidance, full individual counselling, mediation between them and the vocational training centres and promotion of professional training in special cases when necessary.
- The **Decision No. 196**, dated 20.03.2003 establishes the standards for the development of the Vocational education and training curriculum, specifically the curricula structures of professional qualifications (profiles and specialities) for different levels offered in vocational technical schools, public, and non public vocational training centres.
- The **Order No. 782**, Dated 04.04.2006 establishes the Fees of the VET System, namely the Registration fees for the registered unemployed in employment offices who want to attend vocational training offered by the Vocational Training Centres.
- **Decision No. 543**, dated 31.10.2002 on the Accreditation of VET institutions, adopted by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs establishes the Commission for the Accreditation of vocational education and training institutions, its composition, organization and functions which are determined by the joint instruction of the two ministers.

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<http://www.qarkutirane.gov.al>  
<http://www.unicef.org/albania/YAPScasestudy.pdf>

**Annexes:**

**Annex 1. The pilot schools selected for the VET project in Albania**

<b>School Name Albanian/ English</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Director</b>	<b>Phone 00355</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
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Shkolla e Mesme Profesionale Beqir Cela Vocational High School Beqir Cela	Shkozet Durrës	Bashkim Shkëmbi	682258406	<a href="mailto:shkëmbib@yahoo.com">shkëmbib@yahoo.com</a>
Qendra rajonale e e Formimit Profesional Regional Vocation Training Centre	Lagjia : Shenkoll Elbasan	Rasim Balliu	54 25 86 28 696313550	<a href="mailto:elbasandrfpp@yahoo.com">elbasandrfpp@yahoo.com</a>

**Annex 2. Advisory Boards**

**National Advisory Board**

<b>No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Stakeholder Category</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Phone; Mobile</b>
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### Regional Advisory Board ELBASAN

No	Name	Stakeholder Category	Position	Address	Mobile
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Mapping of VET educational policies and practices for social inclusion and social cohesion  
Country Study: Albania

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**Annex 3.**

**Institutional Stakeholder to be Interviewed**

A preliminary list of stakeholders that the country team  
aims to involve in the interview and in focus groups

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Nr	level	Name Surname	Institution	Position	Location Address	CONTACTS	
						Email	phone/ mobile
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33		Xxx	School Board	Parent representative			
34		Xxx	School Board	Students representative			
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40		Nesti Shuke	RED, Tirana	Inspektor	Rr. "Jeronim De Rada", Tirane	anestishuka@gmail.com	0674080434
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45		Albiaona Lila	School Board	Students representative			
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49		Eduart Shehu	Employment Office	Director	Zyra e Punesimit :Lagja "Emin Matraxhiu"		0692046751
50		Bardhi Doko	"DOKO" Export- Import	President	Kombinati Metalurgjik Elbasan		0682075700
51		Edmond Popa	Chamber of commerce	Chamber Secretary	Qarku:L"11 Nentori"		0682262213
52		Bukuroshe Manaj	A more dream	Directress	Lagja "5 Maji"		0692066599
53		Xxx	Elbasan VC	Trainer			
54		Xxx	Elbasan VC	Trainer representative			

## **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

### **Introduction**

The VET reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) started in 1998 with the Green Paper - VET Policy and Strategy. It includes a list of recommendations for the VET reform in the light of harmonisation with EU developments in the VET field.

In the succeeding two years, the recommendations of the Green Paper were accepted by the ministries, agencies and institutions at all levels in entities and cantons. During 2001 the White Paper - VET Policy and Strategy, actually the way of achieving goals stated in the Green Paper, was prepared and launched. By consisting of two parts: Legislation and Implementation, it became the agreed concept for relevant BiH legislation and the agreed policy and strategy.

The principal documents related to VET reforms follow the Green Papers' broader goals: 1. General role of VET, 2. Governance, business administration, decentralisation, 3. Finance, 4. The Labour Market, 5. Curriculum Development and Certification, 6. Teacher training, 7. Standards, 8. Legislation and 9. Institutions.

Under each of the aforementioned broader goals, the Green Paper spells out respective requirements in more depth. The documents that followed in succeeding years, while often more detailed, do not cross out of this framework and do not diverge significantly from its recommendations. Ever since the VET reform started, very similar diagnoses and recommendations have been reiterated, proving that policy acceptance was followed by only partial implementation (Parkes, 2010).

This does not apply only to VET but to secondary education in general, which also remains a key issue. Although efforts are being made to align the system with the EU, especially in vocational education, the results have been meagre. This is particularly more relevant for VET as it has received a considerable amount of attention and is significantly reformed thanks to efforts led by the European Commission (WB, 2009).

Key milestones in the VET reforms since 1998 up to now are listed in chronological order:

- Development of *Green* and *White Paper* supporting the preparation of VET strategy and policy
- A new *Nomenclature of Occupations* - the new Classification of Occupations (nomenclature) composed of 13 families with a total of 100 occupations was adopted in 2004 at the entity level

- *Law for Agency for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education* (adopted in October 2007)
- Development Strategy of Vocational Education and Training for the Period 2007-13 from April 2007<sup>1</sup>
- *VET Framework Law* (Official Gazette No 63/08, July 2008)
- *Strategy for VET in BiH 2007 - 2013* (April 2007)
- “*Baseline of the Qualifications Framework in BiH*” (adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2011)<sup>2</sup>.

When considering VET in the context of social policy at the country-wide level, it is necessary to underline that according to the Dayton Peace Agreement, no social policy responsibilities are allocated to the institutions at the country-wide level<sup>3</sup>. Article III states that explicitly: ‘all government functions and responsibilities which are not strictly given to the institutions of BiH shall be the functions and responsibilities of an entity’.

Not surprisingly, social inclusion has not yet been given sufficient attention in BiH, despite the fact that it has prepared (with DFID support) but not adopted social inclusion strategy.

According to some surveys, most young people in BiH (aged 15-30) among whom are mainly VET students and graduates consider unemployment to be the main problem they are faced with. They expect government to address the issue by improving the economic situation of young people. At the same time, they mostly do not believe that government works to resolve their problems. For instance, only one in four of the respondents stated that they had heard of governmental employment programmes (YERP, 2011).

## **1. Institutional framework and the policy process at national level**

The VET reform has been implemented in BiH mainly through programmes financed by the EU, which has acted as the major donor and driver of innovation and modernisation in the sector. In addition to the EC, the reform processes relating to VET, social inclusion and social cohesion have been supported by GTZ (in 2003

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<sup>1</sup> The Strategy was intended to have its incorporated short and long term Action Plan but they have not been adopted.

<sup>2</sup> It is the first document in BiH dealing with the qualifications framework for all levels of education. It is in compliance with the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. It requires further development over the coming years. BiH is prioritising the need to reorganise their qualifications and to set up a national qualifications framework that would fit within the European Qualifications Framework, the objective being to improve transparency, to support skills matching and to promote mobility with the labour market (ETF, 2011a).

<sup>3</sup> Ministry for Civil Affairs, precisely its Department for labour, employment, social protection and pensions has only a coordinating role

German Technical Cooperation launched a six-year project to modernise curricula and improve students' practical skills), ADC (Austria), USAID (USA) and SCD/SECO (Switzerland). In addition, in the field of social inclusion and social cohesion, DFID (providing substantial technical assistance to the stakeholders in social inclusion and poverty reduction policy) and World Bank (providing assistance to the labour market through the employment support programme and continuously supporting the development of the social sector at local and regional levels) supported social reforms.

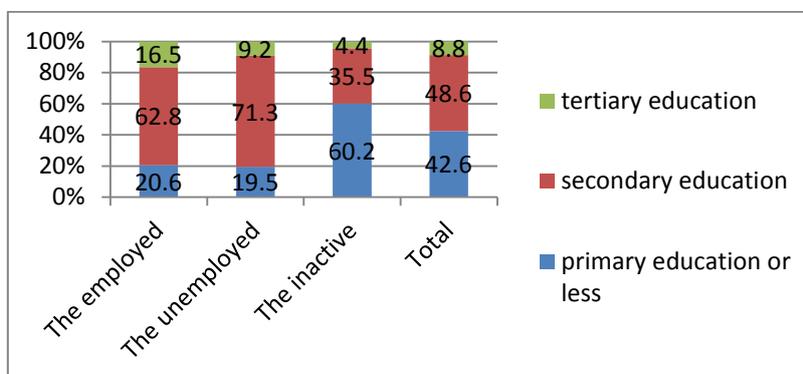
Nevertheless, VET reform in BiH was mainly implemented under the EU support through Obnova, Phare, CARDS and IPA programmes. Through the Obnova programme various projects (e.g. establishment of a vocational training centre in the town of Odžak/Posavina, Vocational Training Programme for Demobilised Soldiers) were carried out with the purpose to assist the post-war reconstruction of the country. The EU Phare programme (1998 - 2000) had three components: Policy and strategy (the preparation of the Green paper), Development of curricula (in accordance with commonly agreed modular methodology), and Reintegration and training for disadvantaged groups in order to support repatriation process. The Phare VET Bridging project (2000 - 2001) had as the aim to continue the activities of the Phare programme and to prepare a White Paper.

The EU VET I (2002-2004), EU VET II (2004-2006), EU VET III (2007-2009) and EU VET IV (2011- ) continued to support the VET reform by assisting in reducing the occupational categories (from almost 500 to about 100); creating modular education curricula for 13 families of skills, making the VET system more flexible and allowing for increased mobility of students across occupations; encouraging entrepreneurship and occupational orientation of students by forming virtual and real companies at VET institutions as well as career development centres; and make the VET schools more responsive to labour market needs through greater interaction between schools, students, and employers (World Bank, 2009).

### **1.1 Situation analysis (vocational education, skills mismatches, social exclusion and social cohesion at national level)**

According to Labour Force Surveys, those who completed the secondary education outnumber those with primary or tertiary education among both the employed and particularly the unemployed. The respective percentages are 62.8 % and 71.3% (see Figure 1)

Figure 1: Working Age Population by Education, BiH, 2012



Source: BHAS (2012a)

Accordingly, the role of secondary education is of great significance, particularly if it is borne in mind that those who are unemployed over 12 months, i.e. long term unemployed, account for 82.4 % of total unemployment (BHAS, 2012a). VET is closely related to this, as VET students are substantial cohorts of young people in secondary education of 70-75 %. Consequently, VET graduates are disproportionately represented in unemployment<sup>4</sup>

Mass and growing unemployment is a consequence of skill mismatches. Formal educational degrees do not correspond with skills needed at the workplace. In contrast, in comparator countries like Austria or Switzerland well-established apprenticeship systems report just minor or no problems with respect to skill mismatches.

At the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year in BiH, 163,417 students were enrolled in 312 secondary schools. Approximately three quarters of them attend VET schools (see Table 1). About 25,000 of them completed their education in June 2012 and mostly applied to employment bureaus.

Table 1: Secondary Education at the Beginning of the 2011-2012 School Year

	Number of classes	Students	
		All	Girls
• Grammar schools	1628	41155	25797
• Art	111	1514	861

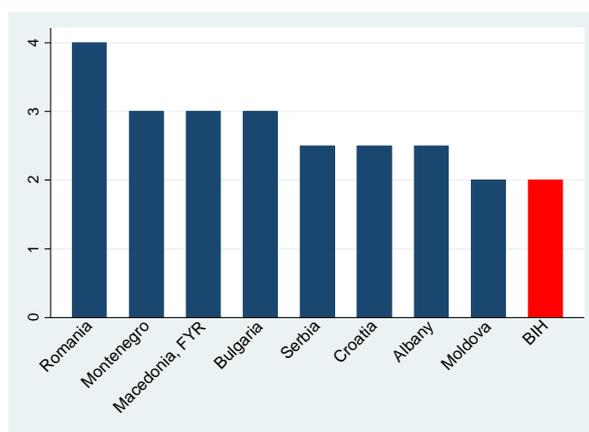
<sup>4</sup> According to the preliminary results of LFS for 2012, unemployment rate is 28 % (BHAS, 2012a).

• Religious schools	78	2157	1039
• Secondary schools for children with special needs	76	411	152
• Technical schools	3171	83573	42040
• Vocational schools	1441	34607	10717
• TOTAL	6505	163417	80606

Source: BHAS (2012b)

Education outcomes in BiH are well below expectations<sup>5</sup>. VET programmes in BiH are not aimed at increasing practical training and reducing skill gaps in order to meet market needs. Education in general, particularly secondary education has undergone little reform and is thought to be too broad and insufficiently practical to equip graduates with the types of skills needed to be employable at the workplace (WB, 2009). Due to the lack of regular international appraisal of the VET education, the results of an OECD research into human capital in the Balkan countries will be used here (OECD, 2006) (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Scores for VET



Source: OECD (2006)

<sup>5</sup> BiH does not participate in international tests (PISA, TIMSS, and PIRLS). In 2007, BiH students for the first time participated in the TIMSS having eight-graders ranked below average and below the regional comparators countries that participated in the test (Serbia and Slovenia) (World Bank, 2009).

As Figure 2 shows, the BiH VET system is among weakest in the Balkans<sup>6</sup>, lagging behind all Balkan countries. Useful lessons for BiH from the experience of other countries, including the LSEE Project countries (Montenegro, Macedonia, FYR, Serbia, Croatia and Albania) could be drawn.

BiH had strong but jobless economic growth before 2009, insufficient to make a dent into continued high unemployment. What is most worrisome is that about half of the unemployed are first time job-seekers, mostly graduates of secondary or vocational programs. The unemployment rate among 15-24 year olds is a staggering 63.1% (32.6% for male and 64.0% for female) (BHAS, 2012a).

It is clear that there is a fundamental problem in the labour market that makes it extremely difficult for young secondary school or VET graduates to move into employment. Firm surveys and interview evidence suggest that recent secondary school graduates do not have the right type of training, skills and experience needed by firms. The high unemployment rate among young secondary school graduates coexists with a 37% tertiary enrolment rate, suggesting that many young people participate neither in the labour market nor in higher education, which poses a serious challenge to BH's future economic growth (WB, 2009). In labour statistics, they could be found under the label Discouraged, as a subcategory of the inactive population i.e. among those who are not classified as persons in employment or as unemployed persons.

The main obstacle to VET graduates entry into the employment is the lack of labour demand with a particular lack of jobs of kinds that fit the educational attainment of the population. This is related to the lack of a comprehensive reform package, part and parcel of which should be the VET system. In the meantime social cohesion and integration will become more and more fragile.

## **1.2 The institutional framework for vocational education**

Some points to bear in mind when describing the education system of BiH, primarily the general institutional setup can be seen in Figure 3. According to the Dayton peace agreement, which defines the institutional setup of the country, the main institutions that deal with education and VET are:

- At the country-wide level: (i) Ministry of Civil Affairs (MoCA) with its sector for Education and (ii) Agency for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education in BiH with its VET Department
- At the entity/district level: (i) Ministry for Education of FBiH, (ii) Ministry for Education of RS and (iii) Department for Education in Brcko District
- At the level of FBiH: 10 Cantonal ministries of education

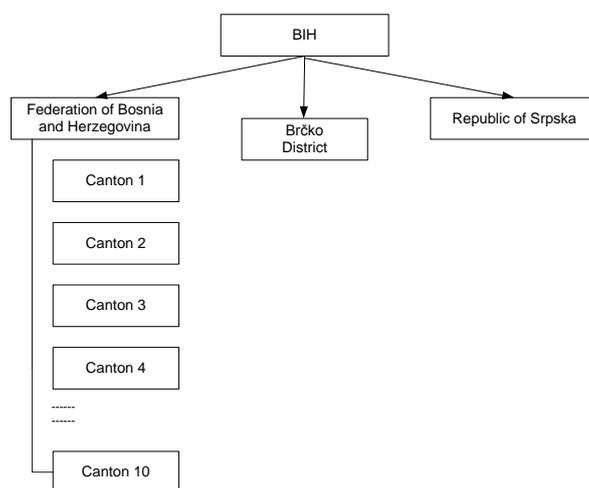
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<sup>6</sup> The VET system were assessed by government officials, local stakeholders and international staff of the OECD Investment *For a detailed breakdown of scores please refer to: [www.investmentcompact.org](http://www.investmentcompact.org).*

In addition, there are educational institutes established at the Cantonal level in FBiH and one in RS.

Practically, the main decision makers are the Ministry of Education in RS, the Department for Education in BD, and 10 cantonal ministries in FBiH. The state-wide institutions, the Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH (sector for education)<sup>7</sup> and the Agency for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education in addition to the Ministry of Education of FBiH have only a coordinating role. For instance, in the case of the breach of the law the Ministry cannot take any legal action. The real decision-making power lies with the 12 education ministries.

Figure 3: Institutional setup of BiH



Another general point to be born in mind is that all administrative units at entity and canton and levels have insufficient capacity and weak governance structures, since just one or two canton-dependent employees are responsible for the administration of education, including VET (Corradini et. al., 2012).

The education system consists of fairly independent units with little coordination as defined by the complex constitutional set-up and multiple layers of government. It requires a degree of coordination that is not currently in place. At the moment, decentralised government structures having been coordinated to a certain degree by the Conference of Education Ministers, who are supposed to meet twice a year, although this is not sufficient.

The legal framework of the VET system at the county-wide level is determined by:

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<sup>7</sup> In terms of the number of employees the Sector is small, consisting of just 12 employees.

- Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in BiH (Official Gazette of BiH, number 18/2003);
- Framework Law on Secondary Vocational Education and Training (adopted in August 2008),
- Law on the Agency for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education of BiH<sup>8</sup> (Official Gazette of BiH, number 88/2007)

According to the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in BiH, schools are permitted to design and carry out activities in accordance with the needs of the local market. Schools are also allowed to associate and merge to realise common interests. In addition, they may conduct commercial activities, particularly if related to vocational training, and use revenues in accordance with regulations.

The Framework Law on Secondary Vocational Education and Training was transposed into the legal system of RS but not by all cantons in FBiH, where the VET systems are usually regulated by the Law on Secondary Education, which is supposed to be in line with the Framework Law on VET.

The Agency for Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education started operating on January 1, 2009. In addition to the headquarters of the Agency in Mostar there are two field offices, in Banja Luka and in Sarajevo. The Agency operates as an association of the units, one of them being in Banja Luka dealing with Secondary Vocational Education and Training.

VET accounts for 75 % of enrolment in upper secondary education, where it is offered in two forms (World Bank, 2009; Corradini et al., 2012):

- Through three-year vocational profiles leading to specific profession including crafts, and employment, although students are allowed to continue their studies to the next educational level by passing additional exams
- Through four-year technical profiles, leading to employment, enrolment in non-university post-secondary vocational education or to higher education,

The scope of VET is mainly limited to initial VET, precisely to secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary VET.

In the Federation of BiH the government has only weak capacity to coordinate policy issues with its cantons even in those areas of shared and joint responsibility envisaged under the constitution (Corradini et al., 2012).

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<sup>8</sup> The Agency for Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education started operating on January 1, 2009.

### 1.3 The policy process and the policy debate

The establishment of VET Councils as advisory bodies is stated in the Framework Law on VET as a crucial step in enabling labour market stakeholders to influence VET policy.

The Conference of Education Ministers advocated the establishment of VETAC but the VETAC at the county-wide level has not been established and no efforts have been made to do so. It is not clear how to establish the VETAC: just one of them or 13 of them for each family of occupations. Nevertheless, the establishment of VET Advisory Councils should be promoted.

A good cooperation with private employers is a prerequisite for the development of new occupational profiles and fitting curriculum design to the needs of labour markets.

However, in order to have VET schools more interested in collaboration with entrepreneurs, the issue of sub-account should be clarified. According to some views, schools have limited interest in commercial activities because of the centralised financial system. More precisely, central collection of income generated by schools, in accordance with the way the treasury operates, is a complex administrative process that provides no opportunities for financial incentives and upgrading of equipment<sup>9</sup>. Under the current rules, schools must obtain approval from the pedagogical institutes and education ministries for each activity they wish to undertake<sup>10</sup> (Corradini et al., 2012).

One of the reasons why VETACs are not established is the slow process of harmonisation of entity, canton and Brcko District laws with the Framework Law on VET. The Law was adopted in August 2008 and all administrative units (entities, cantons and Brcko District) have been under an obligation to harmonise existing

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<sup>9</sup> An example of the negative impact of the treasury system can be seen with the agricultural school that made EUR 156,000 from income-generating activities only to see the entire amount blocked within the system where they were unable to access it (Corradini et al., 2012).

<sup>10</sup> According to Mr. Hajrudin Hadžimehanović, Assistant Minister of Federation of BiH, the school could turn to the Ministry with its request and the issue of sub-account could be resolved. In other words, the problem of sub-account could be handled without difficulties. However, Mr. Perkan Pervan, a principal of Hotel and Tourism School in Mostar, which is famous for having its students employed even before certificates are issued to them, has also complained about this sub-account. Mr. Miljenko Miloš, Principal of Electro-Technical School in Mostar, complains about the allocation of revenues: 60 % goes to the Cantonal Budget and 40 % to the School. According to Corradini et al., (2012), the funds obtained through income-generating activities are treated in Herzegovina-Neretva Canton are allocated at this way: 35% of funds obtained through income-generating activities are deposited in the central budget while the remaining 65% are used to pay teachers and taxes leaving very little if anything for investment in school infrastructure or equipment.

laws in accordance with the recommendations of the Framework Law within six months of its adoption in August 2008.

The key features of the Framework Law on VET include:

- A new enhanced role for social partners and a focus on the needs and demands of the economy
- A central role for vocational schools with increased autonomy in response to local economic needs and possibilities of mergers with other schools to form communities whilst retaining their autonomous legal status
- Diversification of training offer for new target groups, including adults, through the organisation of short education and training courses at any level and to meet any requirement as a tool for promoting income-generation activities for the schools

However, by the end of 2012 only 50% of administrative units have come into line with the Framework Law on VET (see Table 2).

Table 2: Administrative units which harmonised their laws with the Framework Law on VET

<b>Administrative unit</b>	<b>Law</b>	<b>Date</b>
• Brčko District	the Law on Secondary Education	
• Republika Srpska	the Law on Secondary Education	
○ Una-Sana canton	the Law on Secondary Education	June 2012
○ Tuzla Canton	the Law on Secondary Education	December 2011
○ Herzegovina-Neretva Canton	the Law on Secondary Education	Not yet
○ Zenica-Doboj Canton	the Law on Secondary Education	Not yet
○ Sarajevo Canton	the Law on Secondary Education	

The very debatable issue is whether the secondary school dropout rates are high or not. According to research studies conducted by some international organisations (UNDP, ETF) dropping out are high and unacceptable. On the contrary, for the BiH

dignitaries, dropouts of 1.1% in Republika Srpska and 2% in the Sarajevo Canton are not high and worrisome<sup>11</sup>.

According to a UNDP research study dropouts in secondary education are closely linked to:

- the financial standing of the family
- distance from the school
- lack of interest in continuing education and
- conflict with the law.

The most frequent reason for dropping out of secondary school is conflict with the law, followed by a lack of interest in education and the poor financial standing of the family.

One of the signs of this problem is truancy and a large number of absences. In the majority of cases truancy is a consequence of deep and long lasting frustrations. Within contemporary educational and psychological literature truancy or absence from school is classified as a behavioural disorder.

Statistics show that truancy or school absence in the EU countries occurs amongst 10-20% of the school population.

In BiH there are no statistics on truancy, even though experience has shown that this problem is present in BiH. This is related to the issue of poor statistics in general in BiH and to the poor VET statistics in particular. To make things worse, the last household surveys, which could reveal the picture of poverty and related issues, were conducted in the period 2001-2004.

## **Methodological discussion**

### **Choice of schools**

Secondary Electro-Technical school Sarajevo is located in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

There are 675 (62 girls and 612 boys) students and 52-3 teachers. The student teacher ratio is 12.9.

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<sup>11</sup> For details see: ZAPISNIK S ETF konferencije održane u hotelu „Bosna“, u Banja Luci, 26. aprila 2012. na temu: reforma nastavnih planova i programa u srednjem stručnom obrazovanju u BiH: pregled napretka u okviru Torino procesa.

It is the first electro-technical school in BiH, providing the four-year education only. The School teaches for five professions:

1. electro-technician for computer techniques and automatisation
2. electro-technician for electronics
3. technician for computing and informatics
4. telecommunications technician
5. Radio and TV technician.

The practice for students is organised at the school (in 11 equipped laboratories) and outside (various TV stations, a thermo plant, an electrical company, and an international university)

The Secondary Electro-technical School Ruđer Bošković is located in Mostar, industrially declining city (famous for aircraft, aluminium etc. industries before the war of 1992-1995).

There are 410 (20 girls and 390 boys) students and 28 teachers. The student teacher ratio is 14.6.

The school provide the four-year education only.

There were problems with selecting a school in Mostar. Firstly, the Hotel and Tourism School was nominated, then tried to replace with the High Nurse School, all with the close cooperation with the Agency with Pre-Elementary, Elementary and Secondary Education. Finally, upon a proposal given by the Agency, Secondary Electro-Technical School was selected.

The Secondary School Centre Aleksa Šantić is located in Nevesinje, a small mountainous town, with the largest unemployment rate in BiH. The unemployment rate in 2006 was 48.1 % and 57.5 % in 2010.

The School is the only secondary school in the town.

There are 591 (303 girls and 288 boys) students and 45 teachers. The student teacher ratio is 13.1.

Table 1: Local Schools, BiH

Name		Address	Director	Phone	Email
local language	English				
Srednja elektrotehnička škola	Secondary Electro-Technical school Sarajevo	Safeta Zajke 2, 71000 Sarajevo	Mr. Fahrudin Alihodžić	387 033 651 108	<a href="mailto:msets@bih.net.ba">msets@bih.net.ba</a>

Elektrotehnička škola Ruđera Boskovića Mostar	Secondary Electro-Technical School Ruđer Bošković Mostar	Kralja Tomislava 2, 88000 Mostar	Mr. Miljenko Miloš	Tel / fax: 036/31 8-525	<a href="mailto:elektro-skola@tel.net.ba">elektro-skola@tel.net.ba</a>
Srednjoškolski centar Aleksa Šantić Nevesinje	Secondary School Centre Aleksa Šantić Nevesinje	Petra Samardžića bb, 88280 Nevesinje	Mr. Vukan Bratić	387 059 601 474	<a href="mailto:ssrs81ne@teol.net">ssrs81ne@teol.net</a>

BiH suffers from mass and growing unemployment, particularly in rural areas such as Nevesinje. The rates shown in Table 2 are administrative. The get real ones it is necessary to decrease the administrative rates by 20 percentage points on average.

Table 2: Unemployment rate in

	Unemployed	Employed	Unemployment rate
<b>Nevesinje, 2010</b>	2,401	1,773	57.5
<b>Mostar, 2012</b>	15,349	28,318	48.3
<b>Sarajevo, 2011</b>	41,537	98,144	29.9

Source: BiH statistical agencies

### **Formation of advisory boards at national and local level and problems encountered**

According to the article 5 of the Framework Law on Secondary Vocational Education and Training (adopted in August 2008) tripartite and advisory bodies, consisting of representatives of employers, trade unions and government, are to be established at the level of the entity, cantonal and Brčko district. The meetings of these bodies are to be held at least once a year and be coordinated by Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH.

However, four years passed now and these bodies have not been established. Even worse, there are no task forces or action plans dealing with this issue at all. It is not even clear how to organise them. Members of the National Advisory Board are interesting in sharing experience with other countries' focus group in practice of establishing these VET councils.

However, thanks to personal relations a focus group at the national level was established. The members of the group are:

1. Lejla Divović, Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH
2. Marina Duka, Directorate for Economic Planning (DEP)
3. Dr. Asim Ibrahimagić, Agency for Labour and Employment, Assistant Director
4. Kenan Rešo, Federal Employment Bureau, Director
5. Alihodžić Fahrudin, Secondary Electro-technical school Sarajevo
6. Miljenko Miloš, Secondary Electro-technical Scholl Ruđer Bošković Mostar
7. Vukan Bratić, Secondary School Centre Aleksa Šantić Nevesinje
8. Mirela Ibrahimović, UNDP (former Head of Social Department of DEP)
9. Dr. Lejla Kafedžić, expert
10. Vjekoslav Domljan, researcher

Schools are not very enthusiastic about establishing local focus groups as they do not have influence whilst external bodies (companies) are not interested in taking part. The key reason why is the low level of social capital and the lack of pro-active dealing on the part of schools.

Nevertheless, it seems that Director of Secondary Electro-Technical School Sarajevo will manage, thanks to strong personal relations and wiliness to contribute to this and similar projects, to establish a focus group. To illustrate, on 9 November, 2012 Director rented the car at this own expense (the costs will hopefully reimbursed in the three months time, the usual time lag needed to the financial authorities to transfer money for covering schools' material costs), took four students with their models, and drove them to the exhibition in Šibenik (Croatia).

To make things simpler, the local advisory group will be consisted of school teachers and students. They will be established by school directors around November, 20.

### **Your understanding of the methodology of participatory action research as they intend to apply it in their context**

At the national level the focus group, serving as a research advisory group at the same time, would be established.

Some useful inputs could be expected as the members of the Focus group are very familiar and knowledgeable about social exclusion. However, these inputs are to be provided in the broader context of social inclusion as the specific link between VET and social inclusion is not researched in BiH and there are no researchers specialised in that specific field.

The list of questions sent to national researcher was circulated in advance to have members of the group better prepared for the first meeting scheduled for November, 9.

At the first meeting of the Focus group decided to organise a web site to exchange mutual views. The web will be conducted by Ms Mirela Ibrahimović of UNDP. The access to the web site will have not only the members of the group but other experts as well.

### **Expected problems that may be encountered during the fieldwork with the schools and local communities and how you will deal with them**

No serious problems are expected in dealing with the Secondary Electro-Technical School Sarajevo, but problems are expected with the two other schools, particularly with the Nevesinje based school.

Firstly, they need an approval from the respective ministry for taking part in the Project. The letters from the ETF sent to respective ministries were forwarded to them to assure them that they can collaborate. In addition, the air tickets for the Vienna conference scheduled for 2-4 December, 2012 were received by them.

In addition, a second letter to respective ministries will be sent by ETF specifically asking ministries to inform officially schools about the Project and explicitly saying that schools are allowed to take part in the Project.

The schools and other institutions are not keen to cooperate with each other. For instance, Director of the Electro-technical School in Mostar sent pupils for practice to the public company Mail Service but the company refused to admit them. These situations could be resolved only by good personal relations.

### **Analysis and discussion of statistical indicators gathered at national level**

In interviews the issue of dropouts was raised. The unison opinion is that the dropout rate is not high. The official data about this issue have been collected for the last three years but are not publicly distributed. They can be given upon personal request that we are going to submit.

The national focus group also maintain that rate is not higher than 3 %.

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## CROATIA

### **Part A.**

#### **Introduction**

The institutional framework of the educational system in Croatia has undergone substantial changes since the mid-2000s. In vocational education this has included a new Law on Vocational Education (2009) and a Law on Primary and Secondary Education (2008), the introduction of formal pedagogical standards (2008) and the National Framework curriculum (2011), adoption of the Bruges Communiqué (2010) and a Strategy for the Development of Vocational Education 2008-2013. At the institutional level, several changes have emerged: the formation of an autonomous Agency for Vocational Education and Training (2005), the rolling out of the apprenticeship system for craft programmes (circa 2004), as well as the inception of external and internal evaluation processes and information infrastructure (VETIS, E-matica). However, the basic stratified three-track system of general (gimnazija), technical (4-year) and purely vocational (3-year craft, trade and industrial) upper secondary education has persisted so far, with only the most recently introduced changes potentially increasing vertical mobility.

So far, it is well established that the relative labour market position of youth in Croatia is poor (ASOO, 2011; Crnković-Pozaić, 2009; Matković, 2009a, 2010a, 2011), and that insertion into the labour market upon graduation is rather slow in European terms, in particular during the economic crisis (Herceg, 2010). While graduates from purely vocational three-year upper secondary education have some advantage over early school leavers and better job entry dynamics than graduates of general or technical upper secondary education, it is tertiary education graduates who have by far most favourable labour market outcomes.

However, there is little debate or knowledge about social cohesion and inclusion issues as they emerge from the current setup of the vocational secondary education. This mapping effort is expected to throw some light on those issues as they are laid out within the normative framework and through the data at hand, but also to provide a deeper understanding from the perceptions of national and local stakeholders.

#### **1. Institutional framework and the policy process at national level for VET, and for social inclusion:**

##### **1.1 Situation analysis at national level**

Vocational education is most often framed within the "skills mismatch" framework (e.g. JAP, Strategy for Development of Vocational education 2008-2013), the need for relevant competences, programmes, and involvement of employers. While there is some high-level involvement of employers in recently established Sectoral Councils and a long-standing involvement of Chamber of Crafts in craft education, few initiative or solutions have emerged

from this venue, while sectoral profiles, LFS or PES data do not indicate any excessive difference in employability or mismatch among graduates from various fields (ASOO, 2011, Matković, forthcoming).

On the other hand, priorities in the field of social inclusion (JIM), education sector strategy (*verify this*) and general public focus were aimed at early school leavers (with initiatives such as mandatory upper secondary education). The share of early school leavers in each cohort, measured both by LFS and aggregated administrative data is very low (LFS estimates hover about 5%), and is concentrated in vocational education, in particular in three-year courses where about one sixth of each cohort do not complete the program they enrolled in.

Social inclusion efforts in education are either aimed at integration of special needs students (whose numbers remain steady throughout the years) or Roma (who are starting to reach upper secondary education in greater numbers, mostly via short vocational courses).

However, to the extent of our knowledge, no effort has been made at quantification or articulation of broader issues with respect to social inclusion in vocational education, while no social cohesion indicators in general have been adopted yet at the national level. This is why we are about to start with low-level mining of regulations and expert positions in order to throw some light on the broader issues of social inclusion and cohesion.

## **1.2 The institutional framework for vocational education at national level covering also the degree of decentralisation**

The vocational education content in secondary education lies within the auspices of the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education, whereas Education and Teacher Training Agency watches over the general education segment. In particular, the Croatian Chamber of Crafts is heavily involved with craft programmes, which make up the majority of three-year "pure" vocational education, both with respect to curriculum, apprenticeships and practical exam evaluations.

However, unlike the national final matriculation exam in general secondary education ("državna matura"), so far there is no standardized system for evaluation of vocational education outcomes at the national level (although the idea is floated at times).

Vocational education is divided in thirteen broad educational sectors (and then to thirty vocational fields), each having a sectoral council. Most sectors include both technical and vocational courses, with large total number of programmes but only a few dozens that are attended by more than a handful of students.

While the curriculum is set up at the national level, the schools are run and managed by school boards. Three members of the board are elected from the

ranks of teachers (one through the works council), one by parents and three by the founder (County). Since 2001 the headmaster has been elected by the board. The wage bill is paid from the state budget, but running and investment expenses are financed from the County budget. The importance of the County educational department arises from that perspective, as well as from being the primary source of scholarships for pupils. Schools themselves have some leeway to adjust the teaching plan and program as well as adherence to pedagogical standards in line with the resources available to the school, as well as freedom in the choice of teaching approach and literature along the lines of the study plan. As well, it is not uncommon for schools to procure equipment through donations and collaborative projects.

### **1.3 The policy process and the policy debate at national level**

As the interview process has not started yet, what follows is but an arbitrary and broad mapping of developments in the public and policy sphere, which might relate to vocational education and social inclusion.

The focus on normative instatement of obligatory upper secondary education had lapsed, as had the focus on early school leavers (in part due to rather low incidence), although the later are part of the Joint Memorandum on Social Inclusion of the Republic of Croatia (JIM). While youth unemployment is mounting, the NEETs issue had not come to fore yet, and most public attention and sensitivity is focused on (declining) employment opportunities for the tertiary educated.

The Joint Assessment of the Employment Policy Priorities of the Republic of Croatia (JAP) prioritizes the skills mismatch issue (focusing on tertiary education) and work experience focus (the later recently being offered to persons with tertiary and craft education as one to three years internships with sub-minimal stipend).

There were several employer-oriented labour market surveys, carried out by the Chamber of Commerce, the Public Employment Service and through various EU programmes (lately IPA component IV) which attempted to assess the vocational profiles or skill mix needs, in particular related to vocational education, but with no conclusive insights or impact on the setup of vocational education. The Croatian Qualification Framework is nearing completion, but so far there is not much concrete insight whether or how it might affect education system or labour market integration, as it is mostly led and drafted by education system insiders with little involvement from social partners or other areas of government (ETF, 2010).

Trade unions do not play a large role in the private sector (which is the almost exclusive destination for vocationally educated youth) and their actions do not focus on youth (or even benefit youth) apart at the rhetorical level.

As for the affordability of vocational education, free textbooks and transport for all pupils (disproportionately helping vocational school students who are mostly from less privileged background) were revoked when the crisis hit the

budget, but the pupil transport subsidies were reinstated recently (however, with some issues as for travel expenses for place of apprenticeship).

On the active citizenship side, the recent civic education initiatives (such as experimental civic education programmes), as well as key and civic competences in the framework curriculum are more represented in general secondary education track than among the vocational education, in particular among the three-year apprenticeship-based programmes.

The Bruges communiqué and review (not consulted in detail yet) might provide a good benchmark for the direction of the policy process and debate.

## **Part B.**

### **Please *also* provide a careful description of the following methodological issues**

#### **1. Choice of schools**

The final choice of schools did deviate from what was originally conceived, as Industrijsko - Obrtnička škola, Šibenik declined to cooperate and a new round of negotiations had to be undertaken. The choice was constrained to seven schools recommended by research network experts selected by the criterion of good social inclusion practices, though, we have striven to select different schools in different environments.

The first school selected is "Mješovita industrijsko - obrtnička škola Karlovac" (Domobranska 2, 47000 Karlovac), situated in the crossroad city of Karlovac, a moderately large city (56,000) half an hour's drive south from the capital (Zagreb). It is a centre of a county (population 131,000) that was heavily war-torn and partially occupied in 1990s. The county has retained an above-average concentration of metalworking and food manufacturing, but currently stands only at 75% of national GDP/Capita, and 4.8% of population receives social assistance (double the national level) and plagued with high unemployment. The chosen school is one out of eight upper secondary schools in Karlovac (one general and seven vocational), with 440 pupils in total, attending courses from vocational sectors of Construction, Food Production and Personal Services. While mainly offering three-year vocational courses (many apprenticeship-based), there are two four-year technical programmes, as well as three adjusted programmes for special needs pupils. The school has a student cooperative. There is a rather lively youth civic scene in the town as well as an elaborated city program for youth that touches upon social inclusion issues; however, the majority of pupils travel from other parts of county outside Karlovac, so they might not benefit to full extent from that. We have been granted trust and established full cooperation with this school and city department for youth and social policy.

The second is Gospodarska Škola Čakovec (Vladimira Nazora 38, 40000

Čakovec) situated in a medium sized town (27,000) in the Border county of Međimurje (117,000), spared from war, and developed in light industry (meat and food production but as well struggling textile and clothing facilities) and agricultural production, being moderate both in terms of unemployment and GDP (at 83% of national level). There is a substantial Roma minority in the County (thus a high prevalence of welfare assistance in the county – at 4.9% of population), several being pupils of the chosen school. Gospodarska škola Čakovec is a rather prestigious vocational school with about 660 pupils, mostly girls, and offers twelve regular courses in the fields of agriculture and food production, transport, textile and leather, and personal services (two of them four-year technical courses), as well as two adjusted programmes for pupils with special needs (which usually start empty, but are filled over time by students not managing to cope with regular programmes). The school is well equipped, thanks to several international projects, and located in recently constructed premises. The school has a student cooperative. Although reluctant with respect to participation, largely due to the late arrival of a support letter from the Ministry, the Headmaster summoned for our initial meeting the head of the educational department and the local chamber of crafts, leading to an impromptu local advisory board meeting at the time, informing us of some issues and providing a framework for cooperation later on. The civic youth scene is rather strong and several school pupils participate.

The final school chosen is Graditeljska škola za industriju i obrt, Rijeka (Podhumskih žrtava 4, 51 000 Rijeka). It is situated on the northern Adriatic coast, in the third largest city in the country (129,000) situated in a rather populous County (303,000) standing at 122% of national average in tourism (though not Rijeka itself) and with a low unemployment level (in relative terms). The school is rather small (4 classes per year) runs only three-year vocational programmes in fields of agriculture, construction and personal services, and operates in the same space but on an opposite shift with a school running technical programmes. The tracking/selectivity issues and challenges might be more pronounced in a large and relatively affluent city as Rijeka with broader choice of general and technical programmes. At this time we've just made arrangement with the headmaster, and are about to engage in assembly of local advisory board and gathering in-depth context.

## **2. Formation of advisory boards at national and local level**

Besides research team members, the core of national research advisory board comprised of ETF Social inclusion network members who were involved in the creation of school lists and previous events, reinforced by two representatives of the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education, as well as Boris Jokić and Zrinka Ristić Dedić from the Education Research Institute (CIRO) who were extensively involved with education inequality issues in their past research.

National research advisory board members:

- Jure Biloglav, Agencija za strukovno obrazovanje i obrazovanje odraslih

- Nikola Buković, Mreža mladih Hrvatske\*\*
  - Karin Doolan, Sveučilište u Zadru\*\*
  - Darko Tot, Agencija za odgoj i obrazovanje\*
  - Nada Jakir, Ministarstvo znanosti, obrazovanja i sporta\*
  - Boris Jokić, Centar za istraživanje i razvoj obrazovanja
  - Maja Jukić\*
  - Darko Kobetić, Učilište za obrazovanje odraslih IDEM\*
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  - Natalija Lukić\*\*
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At the first meeting held it was a challenge to broaden the social inclusion agenda beyond inclusion of groups with disability and minorities, yet narrow it down from broad discourse of development and civic role of education.

Over the course of the meeting, references to several additional documents and reports potentially relevant for social inclusion emerged, while the list of potential stakeholders for national-level interviews was extended (to 15, more than is manageable with allocated resources), but there was not much discussion with respect to national-level interviews. The board looked favourably upon group interviews in some institutions where there are several experts covering different facets of inclusion. As well, a focus on selection to and outcomes of programmes for "assisting vocational occupations" (attended by special needs pupils but some with behavioural problems as well) was suggested. The board recommended vocational schools in Rijeka and Slavonski brod as stand-ins for Šibenik, where we have failed to establish cooperation.

As for the local advisory boards, we had in mind the school as a pivotal organization, and heeded suggestions of headmasters in this respect, as no substantive suggestions emerged from the national advisory board. The same pattern seems to be emerging in all three cases, involving a representative of the county department for education, a representative of the Chamber of Crafts, and a person responsible for social affairs in the city where the school is located.

An impromptu meeting with some stakeholders in Čakovec has revealed substantive articulation with respect to social inclusion issues that ought to be explored: Why and how are pupils making decisions on vocational education; do self-employed send their children to train for the crafts they are working in (so they can take over) or into general secondary education; What might be done in order to attract a broader range of pupils to enrol in vocational education; How to facilitate civic participation from vocational education pupils; hierarchy between programmes and emerging dynamics; what are employers' criteria and practice with respect to recruiting vocational program

graduates and the challenges of apprenticeship; what happens with vocational education graduates afterwards; where do Roma pupils go for an apprenticeship, what is the level of social integration among this group, and what does their career after graduation look like.

### **3. Methodology of participatory action research**

We conceive the participatory research setup as a two-way process. For one, getting stakeholder input into the research design; in particular from the national and local research advisory boards. This might be challenging due to common research design framework, time and budgetary constraints, and need to keep research tight and focused, but so far seems manageable. Second, handing out the output that will be "owned" by the stakeholders, being provided data and understanding that they can use in their further efforts. On more concrete level, this means focusing the inclusion and cohesion issues that board members find important and delivering on those issues, taking into account their position in discussion of findings during the final board meeting, as well as bridging understandings from the national and local level actors. So far it seems that such a process is working better at the local level than with the national stakeholders who are rather departmentalized and set in the current institutional agenda.

### **4. Expected problems that may be encountered during the fieldwork with the schools and local communities**

The first and foremost problem is one of approach and credibility (e.g. we did not have a project letter template). While with respect to the national board there were no problems, the start at the local level was rather rough here, as it took some time to get a letter of support from the ministry, with several school communities being reluctant and one of them rejecting cooperation. Though, once the contact is established, chains of recommendations should make reaching other interviewees and local board members easier.

There is some risk that we won't be able to reach some stakeholders at the national level, but the list of relevant institutions is long enough, and we can reach information saturation even with a few such "holes". The same applies for the local level, with too many candidates for interview.

We have much discussed the issues of confidentiality and anonymity, framing the questions so to be inoffensive and "safe" for interviewees, whilst rich in information – and will provide a draft of report to interviewees so they can amend it. The same will apply on the local level – although the identity of many contacts will be known to local board members (or national institutions that recommended them). This should not be a major issue when there is no hierarchy of positions involved, but a lot of tact will be needed in both framing the questions, moderating discussions and compiling the data. The positive selection of school communities will minimize some of such risks.

At this time we are somewhat concerned with the "project weariness" on the part of the schools (as the selected schools participate in several and seldom

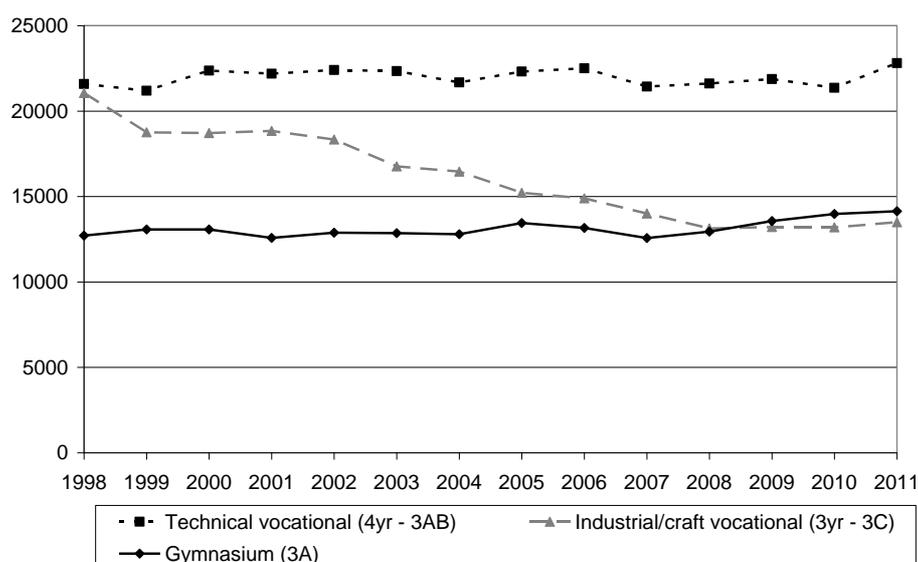
see some payoff).

There is a risk of getting too abstract on inclusion and cohesion, so that researchers get generic answers or silence as an answer, but it is important to introduce and contextualize those concepts, so that respondents leave interviews with enhanced understanding of those. On the other side, another unwanted outcome would be getting into "turf wars" between actors, where responsibilities are being glossed over (and tensions rise).

## 5. Analysis and discussion of statistical indicators gathered at national level

Apart from the number and distribution of pupils, there is not much in the officially published statistics that might indicate or differentiate the position of vocational courses, pupils and graduates, although the data collected (through e-matica and other reports) could allow for a much greater insight into issues of social selectivity, inclusion and cohesion with respect to vocational education in Croatia. Here follows an overview of findings so far.

### Breadth of VET participation



Source: Croatian Bureau of Statistics

For the past four years, about 13,000 youth (26-27% of each cohort) enters upper secondary education via Industrial/craft, three-year vocational programmes, with a marked decline over the 1998-2008 period (when the cohort size was declining dramatically). Intake to four-year school-based technical courses holds steady, while the number of placements in gymnasiums is increasing slowly. The hard limit is set up by cohort size (14 yr old), which declined from 58 to 46 thousand between 1998 and 2008, recovered to 49 thousand by 2011, but is certain to decline rapidly to 41 thousand by 2015. There is no individual level register-based tracking, but from aggregated data, it seems that non-continuation to upper secondary education is extremely rare.

There is a strong gender imbalance in this sector as a whole, and as recently as 2010, only 35% of graduates from those schools were female, down from 37-38% of pupils in 1998-2005 period (ASO, 2006), however, there is a strong sectoral segregation, with girls making up less than five percent of pupils in substantive sectors of mechanical engineering, electrotechnics, construction and transport, but making 70+% in textiles, personal services, agriculture and food production.

### **Social differentiation**

There are no published statistics on social composition of upper secondary education students (although one could be established by using e-matica data), but there were few efforts to estimate those using large national level datasets, bearing consistent results.

By using Labour Force Survey data for 1996-2006, Matković (2009b) has identified that three-year vocational education is the most common destination for about a third of each cohort whose parents have not achieved upper secondary education (60% of children whose mothers have not completed compulsory education and 48% of children whose mothers have not completed upper secondary), while social reproduction is rather common among children of mothers with vocational upper secondary education (a third of them attend short vocational education). The incidence of general upper secondary education is very low among this half of the population. On the other hand, only 18% of children whose mothers have technical upper secondary and a mere 2% of children from university-educated mothers enter this track. A survey on educational and employment careers of Croatian youth from 2008 gave similar findings (Matković, 2011).

### **Continuation towards tertiary education**

The same survey identified that about 4% of three-year vocational education graduates continued to professional tertiary education (Matković, 2009a), and those findings were mirrored by the Eurostudent 2011 findings (Cvitan, Doolan, Farnell, & Matković, 2011), as 12% of students in professional tertiary courses have emerged from such a route.

Putting those findings in context, the transition to tertiary education is far more common from the four-year technical schools (which qualify for access to any tertiary education), as the share of this population immediately entering tertiary education was estimated at 65% in 2010 (from 47% to 81%, depending on the field), a level reached already in 2004 (ASO, 2006; ASOO, 2011). Similar numbers were estimated from aggregated statistical reports and from the e-matica register and "državna matura" microdata (Jokić and Ristić-Dedić, 2012, unpublished report). This implies that "technical vocational education" is in reality oriented towards tertiary education, rather infrequently leading to the labour market.

### **Early school leavers**

Not achieving upper secondary education has become a rare event in Croatia, as LFS data persistently identifies only about 5% of persons of the age 20 to 24 as not having completed at least upper secondary education. Tracking of aggregated cohort numbers through the upper secondary education provides consistent findings; the completion rate has been at about 90-92% throughout the past decade (and many pupils younger than 20 gained their credentials via "adult education" courses). However, application of this data indicates a substantive difference between general upper secondary education (dropout 4-5%), technical education (dropout 7-9%) and three-year vocational courses (dropout 13-17%). Analysis of a decade of LFS data indicates that while the number of dropouts is declining and the risk of such an outcome for the majority of the population is miniscule, such outcomes most often befall individuals with the most disadvantaged income and educational background (Matković, 2010b)

### **Resources available and teacher-student ratio**

There are no reliable estimates in the funding segment, as upper secondary education expenses are expressed only at the aggregated level, but teacher engagement has as of recently been portrayed in full-time equivalent in statistical reports, making comparisons possible.

At the end of school year 2010-2011, in public upper secondary schools there were 4,070 FTE teachers in three-year craft and industrial vocational schools (56% of them female) teaching 37,881 students – leading to a rather favourable ratio of 9.3 pupils per teacher (and rather small class sizes as well). In four-year technical secondary schools there were 80,005 students and 7,027 teachers (66% female), that is 11.3 pupils per teacher. The general secondary education was the most crowded (and competed for), as 47,409 pupils were taught by 3,482 teachers (74% of them female), leading to ratio 13.6 pupils per full-time teacher. This is likely the result of years of low demand and unfulfilled entry quotas (about a fifth of placements), leading to class sizes close to lower margin of pedagogical standards.

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## ISRAEL

### **Part A.**

#### **Introduction**

Israel is a very diverse nation with many marginal minority groups, both Jews and non-Jews. Regarding the former, the society remains somewhat divided until the present day along ethnic lines. Western Jews (Ashkenazim) have maintained higher levels of education and income than Eastern Jews (Mizrahim). Although such inequalities have improved, they continue to persist (Ayalon and Shavit 2004, Haberfeld 2009, Smooha 2002). This divide is also accentuated by the location of many Mizrahim in peripheral areas (development towns), which have lower socio-economic status and worse schools. Despite attainment inequalities, the difference in proportion of Mizrahim and Ashkenazim in technological vs. general educational programs is not statistically different (both groups totaled 34% in technical or vocational tracks in 2010, Goldstein 2012a).

Besides the traditional Mizrahi-Ashkenazi divide, Israel has witnessed several recent waves of immigration since the 1980s. Two of these waves are worth noting, that of the Ethiopians and Former Soviet Union. Regarding the former, there are currently 116,100 people of Ethiopian descent living in Israel, 77,400 of whom were born in Ethiopia (Ethiopian National Project Website). Most of these immigrants received little or no schooling in Ethiopia and are illiterate in their native language (Stavans et al. 2009). Their socio-economic status is at the bottom of Israeli Jewish ethnicities. Regarding the latter, between 1990 and 2001 805,200 immigrants arrived from the former Soviet Union, and more continued to arrive until the present. While these immigrants were often very highly educated, they struggled to adapt to the new language and culture (Golan-Cook and Olshtain 2011). Many schools cater to this population, including extra courses in Hebrew education in addition to the regular course curriculum.

Beyond the ethnic divide, divisions in Jewish Israeli society exist based on religiosity. MOE is divided into 3 types of schools: Governmental, Governmental-Religious, and Haredi (ultra-orthodox). Regarding the latter, Haredi students attend special rabbinical training schools that provide almost entirely religious education and do not follow many of the standard core courses found in government schools. These schools are divided by gender, known as a Yeshivot for boys and Ulpanot for girls. The relationship of such schools with MOE is very loose, and most of the statistics by MOE do not include these schools. Government-religious schools on the other hand offer a diverse range of standard courses with an added emphasis on religious

education. These schools do follow standard MOE core courses that most often provide the possibility of matriculation and are not necessarily substandard to regular government schools. However, such schools offer far less technological courses (5% of government-religious students were in vocational or technological tracks in 2010, Goldstein 2012a). Finally, the majority of Israeli students attend governmental schools. Since the early 1990s, the percentage of students in governmental and governmental-religious schools has been declining, while the percentage of students in Haredi schools has increased. Although differences in educational attainment were not observed between governmental and governmental-religious schools, Haredi schools are often criticized for not providing adequate training that will enable them to join the workforce.

Even more extreme than differences in attainment between subgroups of Jews are differences between Jews and Arabs in Israel. Overall Arab students start out with far less resources to succeed in school. They live on average in far poorer communities. Their parents have much lower levels of education. As a result, they have far less expectations and aspirations to succeed (Yair et al. 2003). Arab students most often attend separate Arabic language schools, and in total amount to 27% of all public school students. MOE also administers these schools, which has been a source of contention in the past (Goldstein 2012b). Within the Arab population subgroups exist with pars in educational and economic attainment. For example, an analysis we made of data on matriculation eligibility from the Ministry of Education for 2010 showed that among the diverse Arab subgroups, Bedouins were the lowest, followed by other Arabs, and Druze. Arab Christians, especially males, have the highest attainment, and Muslim females had higher attainment than males.

## **1. Institutional framework and the policy process at national level for VET, and for social inclusion:**

### **1.1 Situation analysis at national level**

Since the revamping of the Israeli Ministry of Education's system (hereinafter MOE) in the 1970s and 1980s towards a "technological" education track, vocational education has been reduced to a marginal program for a small minority of students who have seemingly fallen through the cracks of the general educational system. However, once vocational education was highly valued by the Jewish people and young Israeli state, and as a result of recent educational initiatives discussed in this report, it is planned that Israel will improve Vocational Education Training (VET) to levels consistent with other OECD countries.

ORT began the first Jewish vocational schools in Russia in 1880. ORT was the first vocational program in Israel. In 1949-50 ORT founded 19 schools in Israel. In the late 1950s ORT schools expanded as they were seen as a way to

reduce high school dropouts (Sharon 1987). In 1948-1949 20% of students studied in vocational schools (CBS 2012). The vocational system continued to rise in the 1950s, as there was a need to incorporate the vast number of Jewish immigrants from Middle Eastern countries (Mizrahim), who were often being settled in peripheral areas of the country. The vocational schools provided a solution to create suitable education for these immigrants. As such it was a tool for integration. However, it also accentuated the social divide.

In 1953 responsibility for the vocational schools was transferred to The Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Labour (hereinafter Tamat), primarily for financial reasons (Vergon and Natan 2008). In that year the Apprenticeship Law and the Youth Labour Law mandated training exercises that were permitted for students to participate in the work force as part of their education (Ashkanazi and Ballas 2010). The role of workforce training in schools where students would participate in apprenticeships was made obsolete from MOE schools. However, such work training continued for students in Tamat schools (and still continues to the present).

In 1961 administration of vocational schools returned to the responsibility of MOE. Tamat maintained control of only a small number of vocational schools. In the 1960s the British concept of multi-track schools, which combine vocational and academic education, was brought to Israel. In 1969 The Reform Law added junior high schools for grades 7 to 9. As a result, the age at which students started vocational school was increased from the 9th grade to the 10th grade. The law intended to reduce the division when students are separated into tracks. However, the separation became apparent and practiced already in junior high schools (Vergon and Natan 2007).

In the 1970s and 80s the "vocational system" was revamped to a "technological system". Attempts were made to include advanced students in the technological schools, so as to reduce the lower rank associated with them. The new technological education was intended for industrial development. Traditionally around the world vocational schools had sponsors, "private factories and industries trying to minimize training costs and increase profits" (Benavot 1983: 64). In Israel, likewise, there was a market demand for skilled professionals, and the schools were not producing qualified graduates. Technological vocational education (TVET) was viewed as a means to promote economic development and technological competition.

TVET was split into 4 tracks (Masmat: vocational education for matriculation, Masmar: regular vocational education towards technical and engineering diplomas, Masmam: practical vocational training towards government diplomas, and Guidance Direction: basic vocational training). Each track included numerous courses of study. These tracks were later canceled in the 1990s and 2000s. There was a rise in such VET until 1979-1980 when technological education reached its height of 53% of all high school students. However, since then, the number of students in technological education tracks has reduced drastically. The budget for technological education was cut by 23% between 2003 and 2007 (IZS website). The number of students in vocational-technological education consistently declined until 2009-2010

when it reached its lowest point since 1959-1960 of 32% of all students.

Since the Free Compulsory Education Law in 1979, public education is required for all children between the ages of 5 and 18. However, in practice a large number of students choose not to attend. In 2010 there were about 30,000 youth of school age who were not attending; the cost of education was approximately 25,000 shekels per year, and the incorporation of about 10,000 of these potential students would be approximately 250 million shekels (Vergon and Natan 2008). It was decided in 2010 that there was a need to integrate youth aged 14-15 (at the ninth grade level) to be integrated in vocational education if necessary, to ease matriculation opportunities for those with learning disabilities, and to develop diplomas for those with vocational training that would make them eligible for further studies. As a result, it is expected, and observed in data, a slight increase in vocational and technological education since 2010. Tamat schools have increased in number from 58 schools in 2007 to 69 schools in 2012 (Tamat website). In 2011-2012 34% of all students studied some sort of technological or vocational education, an increase of 2% in 2 years.

Besides the tracking of students into general, vocational, technological, and other types of education, the educational system is further divided along sectarian lines. 1,417 schools are Jewish, 247 are Arab, 43 are Bedouin, and 27 are Druze. Furthermore, 257 of these schools are categorized as special education. 860 are governmental, 302 are government-religious, and 572 are Haredi (ultra-orthodox). In 2010 of the 839 schools with 12th grade students not categorized as special education or Haredi, 265 had general students only, 143 had technological or vocational students only, and 432 had both (Ministry of Education Matriculation Data Set 2010). Israel's educational system also includes several semi-private schools, such as the branches of schools investigated in the current study: ORT and Amal. These schools offer VET but remain with close ties to MOE or Tamat.

The Israeli educational system is highly centralized with the completion of a high school matriculation examination known as the Bagrut, which enables most forms of post-secondary education. The mandatory high school subjects for governmental and governmental-religious schools are Bible, Maths, English, Literature, History, Hebrew, and Citizenship. Students will engage in differing amounts of credits, while students in VET often partake in less credits than general students. In order to pursue university study it is necessary for a student to obtain a Bagrut in all of the required courses. As a result, VET often ignores the possibility of post-secondary education and focuses on human resources development, preparing students for the transition directly into the labour market.

During the past decade a revolution of private colleges has flourished, which enabled many students from technological and vocational tracks to pursue post-secondary education. This decentralization of higher education appears to be having a trickle-down effect towards policies for vocational and technological secondary schools. However, the phenomenon is very recent and its effects remain to be seen. Many of these private colleges offer 1 and 2

year degrees in technical fields that suit employment, comparable to the Associates degree in the US. Occasionally, such programs are also offered within the secondary education system, such that students enter a secondary education program with a track for a college degree.

The over-reliance on Bagrut education has been a growing source of contention for many teachers, who feel that standardized curricula do not support the needs of teachers or students. Attempts to advance the status of technological schools are often equated with increasing the percentage of students who are eligible for matriculation degrees. However, in doing so, the role of VET as a specialized field of education is reduced. Goals to increase Israel's math and science scores are as well often equated with a recentralization of the system.

## **1.2 The institutional framework for vocational education at national level covering also the degree of decentralisation**

The Israeli public upper secondary education system is governed by two ministries. For the 2012-2013 school year the Ministry of Education (MOE) oversaw approximately 1,664 schools, and Tamat oversaw approximately 70 schools. MOE schools are not necessarily divided by educational track, but rather the schools may include students in technological, general, agricultural, and multi-track upper secondary education programs. 4,031 classes are vocational, 7,595 are general, and 43 are multi-track. All Tamat schools include vocational track students only. However, these schools are divided into 3 different types of schools:

- o. "Industrial schools which operates in conjunction with large industrial organizations and companies including the IDF and others. In this way a combination of theoretical study with on-hand practical training is achieved".
1. "Apprenticeship schools, with approximately 1,800 students. They operate together with small local factories in which the students work part-time."
2. "Work groups and courses for adolescents aged 15–17.5 who are not studying or employed elsewhere, offered in collaboration with large public institutions such as hospitals, the IDF and technical education and training networks." (Eisenber 2006)

Tamat offers two stages of VET: pre and post-army service. Both stages offer programs of study in a specific industry, such as mechanics, carpentry, and electrical engineering. Programs are also available for special needs students, such as students with physical and mental handicaps. Other focused educational programs specialize in educating immigrants, both those with and without prior high school education. Tamat also offers a number of home schooling options for the unemployed and those seeking to advance their prior

education for work promotion.

Policies for the administration of MOE and Tamat are coordinated almost entirely separately. MOE recently set up the Dovrat Commission and Pries Committee, whose goals were to reverse trends of lower achievement among Israeli students in general and vocational tracks respectively. Despite extensive research, a number of complications have impeded the progress of these committees with barriers from schools and teacher unions (Eisenberg 2006).

Besides The Pries Committee, other committees have been set up to administer policies for the advancement of technological and vocational education. For example, The Harari Commission set up The Tomorrow 98 Program in the 1990s with the hope of improving Israel's declining rank in science and mathematics scores on the PISA test and other issues such as brain drain. However, this program as well succeeded very little in implementing policy changes (Karmi 2004).

A number of external public and private institutions have formed advisory councils to help improve the state of VET in Israel, such as the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and the Manufacturers' Association of Israel (MAI). These councils were concerned about the lack of skilled young people who could fulfill needed positions in engineering and other relevant fields (Ashkanazi and Ballas 2010). As a result, MOE is attempting to increase quality students in its technological tracks, by making it easier for such students to attain matriculation certificates. Such programs often incorporate businesses in the school and seek to foster a future increase in hi-tech professionals.

A number of programs have sought to upgrade the status of minority students through VET. One such program that was established in 2006 is the Technicians for Matriculation Program (Tech-Mat), which seeks out high qualified students from primarily minority groups in peripheral areas, including non-Jews. "In the 9th grade, students are given extra lessons in mathematics, English, Hebrew and the sciences. They complete most of the matriculation examinations in the 10th and 11th grades, leaving them free to devote the 12th grade to technical studies." (Ashkanazi and Ballas 2010: 11).

Recent policy decisions of Tamat have focused on improving its apprenticeship program by creating greater coordination with local businesses. Social inclusion for Tamat schools has focused on reintegrating dropouts from other schools. As was conveyed in a meeting we had with Tamat administrators, the success of apprentice programs has realized students' realistic goals of "making money" and the importance of their education towards doing so.

### **1.3 The policy process and the policy debate at national level**

Due to high levels of unemployment and individuals dependent on welfare, a

number of attempts have been made to develop work opportunities and reduce reliance on government subsidies. Attempts have been made at the policy level to provide subsidies for businesses that provide apprenticeships and work opportunities. Both immigrants and vocational students are often on the recipient end of such subsidies.

Specific populations such as Haredim and recent immigrants are especially susceptible to dependency on government funding, which has become a major burden on the state. One of the attempts to reduce this burden has been the Mehalev Program, which was started in 2005 by Tamat. The program established employment centers specifically for those receiving government subsidies. The effectiveness of such programs has been called into question, even though subsidies offered to specific populations such as the Haredim is a major source of contention and public debate.

Israel has made amazing advancements in its relatively short history of becoming a technologically advanced nation. The country holds the largest number of start-ups outside of Silicon Valley in the US, and a vast amount of hi-tech companies either began in Israel or branches of such companies have been built in Israel (Senor and Singer 2011). A policy debate has ensued as to how to progress Israel's advanced technological studies in order to develop a workforce capable of meeting the needs of high-tech companies and maintaining the high levels of start-up development. At the same time, such industries suffer from a lack of qualified graduates from the Israeli public school system.

Besides the private industry, the Army also suffers from a lack of qualified graduates, who can take on high-level technical positions. The IDF has created a number of programs that incorporate technical degrees as part of mandatory service. Some of these programs, such as those for air-force pilots, begin already within the high school with special classes that are separated from the rest of the school. These programs often also extend the period of mandatory service, which currently stands at 3 years for men and 2 years for women. Such students may often remain enlisted in the army for a period of 5 years or longer but receive a technical diploma in the process.

The National Labour Union (Histadrut) has played a major role in employment for a large number of industries. In the past the Histadrut was extremely tied to the Labour government, and employed a large proportion of the public. Over time the importance of the Histadrut has waned, but it still has a large influence. The teachers' union also has a large amount of clout. While attempts have been made to increase the qualifications of teachers, especially for those capable and willing to teach in high schools, a number of backlashes in terms of general strikes and the failure of schools to comply with policy initiatives. Especially in the field of VET, Israeli schools struggle to recruit qualified teachers who would choose to work in the public education system where wages are often lower than in private industry.

## **Part B.**

### **Choice of schools**

As previously discussed, both MOE and Tamat operate their own separate systems for VET training. Both offices were contacted by our research team and were invited to take part in the research. However, only Tamat agreed to do so. This fact on the one hand limited our range of schools to choose from, but on the other hand allowed us to concentrate on schools that provide "pure" VET training rather than the TVET offered by MOE.

After our initial meeting together with Tamat officials, three schools were chosen for the case study (Ort Adivi, Amal Rahat, and the Yeshiva of Kfar Zetim). These schools were chosen specifically after consultations with Tamat, as they represent diverse examples of Israeli society. Furthermore, these schools were chosen because they represent stronger schools of the Tamat system, which as previously highlighted is composed of schools with students that have much lower achievement than national averages. Furthermore, the Tamat administrators were confident that the school administrators and staff would be open to participating with our study. By using these schools as case studies, we seek to learn from their success.

Ort Adivi is situated in Ashkelon, a medium size town known for its mixture of immigrants from different backgrounds (from the former Soviet Union, Ethiopia, and others). As Israel is an immigrant society, and FSU and Ethiopian immigrants are the two largest migrant populations of the past 20 years, this school is our representative sample of an immigrant education centre. Many of the students are indeed second generation migrants, but yet educational inequalities persist due to differences in social capital available. Inclusion of immigrants in Israeli society is a major challenge and goal for the educational system, and we seek to learn from this example about social mobility for recent immigrants.

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Amal Rahat is a VET school catering to the Bedouin population of Rahat - the largest Bedouin town in Israel. Rahat ranks very low in a range of socio-economic and health issues as explained in the CSB Report (2005). Rahat's fertility rate is 7.8 when the national average is 2.8, the infant mortality rate is 13.2 per 1000 births compared to 5.4 nationally. According to the report "The Face of The Israeli Society" (CBS 2009), approximately half of the Arab

population was forced to forgo food expenditures as a result of economic deprivation. The report also indicates that the chance of poverty for an Arab household consisting of two adults and three children is 79% compared to 42% for the overall population. This school was chosen to explore how VET functions in a community with extreme levels of poverty, and to be representative of an Arab population.

Principal: Mr. Mohammad El-Katni mohammadamal@walla.co.il Amal Rahat Address: Mail Box 5 Rahat 85357, Israel Phone number: +972-8-6222555 Fax number: +972-8-9919130	כתובת: ת.ד. 5 רהט, 85357
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The Yeshiva of Kfar Zetim is a unique Jewish religious institution, combining vocational training with religion studies. It offers a variety of vocational choices – construction, agriculture, carpentry and more. It is also a boarding school with a dormitory where students live. One of the main current issues in Israel is the inclusion of the Ultra-orthodox (Haredi) communities into the labour market, as highlighted by the Mehalev welfare-to-work program (OECD REPORT). The school presents a unique example of the realization of policy where VET meets religious education. The ways that the Yeshiva of Kfar Zetim manages to resolve the supposed conflict between fulfilling needs of the labour market and religious doctrine make it a desirable case study that will provide us insight into how these two worlds can mutually coexist.

Principal: Mr. David Bloch  
meshekez@gmail.com  
Address: Kfar Zetim  
Phone number: +972-4-6733083

## **Formation of advisory boards at national and local level**

The national advisory board consists of our research team (head researcher Prof. Gad Yair, PhD candidate Keith Goldstein, and BA student Nir Rotem) and three high-ranking representatives from Tamat:

- Dr. Ahhron Bernstein  
Head Administrator and Youth officer  
Ahhron.Bernstein@Moital.gov.il
- Mrs. Nurit Birger  
Vice Head Administrator and Youth officer  
Nurit.Birger@moital.gov.il

- Mr. Shmuel Pur  
Head Supervisor of Computer Training and Foreign Relations  
shmuel.pur@moital.gov.il

An initial meeting of the national advisory board was held on 24<sup>th</sup> of October 2012. In this meeting we discussed the following issues:

- The main objectives of the research
- The schools that would take part in the research
- The need to conduct interviews with policy makers at the national level and with key figures within each local community.
- A list of relevant policy makers and position holders that have professional ties with the Tamat will be composed. In-depth interviews will be conducted according to this list.
- We agreed that because of regulations, no interviews with students would be conducted. Anonymous questionnaires will be distributed to students in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade, which correspond with the standard entry and final grades of upper secondary education.

The local advisory boards have yet to be established, and this issue is on the agenda for our upcoming meeting with the Tamat representatives on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **Methodology of participatory action research**

Our research team seeks to make this research as dynamic as possible. We seek to establish a network of ideas, in which one idea leads to the next. The focus groups aim to bring to the surface the main relevant issues to be addressed in the research. Due to the fact that each case study represents a very different community, we aim to try and engage the local focus group as much as possible. Each community targeted in our study is very diverse: immigrant students, Arab students, and ultra-orthodox Jewish students. We will adapt the research questions to suit each community. Questions that are suitable towards one group may not be suitable for another. We plan to follow through with a plan of set questions, in accordance with the research questions set forth by the ETF Project, but we will remain open to the information that arises in the field. As such, this study follows in the tradition of a multi-site anthropology (Hannerz 2003).

## **Expected problems that may be encountered during the fieldwork with the schools and local communities**

Israel possesses a wide array of diverse social groups and minorities, and there is a great amount of segregation within the society, especially between

Jews and Arabs. Our research is limited to only three schools. As a result, this sample is obviously not sufficient to be representative of the entire country. Furthermore, VET and TVET are separate entities included in two distinct administrations. While the majority of vocational students are enrolled in TVET programs, our research is limited to the VET Programs of Tamat. The Tamat program is populated by some of the lowest achieving students in the system, many of whom are former dropouts of the MOE system. As a result, we are dealing with schools in which discipline is a major concern, and success of the school cannot entirely be gauged by traditional measures of achievement that are directly comparable. These schools are very unique, and we are concerned how transferable our results will be to other schools in Israel. Most statistics about VET in Israel are actually discussing TVET, and we are forced to reanalyze statistics that are specific to Tamat. While we have been promised access to Tamat data sets, we are not sure how much data exists and how comparable this data will be to MOE data that we have analyzed to present.

Obtaining access and compliance with all of the administrators and teachers is an issue, especially considering that many of the school staff themselves are minorities. As a result of cultural differences, the way that these teachers may respond to their interviewer who may be of a different religious, migration, or ethnic background, may influence the way that they respond. Language may also be an issue, both in terms of Arabic and Hebrew interpretations, in addition to Russian, Amharic, and other native languages of immigrants. While native speakers may be available, respondents in Israel will often choose to use Hebrew, even if they are not entirely fluent. As a result, transcribing and interpreting interviews is complicated further than the already large challenge presented to us in translating the summaries into English.

The fact that the three schools chosen for the research represent "ideal models" is a bit of a double-edged sword. It may help us learn about problems in these communities or what makes these schools successful, but it may also ignore problems or successes that are inherent to VET elsewhere but not transferable to the current case studies. As a result, we will be forced to examine how our results compare with prior research on VET in Israel and consult with administrators and staff involved in VET and TVET elsewhere.

Due to both our own time pressures and the schedules of school staff, there may be a need to use a butterfly sampling system, rather than first conducting focus groups and then interviews. Staff may not be available for the focus group, and yet still may want to participate in the research. Obtaining access

to staff may require longer working hours, and potentially interviews conducted by telephone, email, or other means of communication.

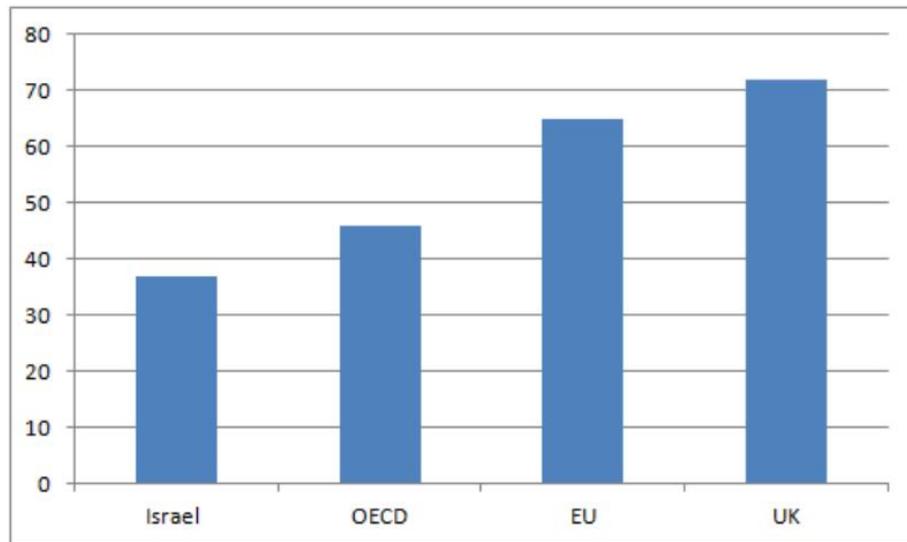
Another concern of our research, as in all empirical studies, is desirability bias. Some staff may be inclined to tell us things that they think we want to hear. They may want to highlight the positive aspects of the school while avoiding serious issues with VET that need to be treated. On the other hand, Israelis can be extremely critical, and these schools have attainment that is lower than national averages. Staff may be extremely critical of the school and highlight the problems rather than the successes of the system.

Finally, we have a concern of sampling preference towards staff with especially positive or negative opinions. The principal may not want us to notice problems, and he or she may refer us specifically to staff with positive opinions, or those who are more efficient. Younger staff may be more inclined to participate or those who are more inclined to use modern technology in their teaching strategies. One advantage that we do have is that these schools are relatively small, and we have been referred towards schools that are expected to be more open towards participating in this research. Already a sampling bias is apparent, but it is still our hope that these schools will provide us with diverse insight into VET in Israel.

## Analysis and discussion of statistical indicators gathered at national level

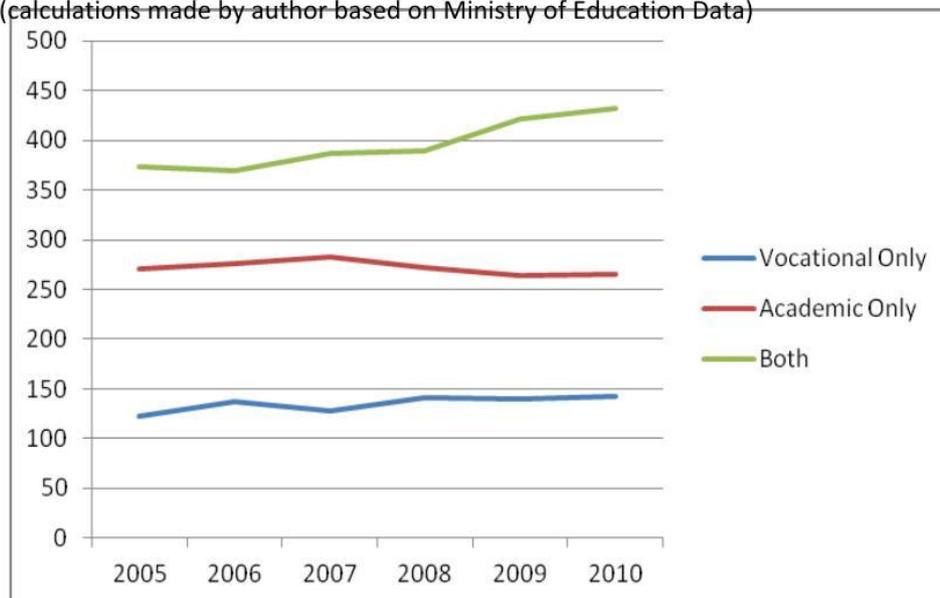
### Vocational Education in Israel Compared (2007):

**% of students who attend vocational tracks**  
(Based on data published on the IZS website)



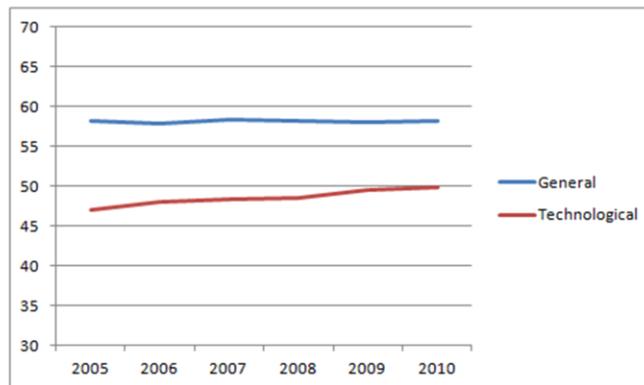
### Number of Schools with 12<sup>th</sup> grade students By Year Based on the Track of all students (excludes special and Haredi schools)

(calculations made by author based on Ministry of Education Data)



### Gender and Technological Education

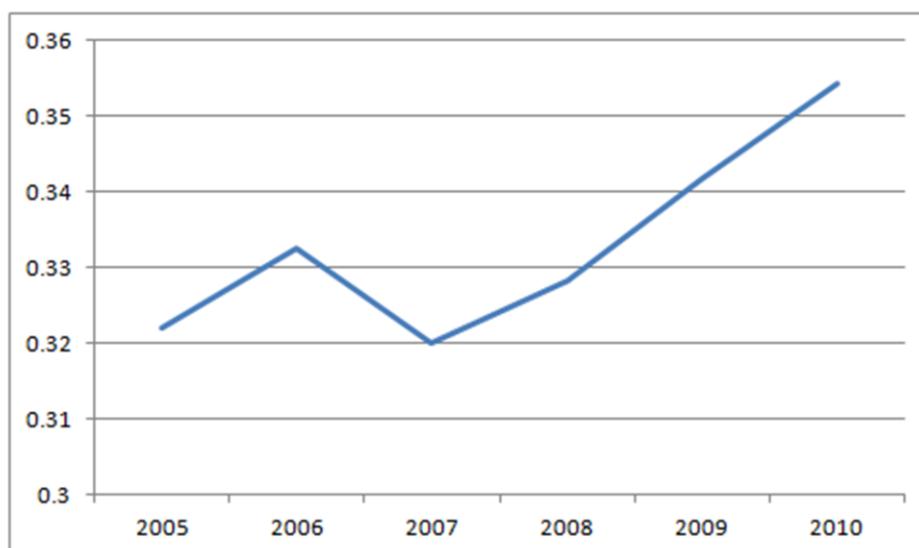
% of Female Students in Grade 12 in General and Technological Tracks By Year (calculations made by author based on Ministry of Education Data)



Traditionally, general education tracks had a female majority and technological tracks had a male majority. However, by 2010 the number of 12th grade female students in technological tracks reached parity (49.9%).

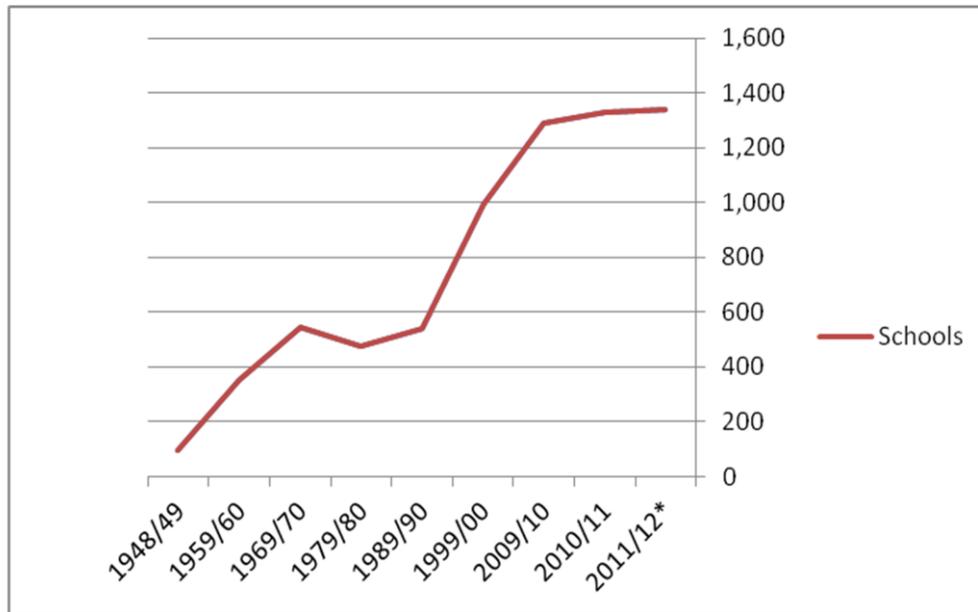
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
General	58.2	57.8	58.3	58.2	58.1	58.2
Technological	47	48.1	48.3	48.5	49.6	49.9

### Percentage of 12th Grade Students in Vocational Tracks By Year 2005-2010 (calculations made by author based on Ministry of Education Data)

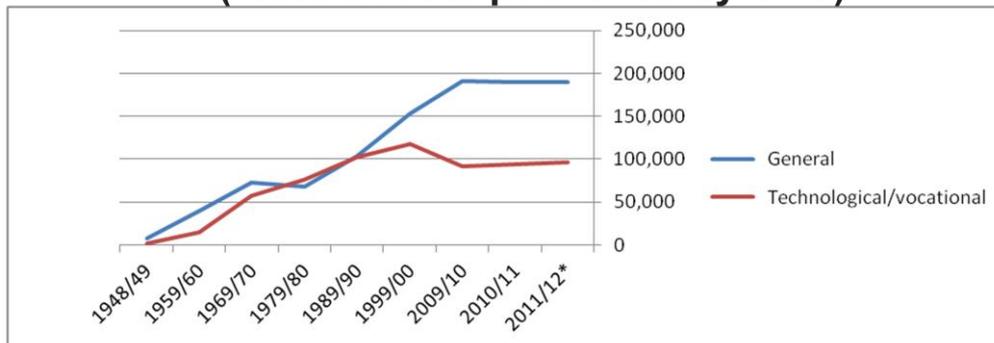


### N of schools with upper secondary education: total, entire country

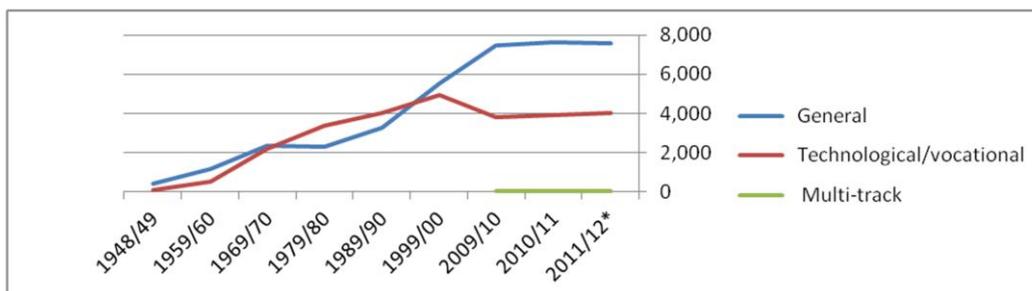
(calculations made by author based on CBS Data)



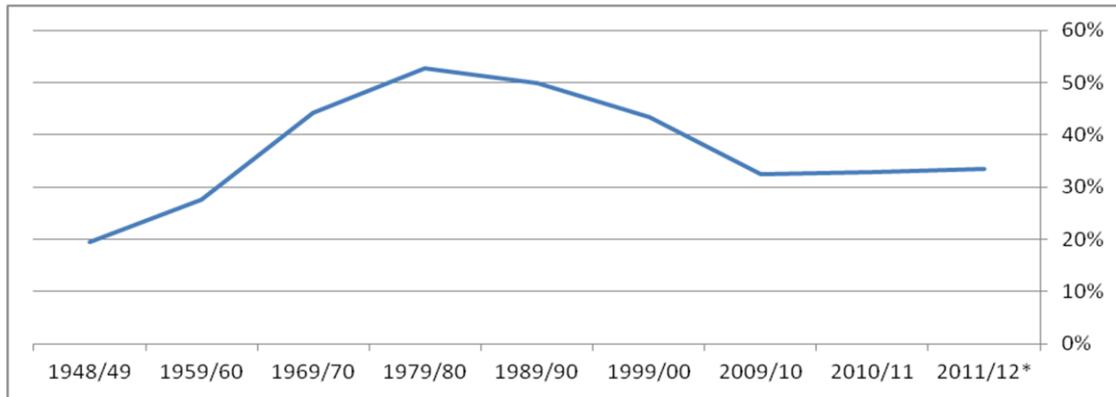
### Vocational Students by Year (Based on data published by CBS)



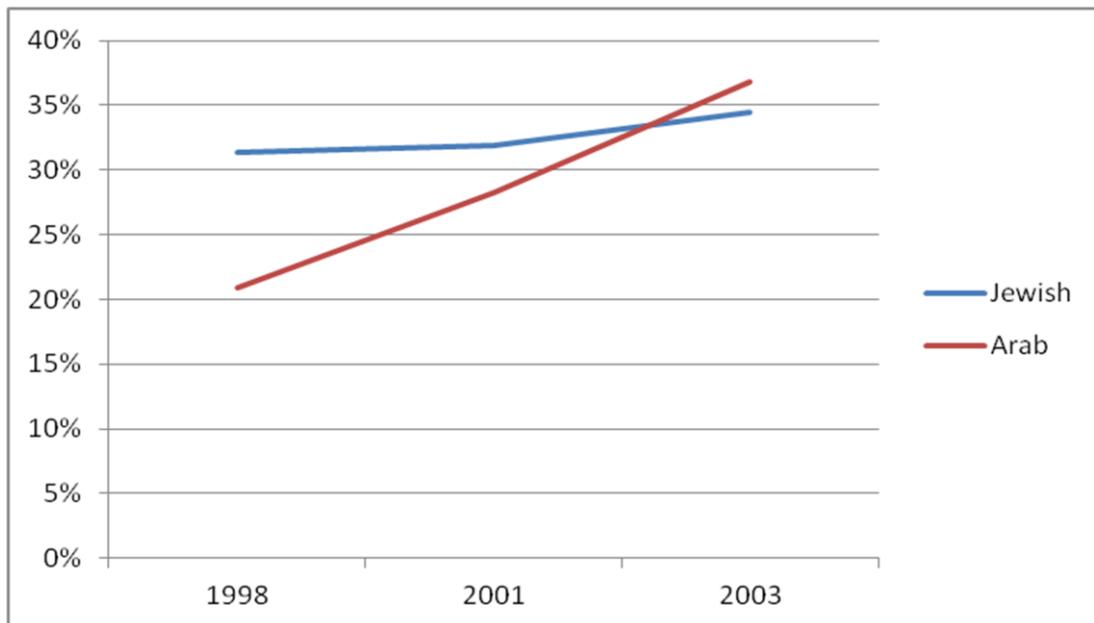
### Vocational Classes by Year



### Vocational students as percentage of total (calculations made by author based on CBS Data)



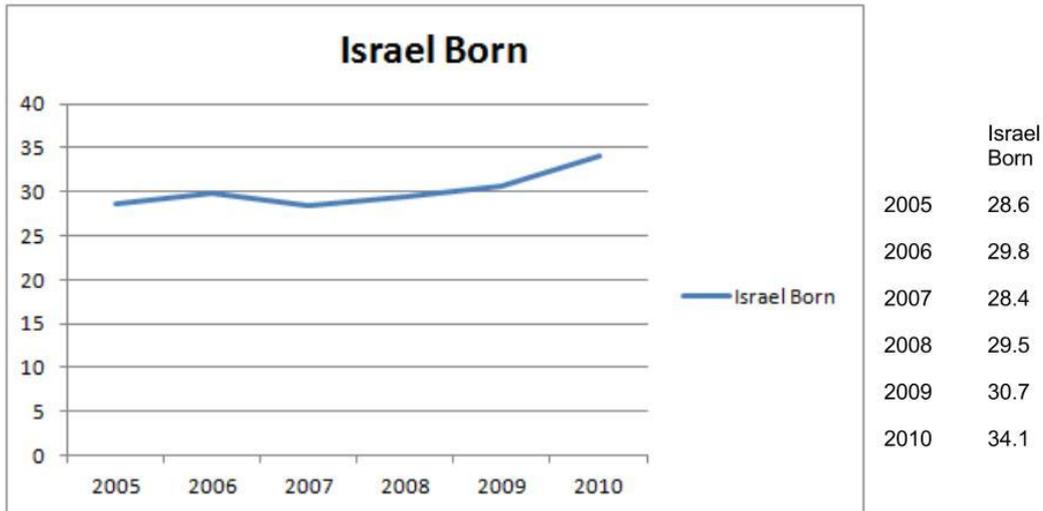
### Percentage of students in vocational tracks by Jewish-Arab (calculations made by author based on CBS Data)



### Percentage of Hebrew Education students born in Israel in vocational tracks

(calculations made by author based on Ministry of Education data)

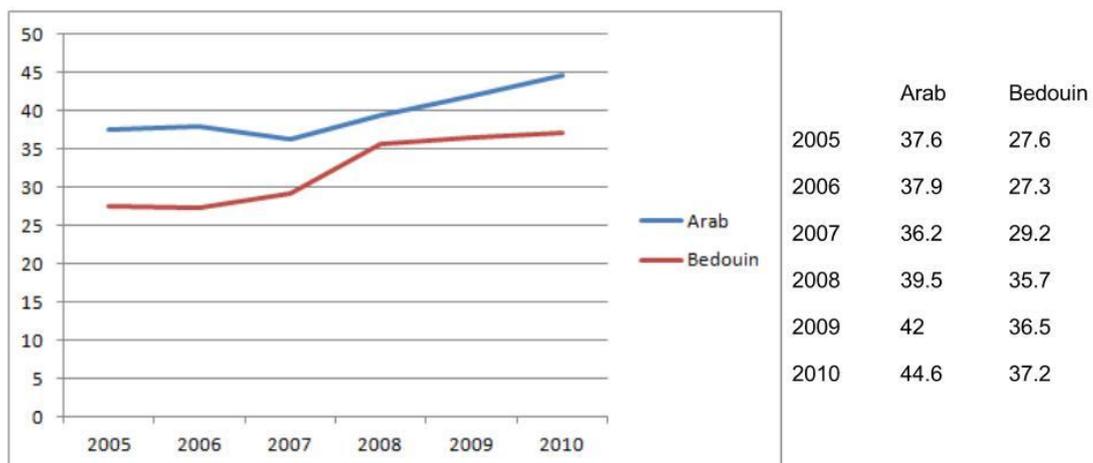
<Agricultural and Other students included as part of total percentage>



### Percentage of Arabic Education students in vocational tracks by Ethnicity (Bedouin and Arabs)

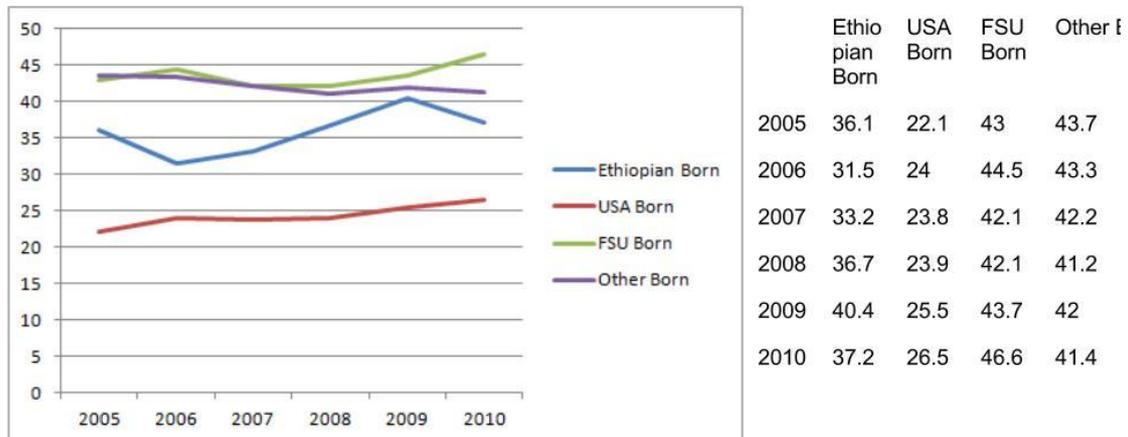
<Druze not included, Agricultural and Other students included as part of total percentage>

(calculations made by author based on Ministry of Education data)



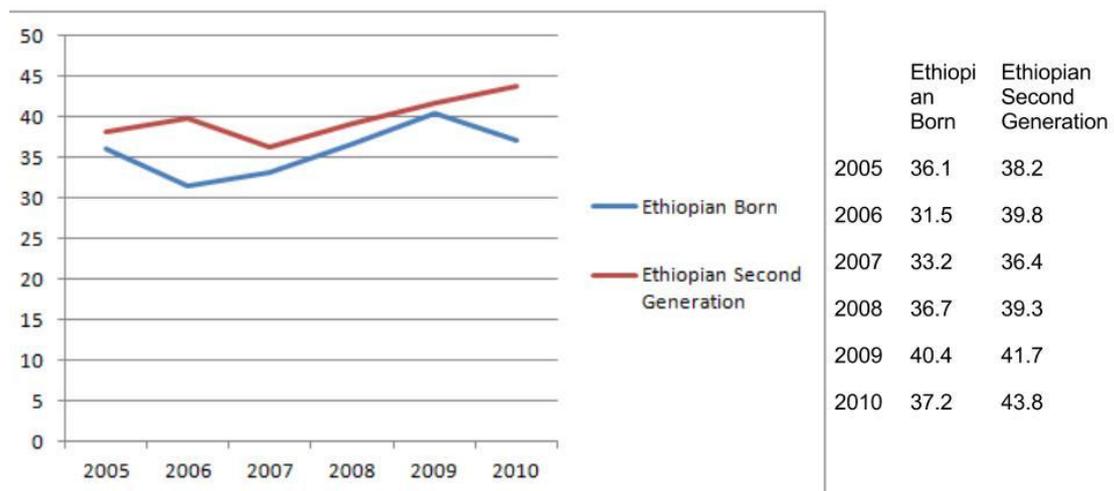
### Percentage of Hebrew Education students in vocational tracks by Country of Birth

(calculations made by author based on Ministry of Education data)



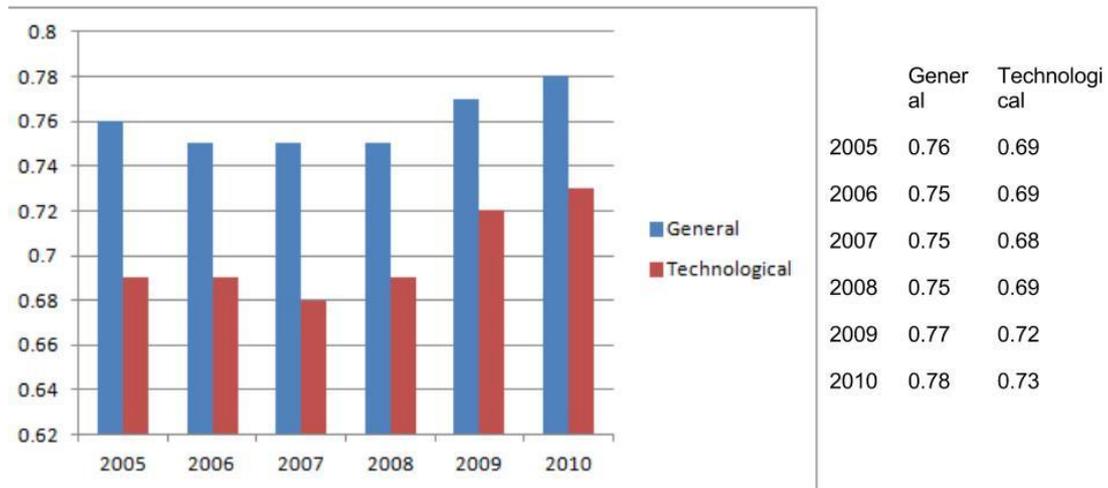
### Percentage of Hebrew Education students in vocational tracks by Ethiopian Born and Second Generation Ethiopian

(calculations made by author based on Ministry of Education data)



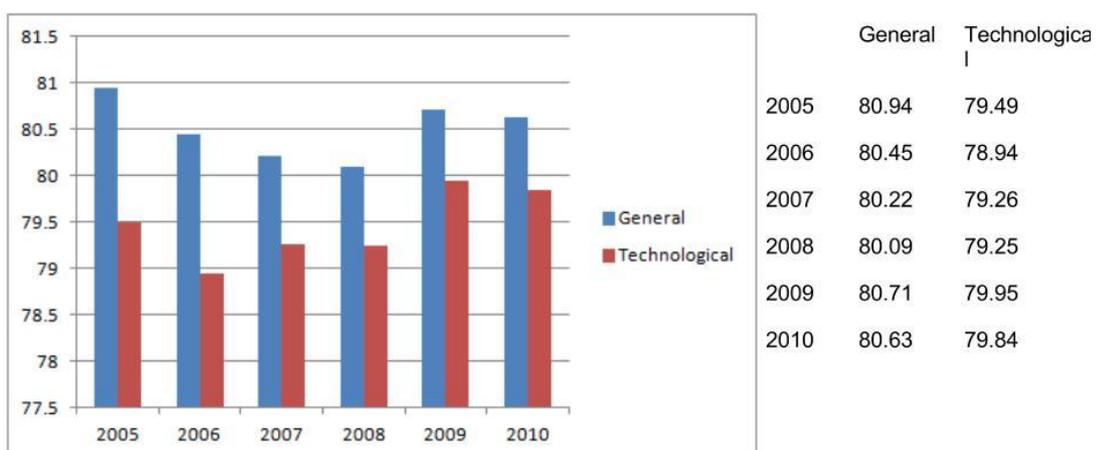
## Percentage Eligible for Matriculation Exam in English by Technological and General Tracks

(calculations made by author based on Ministry of Education data)



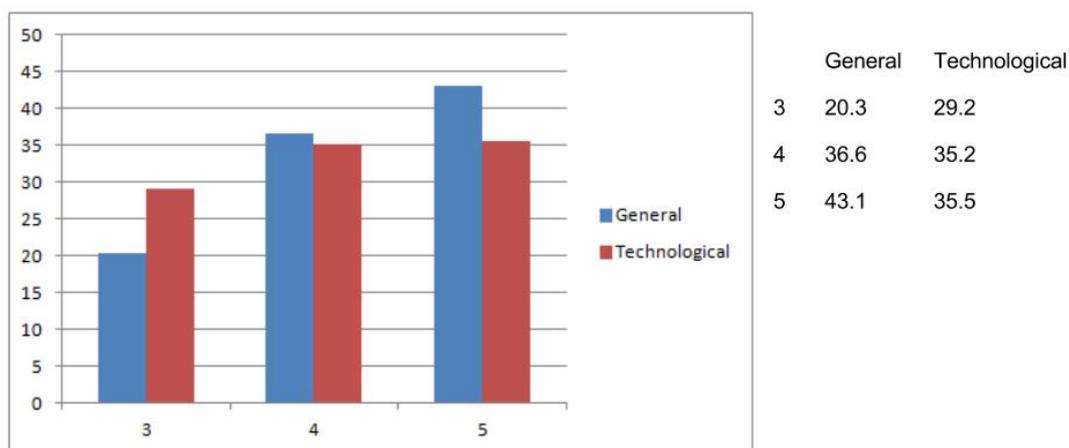
## Average Score on English Matriculation Exam by Technological and General Tracks

(calculations made by author based on Ministry of Education data)

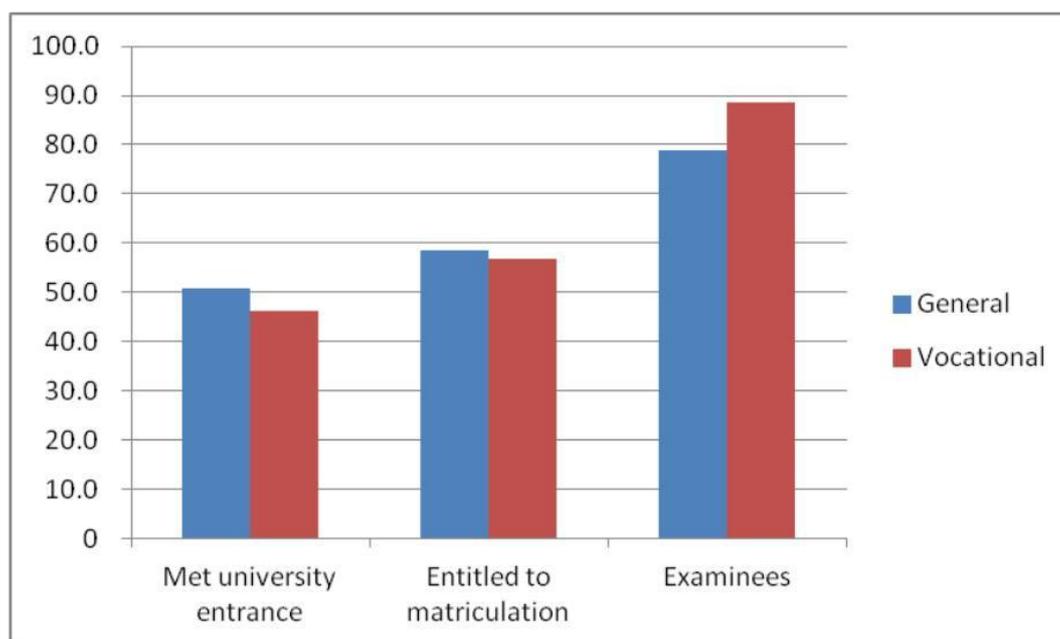


## Credits of English Courses by Technological and General Tracks

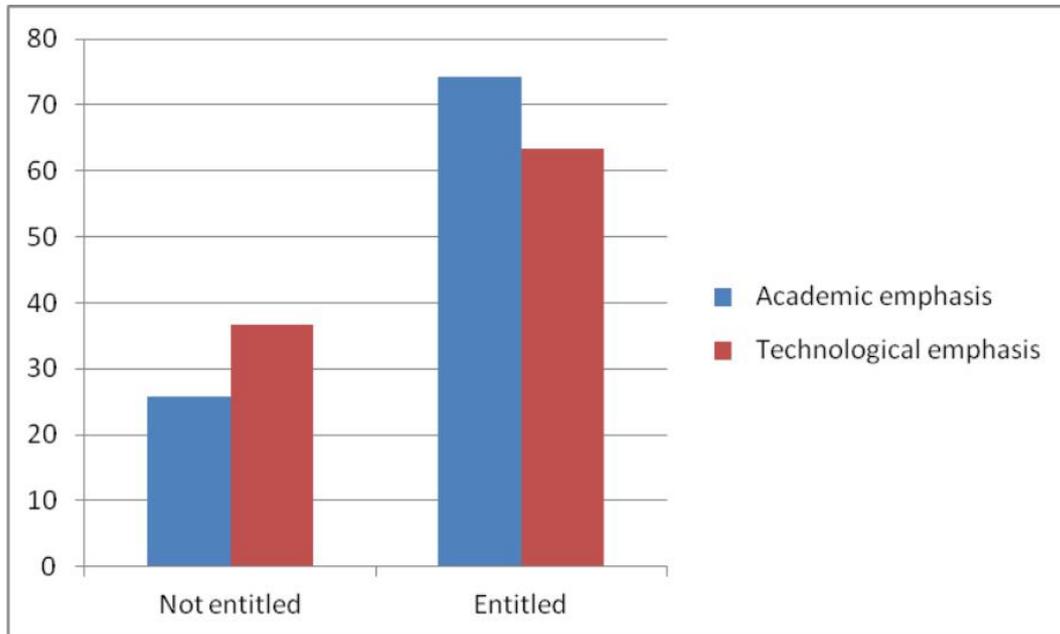
(calculations made by author based on Ministry of Education data)



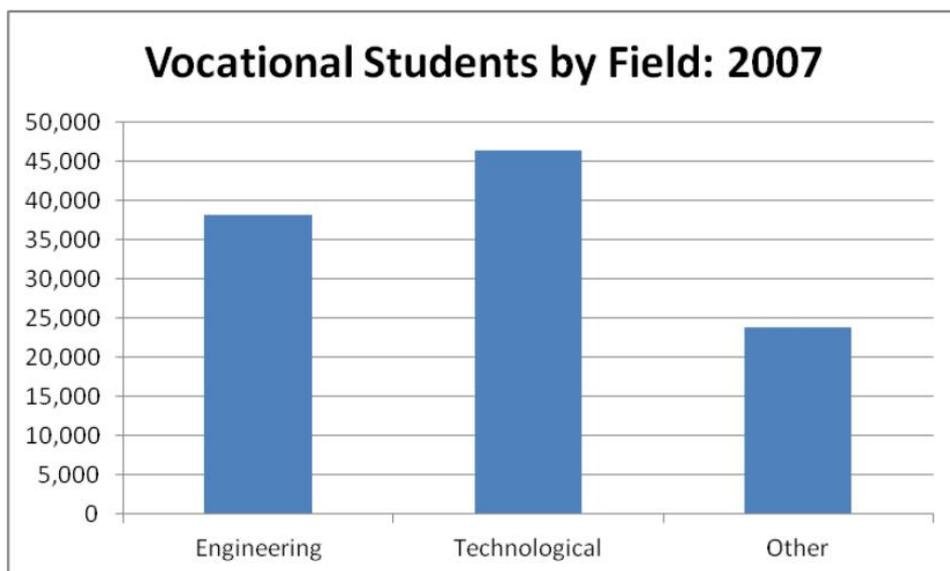
## 2010 % of pupils in grade 12: Achievement by Class Type (based on data published by CBS)



**Matriculation examinees, by entitlement to a certificate and selected characteristics: 2010**  
(based on data published by CBS)

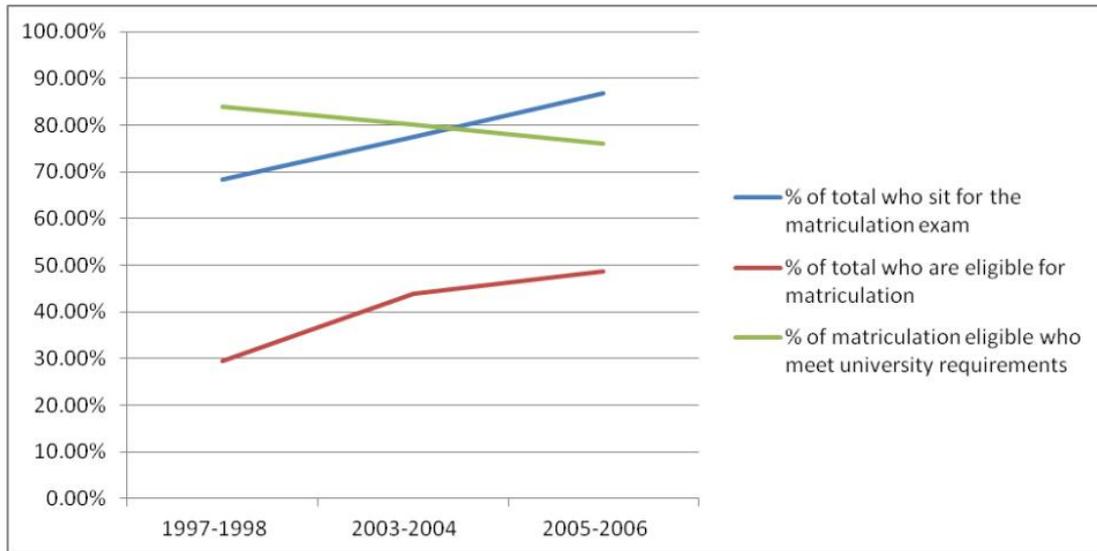


**Vocational Students By Field: 2007**  
(Based on data published in Vergon and Natan 2008)



## Achievement of Vocational Students 2007

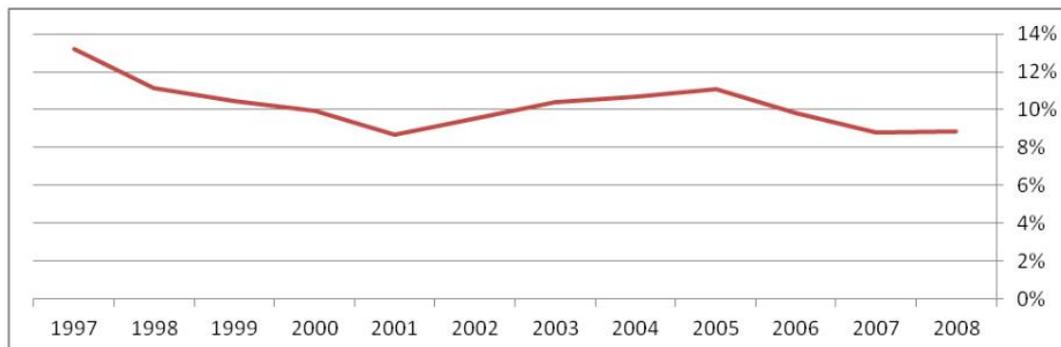
(Based on data published in Vergon and Natan 2008)



## Rate of high school graduates from professional track and Technology

(Graduates under the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Industry <Tamat>, including army recruits, 1997-2008)

(Based on data published in Vergon and Natan 2008)



**Twelfth graders who qualify for matriculation certificates who meets university entrance requirements, by sector, Track and Cluster Trends - 2003**

Based on data published by CBS

		% of those entitled who qualify	% of seniors eligible
Hebrew	Middle and Control Engineering	34	66.7
Arabic		14.6	51
Hebrew	Science-based systems and knowledge	78.9	89.7
Arabic		78.9	88.3
Hebrew	Communication Systems and Society	57.5	73.7
Arabic		51	47.9
Hebrew	Industrial and Management Systems	32.8	58.2
Arabic		36.8	25.5
Hebrew	Design	43	74.4
Arabic		3.2	..

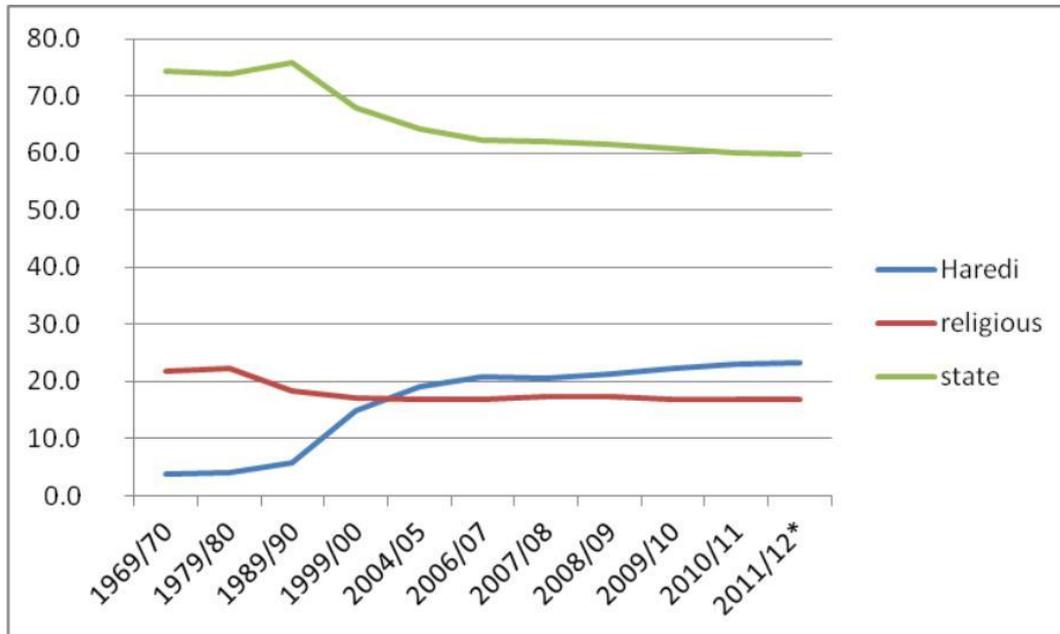
**Twelfth Grade technological track students by sector, cluster and Cohort Trends**

Based on data published by CBS

			1998	2001	2003
Total	High school and Control	תיכון ובקרה	25	21.4	18.3
Jewish			32.5	27.7	26.4
Arabic			24.2	20.4	16.7
Total	Science-based systems and knowledge	מערכות עתירות מדע וידע	18.2	23.6	27.3
Jewish			10	17.5	23.2
Arabic			19.1	24.6	28.2
Total	Communication Systems and Society	מערכות תקשורת וחברה	5.7	8	10.9
Jewish			6.5	11	15.5
Arabic			5.7	7.6	10
Total	Industrial and Management Systems	מערכות ניהול ותעשייה	30.5	27.1	26.9
Jewish			27.9	23.6	24.7
Arabic			30.8	27.6	27.3
Total	Design	עיצוב	17.8	16.8	16.3
Jewish			21.6	17	10.1
Arabic			17.3	16.8	17.5

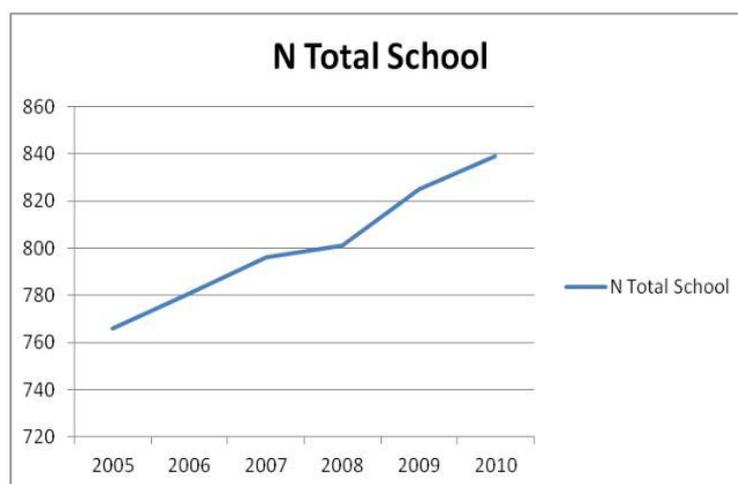
### Other Interesting Demographics

(calculations made by author based on Ministry of Education data)



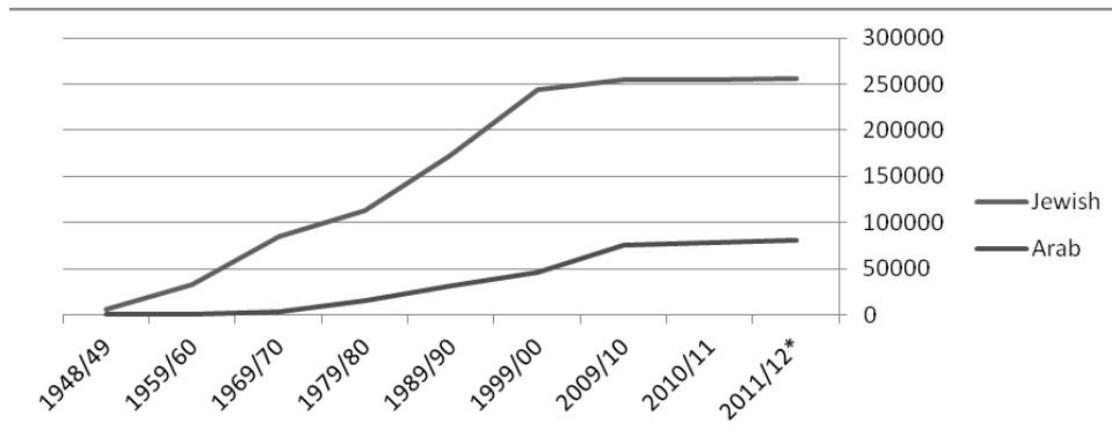
### Number of Schools with 12<sup>th</sup> grade students administered by The Ministry of Education By Year

(calculations made by author based on Ministry of Education Data)



### Number of Students Total by Race

(calculations made by author based on Ministry of Education data)



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## KOSOVO

### Introduction

This interim report provides an overview of VET system in Kosovo and its relation to social inclusion and social cohesion. It builds on the policy vision of the Government of Kosovo for VET, the implications for current policy and practice, and developments and challenges at system and institution levels. The report comprises information, analysis and reflection based on the initial desk research, and a literature review with the main reference point having the draft Torino Process Review 2012. Since not much has happened since the launching of the draft report, same findings are reported in this interim report. Part A presents the Institutional framework and the policy process at national level for VET, and for social inclusion and Part B provides the current developments of the participatory action research process.

In general, it is observed that regardless of clear policy initiatives and legislation in place, the VET system in Kosovo does not offer a promising foundation to socially excluded groups. Lack of implementation of the legislation, both at central and local level is one of the main obstacles to social inclusion. Good practices are reported, but no peer learning to build sustainable and wide-covering programs in responding to the needs of individual learners. The institutional framework for VET has undergone several reform initiatives, but the outcomes and impact are yet to be seen. Despite much policy effort linking VET with the labour market, there is still a mismatch between skills acquired and those needed and employers still report low satisfaction rates with VET students. Professional practice remains a key problem in the VET system due to the lack of cooperation between vocational schools and the business community. Nevertheless, the ad-hoc studies available do not provide a clear picture on these issues. To this end, a participatory action research is deemed crucial to shed light on the reality. Concerning the issue of decentralization and the distribution of responsibilities to local level, policy measures are in place but many challenges in handling the new tasks are observed.

Three vocational education schools were chosen in three different cities and in general with different study profiles for the purpose of this study. Schools chosen are from capital city, a less developed and a least developed city which will support comparative analyses among schools operating in cities with different economic performance. National Advisory Board (NAB) has been established consisting of members representing government institutions, NGOs and academia. The first meeting of NAB was held and important findings obtained. As for the Local Advisory Boards for each location a student, teacher and a parent has been nominated by the school director Regional coordinators of the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce will be part of the

three boards representing business community. In capital city a minority focused NGO will be invited to be a member of the board whereas in two other cities NGOs working in area of people with disabilities and/or focused on gender issues are planned as members. Well-established relationship has been achieved between the country researchers and school directors, whereby the latter have shown commitment to actively participate in the study and support the field work. In this document it is explained that the participatory action research (PAR) is understood as research approach led by researchers working with those to whom results are relevant and have an impact. In the context of this project it implies a researcher working together with the VET schools, national and local policy makers, school professionals, students, employers, researchers and civil society organisation. Methodology, research instruments and findings will be shared with national and local boards and their contribution will be highly valued and appreciated. Given that the project has been appraised by the Ministry and there is a commitment from school directors, the researchers foresee no problems that could hinder the work and/or findings. Finally some indicators have been presented but it is important to note that data on social inclusion and cohesion related to VET are generally lacking in Kosovo.

## **1. Institutional framework and the policy process at national level for VET, and for social inclusion**

### **1.1 Situation analysis at national level**

VET schools in Kosovo suffer from a bad image and low attractiveness to young people. Both policy makers and practitioners claim that enrolment in VET is a second option after failing to enrol in general upper-secondary schools (gymnasiums), making VET system of option rather than choice (ETF 2012)

There is lack of systematic data to support this statement but some studies have been conducted mainly by donors that found out that there is a mismatch between labour market demands and skills produced by vocational schools and that mainly related to professional practice component of studies. A study conducted in 2009 revealed that the practical part of vocational education should be improved in order to meet employers' needs (GTZ, 2009:35).

A series of MEST, KCC and GIZ baseline studies (2011) on employers' skill needs and satisfaction with graduates of vocational schools and vocational training centres in some profiles (Construction, Metal, Sales, Tourism and Wood) conveyed similar messages. More than 50% of employers do not employ vocational school graduates due to: (i) lack of quality among graduates (ii) inappropriate or insufficient machinery and equipment for practical training and lack of experienced teachers and trainers; (iii) graduates/trainees are not sufficiently qualified; (iv) mismatch between skills required and those

available (mainly reported deficits in practical skills and technical competences).

One main determinant of skill mismatch is a lack of professional practice which is provided either to only a limited number of students through ALMPs internship programme or within the school premises through Virtual Practice Firms.<sup>1</sup> This is attributed to poor cooperation between vocational schools and the business community, although efforts have been made in this respect but with poor results. Few initiatives have been made to motivate the business community to provide vocational students with professional practice or a job. An active labour market programme (ALMP) provides some financial support to both students and hosting companies covers a low percentage of vocational school graduates. The sustainability of this programme is low and many schools complain about the employers being “spoiled” with direct financial incentives. At a recent conference, three proposals to encourage employers to employ more graduates from vocational schools were made: 1) tax exemption for business companies employing vocational graduates, 2) the continuation of ALMPs with larger financial support from the Government and 3) no financial incentives should be offered (MEST, KCC, GIZ international conference, June 11 2012).

Social inclusion and cohesion are among main priorities of the Kosovo government. The latter acknowledges that low skill levels and poor educational attainment contribute to social exclusion since those with low skills are more prone to be unemployed and perform worse in the labour market. Issues of equity and inclusion have not been central to the majority of providers of vocational education. Such issues have usually been considered as something ‘extra’ (usually supported by donors) rather than as an integral part of the day-to-day functioning of the VET system (ETF, 2012). The 2012 Torino Process report states that the concepts of social inclusion, social cohesion and equity are unfamiliar or relatively new and the capacities of the existing system for dealing with social inclusion are limited. Previous analysis by OECD (2011) also indicated slow developments in this direction.

Social exclusion in the labour market is reflected in very high long-term unemployment rates and high inactivity rates, especially among women; high youth unemployment, and deep inequalities in particular between urban and rural areas, and poverty in particular of ethnic minorities (ETF, 2012). In Kosovo, social exclusion is the “majority condition, experienced by a wide range of people across many dimensions of life” such as “exclusion – from economic life, social services or civic engagement” (SOLIDAR, 2011, p.4).

The female employment rate is very low (28.7%) and only about 12% of those employed work under a permanent full-time contract (SOK - LFS, 2009). Women’s low representation in the labour market and high rate of school

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<sup>1</sup> Practice firms also known as “fictitious firms”, virtual enterprises, training firms or practice enterprise comprise a new form of learning which provides simulation of processes of a “real” enterprise in different level of achievements and learning outcomes (Xhelili-Krasniqi et al., 2011)

drop-out can be explained by a combination of family and household obligations and the low chances for women of finding a job (ETF, 2010, p.13). This reflects problems of access and of the choice of profiles offered in vocational schools (Kastrati, 2010:14). Despite some donor initiatives and those of MEST (including the so-called “Girls’ day” and “Open days” which aim at informing girls about male-oriented profiles) occupational selection is still very gender stereotyped (Kita, 2008).

Ethnic minorities also suffer from higher unemployment and economic inactivity than the general population (ETF, 2012:24). Partially as a result of low skills and unemployment, most members of RAE communities live in extreme poverty, which negatively affects young people’s opportunities to continue their education and break the vicious cycle (KFOS/COMPASS, 2009).

Poor people face additional barriers in education opportunities and attainment (UNDP, 2012, p.11) which in turn pose difficulties for their inclusion in the society and employment (ETF, 2012). Poverty rates are higher among children, female-headed households and members of Kosovo’s Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian ethnic minority (RAE) (UNDP, 2012, p. 11).

The social protection system treats acute cases of exclusion (providing housing to vulnerable groups) but has no preventive mechanisms (i.e. maternity allowance, unemployment benefits, unemployment benefits or child benefits) which places barriers on upward mobility (OECD, 2011). The policy responses to social exclusion are based mainly on social protection instruments and this is considered to be one of the main weaknesses in tackling social exclusion.

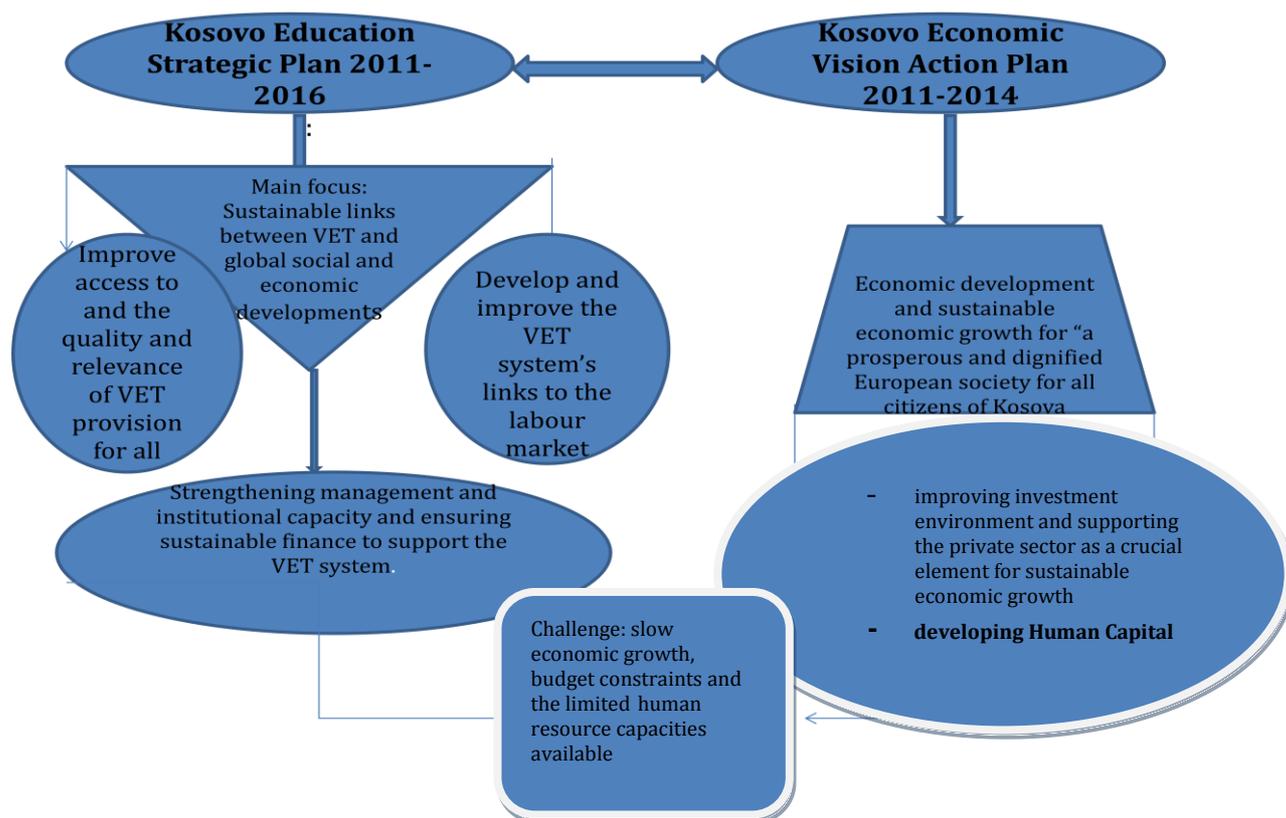
The rate of drop-out of vocational school students is high. By the end of the school year 2009/2010, 3% of students had dropped out from the upper-secondary education system. About four-fifths of these had been on vocational tracks (ETF, 2012). Although MEST provides some data on vocational education, data on drop-out remain patchy. Data on return rates of the drop-outs, data on re-registration of those repeating the classes, and school-to-school migrations to other municipalities are reported as drop-out cases, giving a distorted picture of this phenomenon.

Vocational education for students with disabilities (intellectual impairments, blindness, speaking or hearing impairment) is organized in five Resource Centres. Their numbers increased by 12% compared to the previous year (MEST- EMIS, 2011). In the 10<sup>th</sup> grade of vocational education, there has been a 42% enrolment rate of this group. However, there is a very low inclusion level of students from Resource Centres into the regular schools (a total of 3 students from Resource Centres of all 5 regions in Kosovo) showing lack of inclusive practices and policies. These socially excluded groups face major barriers to inclusion in education. less than 2% of the MEST budget is allocated for education for children with special needs (Landsman and Maloku, 2009. )

We conclude from the above review of the literature that the accessibility, availability and attractiveness of vocational education for socially excluded groups is very limited. The increase in enrolment rates of students with disabilities, legislative and planning frameworks and mechanisms, and the attempts to involve the minorities in the system by providing curricula in all minority languages and teacher training for minority staff (ETF, 2012) The level of implementation of such mechanisms in place remains a matter of individual cases, rather than the system level guidance. In the absence of inclusive practices, socially excluded groups are prone to continuous exclusion from the vocational education system.

## 1.2 The institutional framework for vocational education at national level covering also the degree of decentralisation

Kosovo's vision for VET system development is determined by the political and socio-economic situation (see Fig.1). The main purpose of the VET system in Kosovo is to prepare students for the labour market. (KESP 2011-2016).



**Figure 1 KESP 2011-2016 in relation to Kosovo Economic Vision Action Plan 2011-2014**

In the light of continuous reforms in vocational education, the MEST is focused on the implementation of standards, curricula, assessment and certification as well as the development of the necessary vocational

qualifications in line with National Qualifications Framework. The establishment of National Qualifications Authority has paved the way to quality assurance, although still in its initial phases. All the previously existing quality assurance factors (self-evaluation, validation, accreditation process) are being shaped and delivered under one umbrella – the cooperation between MEST (with its relevant Units), MLSW and NQA (whose board comprises also representatives from the industry, respectively chamber of commerce).

The Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016 is an important policy initiative and tool for monitoring and planning in line with the Medium Term Expenditure Framework. Yet, in the light of slow economic growth, both central and local level of government face barriers in human resource capacities (EC, 2011) and budget constraints which prevents the implementation of the ambitious goals set out in the KESP 2011-2016.

Recent institutional reform policies have been concentrated at the system level. The decision to establish a VET Agency and the re-constitution of the Council of VET (CVET) are clear policy decisions towards the systematic development of VET. However, there needs to be a better link between these two national bodies.

The institutional framework for vocational education is as follows. The MEST is responsible for vocational education, while the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare is responsible for vocational training. There are three levels of administrative responsibility in the publicly funded VET sector:

1. Government ministries set policies, initiate reforms and provide public funding for VET (in line with the Medium Term Expenditure Framework). Vocational education is the responsibility of VET Division in MEST and the Vocational Training is the responsibility of the Vocational Training Division within the MLSW;
2. Municipal Education Directorates (MEDs) are in charge of budget distribution to schools based on the school budget planning (in line with decentralized policy initiatives for the devolution of finances), as well as for statistics and legal issues (depending on the structure of MEDs personnel) (Gowing & Saqipi, 2010: 15)
3. The VET providers are in charge of provision of vocational education, budget planning and management within the school.

In addition, two agencies are involved in VET policy making:

4. The Council for Vocational Education and Training (CVET) is an advisory body established by law under the supervision of MEST mandated to “advise on policy development, establish permanent professional committees and temporary working groups to undertake specific activities and approve occupational standards” (Art.14). The CVET is composed of representatives from MEST, MLSW, MTI, MAFRD, MH and Social Partners (KCC and BSPK).
5. The Agency of VET and Adult Education (AVETAE) as based on the draft VET Law is a newly proposed body by MEST, established by the government and yet due to its very recent establishment no clear

functions of its members are taken on. Nevertheless, based on the draft VET Law this body will be responsible for “Administration and leadership of VET and Adult Education(AE) institutions, Development of VET, Coordination of research and studies concerning VET and AE, Coordination of international projects, engagement of social partners in VET and AE, research on the needs of labour market, and supervision and coordination of the development of occupational standards” (Art. 13). The Agency will draw members from all line Ministries, social partners and business community representatives.

The role of the social partners in VET is in principal very important for designing legislation and strategies, designing VET qualifications, VET financing, planning, monitoring and evaluation. The draft VET Law foresees a greater involvement of social partners in VET (as seen from the CVET and AVETAE). However, there little tradition for social partners to be involved in the design or implementation of VET policy (Likaj and Kasumi, ETF, 2007: 11). In addition, other factors that explain the lack of social partners’ involvement in VET development including a lack of capacity to join social dialogue and policy-making processes (ibid.), although others would argue that it is the lack of interest of the government in organising and financing the tripartite social dialogue that is at the root of this problem.

VET is poorly represented or absent in the central structures and the government’s budget. The governance and financial mechanisms in VET have traditionally been highly centralised. Continuing efforts have been undertaken to decentralise funding to the regional or municipal levels. There is a general will to give VET schools more (if limited) financial autonomy (that is, some capacity for retaining and deploying income raised through commercial services). Consequently there is much discussion of the ability of VET schools and training centres to raise funds on the local market. There has been some discussion of financing formula and its application and of budgetary efficiency and effectiveness.

Decentralization within Kosovo’s education system focuses on three key elements: management, decision-making and the budget. Currently, it is the finance element of decentralization that is being most consistently applied (Gowing and Saqipi, 2010:18). The decision by MEST to give an individual financial code to each school keeps the reform going. This process places new roles and responsibilities to the MEDs, therefore decreases workload in some areas but increases it in others. The responsibility for the planning and implementation of school budgets has been shifted to schools. With the support of VET donors a number of training packages have been provided to MEDs, Governing School Boards and school directors. Yet, the lack of schools’ involvement in budget planning remains a big challenge (ibid.) The low level of decentralization limits local autonomy in addressing social exclusion (OECD, 2011).

The recent Torino Process draft report (ETF, 2012) concluded that, despite considerable finance for capacity-building to support municipalities and

schools in better managing the decentralization process, not much has changed in the priorities followed in the decentralization process as compared to previous years. It is clear that central government has placed more focus on financial decentralization and much less on school-based reform with implications to autonomy and accountability (ibid.p.33)

### **1.3 The policy process and the policy debate at national level**

The Government's vision comprises an inclusive education system, based on lifelong learning principles, and quality education to all. The Kosovo Education Strategic Plan (KESP) 2011-2016 links education policy to national development priorities, recognising the aim for the education and training system to be more responsive to labour market needs (MEST – KESP 2011-2016, 2011). The new draft VET Law foresees the engagement of social partners in the development of a number of VET 'building blocks', such as curricula development, occupational standards, economic cooperation with VET and system evaluation.

One mechanism that is currently being considered is a mixed funding – from central government, social partners, development partners and municipalities. Under the leadership of MEST, the VET Council has been re-functionalized and its essential role is to bring together the different interests, knowledge and skills of a range of state organisations/institutions, social partners, and other stakeholders in VET (draft Torino Process Review 2012, p.11).

Most of Kosovo's upper-secondary students study in vocational schools. It is generally accepted that they constitute around 57% of the upper-secondary school student population, with some profiles having a very few number of students and in some cases these profiles are closed due to the lack of interest shown by prospective students. In total there are 80 VET providers, counting in (apart from public upper-secondary provision) the adult VET providers, NGOs and private providers.

In light of continuous reforms in VET, the MEST is focused on the implementation of standards, curricula, assessment and certification as well as the development of the necessary VET qualifications in line with National Qualifications Framework (*see Table 8*). The latter has been developed by the National Qualifications Authority in accordance with the Law on National Qualifications (no. 03/L-060) and seeks to provide a basis for cooperation and mutual recognition of qualifications in line with European Qualifications Framework (NQA, 2011). The NQF makes an important building block in the reform of Kosovo's education and training system. Designed with the aim to increase the reliability and credibility of the qualifications offered to individuals and employers (KOSVET III - NQF Handbook, 2009) the NQF comprises of a number of features: an overarching framework, quality assurance, a credit system and the validation of prior learning.

Many vocational graduates seek to continue their education to higher levels of vocational tracks. Therefore, two options at the disposal of graduates of vocational schools: either continue directly to the very limited labour market or to higher education level, respectively University. Although it makes an important assessment tool for every school's general student performance the Matura exam does not lay promising paths for the students of the vocational schools. The existence of only one Matura exam for both streams – vocational and general education poses a key barrier for the vocational school students.

A range of policies and strategic objectives has been set out to address some of the socially excluded groups. These include: the Strategy for inclusion of RAE community 2007-2017, the Strategy for Education for Rural People in Kosovo, 2004– 009, Curricula for VET available in minority languages (Bosnian and Turkish); the Strategy for reintegration of repatriated persons, 2007, the Strategic Plan for Organizing Inclusive Education for Children with Special Educational needs in Pre-University Education in Kosovo 2010-2015. However, data demonstrate that in spite of these initiatives, there continues to be unequal representation of marginalized groups in education and training. The VET system as a whole still does little to respond to the most vulnerable groups of society. Good practices can be observed in some individual schools (Lipjan vocational school) but not in a wider national system level.

Notwithstanding new initiatives undertaken as a response to strategic goals and objectives, it can be concluded that although social inclusion, integration of socially excluded groups and lifelong learning comprise guiding objectives of the existing education strategies, they have not yet translated into actions in the real world of work (UNDP, 2012: 93). Of importance to social inclusion initiatives is the voice of youth themselves. A study by UNICEF identified the needs of youth in relation to education and emphasized the need for more intensive efforts to respond to inequalities. The study proposed incentives to families to increase youth education enrolment and completion, especially of ethnic minority youth, including RAE youth in Kosovo, as one of the key solutions to this challenge (UNICEF, 2011: 11).

## **Part B.**

### **1. Choice of schools**

For this study schools chosen to be part of the project are the following:

28 Nentori, Technical School	Pristina. Telephone: +38138603910; E mail: shemsilushaku@yahoo.com
Gani Cavderbasha, Technical school	Prizren Str. Hoxhe Tahsini, n.n., 20000 Gjakova; E-mail: Prizrenxhelalsusuri@gmail.com; Telephone: +38129232210; Mobile: +37744218081
Kadri Kusari, School of economy	Gjakova Str. Normalja e Gjakoves n,n., 50000; E-mail: Gjakovesinan_hajdari@hotmail.com: Mobile: +37744207305.

Initially, the Medical school ‘Ali Sokoli’ was selected in the capital city but since none of school staff could participate in the Vienna conference and since the research team found that the school was not very cooperative, a switch to the technical school ‘28 Nentori’ was necessary. The change was made in consultation with the Ministry and after approval from ETF and LSEE. The chosen schools are in three different cities in Prishtina – the most economically developed city, Prizren as a less developed town and Gjakova as the least economically developed town. The selected schools offer different study profiles. As can be noted from the data presented in Table 1, 2 and 3, the schools are relatively large and the relevant figures for the student questionnaire are the numbers in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade of study. It was noted above that female representation in VET schools is low. Altogether, in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade in the three selected schools only 32% of students are females.

The data in Table 1 provide information on poverty rates in regions of Kosovo, which highlight the economic position of the three cities from which the schools were chosen for this study. It can be seen that Gjakova is the poorest region in Kosovo, Prishtina the least poor region while the Prizren region lies between the two.

**Table 1: Poverty rates across regions in Kosovo, 2009**

Region	Full poverty line		Extreme poverty line	
	Headcount	Poverty gap	Headcount	Poverty gap
Ferizaji	53.8	14.6	17.7	3.7
Gjakova	54.0	16.3	22.4	5.9
Gjilani	18.0	3.8	3.6	0.9
Mitrovica	38.0	12.2	17.0	4.2
Peja	37.2	10.9	13.1	3.8
Pristina	21.8	6.2	9.0	1.3
Prizreni	33.9	7.6	6.8	1.0
Overall	34.5	9.6	12.1	2.7

Source: World Bank staff estimates based on 2009 HBS.

**Table 2: Student number in 28 Nentori school**

Municipality	School	Field	Profiles	Students														
				10			11			12			13			Total		
				Number of classes	Females	Total												
Prishtina	SHMT"28 Nëntori"	Construction	Construction	3	35	110	3	21	63	2	23	51	3	20	61	1	99	285
			Architecture	3	58	110	5	51	124	3	53	86	3	43	70	4	205	390
			Geodesy	1	10	32	2	35	54	1	11	26	1	4	15	5	60	127
		Graphic	Books binding	2	34	75	5	63	140	2	24	53	2	28	56	1	149	324
		Post-telecommunication		2	34	75	4	75	137	1	20	33	2	29	57	9	158	302
Total				11	171	402	19	245	518	9	131	249	11	124	259	50	671	1428

**Table 3: Student number in Gani Cavderbasha school**

Municipality	School	Field	Profiles	Students														
				10			11			12			13			Total		
				Number of classes	Females	Total												
Prizren	Gani Cavdarbasha school	Construction	Architecture	2	15	58	1	8	24	1	5	25	1	5	21	5	33	128
			Geodesy	0	0	0	1	0	25	1	0	26	1	2	31	3	2	82
			2	15	58	2	8	49	2	5	51	2	7	52	8	35	210	
		Informatics	2	14	79	2	13	59	2	12	59	3	19	58	9	58	255	
		Telecommunication	1	13	46	3	11	74	2	3	21	2	0	43	8	27	184	
		Electrician	2	0	54	1	0	18	1	0	26	1	0	18	5	0	116	
		Audio video										1	0	13	1	0	13	
			5	27	179	6	24	151	5	15	106	7	19	132	23	85	568	
			2	0	71	1	2	22	2	2	46	2	11	42	7	15	181	
			2	0	61	1	0	31	1	0	41	1	0	40	5	0	173	
			2	0	78	3	0	55	2	0	45	3	0	46	0	0	224	
		Makineri	Water instalation and sawage	1	0	38	1	0	19	1	0	26	1	0	23	4	0	106
				7	0	248	6	2	127	6	2	158	7	11	151	26	15	684

Mapping of VET educational policies and practices for social inclusion and social cohesion  
Country Study: Kosovo

	Textile	Cloth design	1	27	27										1	27	27
	Art	Graphic design	1	8	22										1	8	22
			2	35	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	35	49
Total			1		53	1		32	1		31	1		33	5		151
			6	77	4	4	34	7	3	22	5	6	37	5	9	170	1

**Table 4: Number of students in Kadri Kusari school**

Municipality	School	Field	Profiles	Students															
				10			11			12			13			Total			
				Number of classes	Females	Total	Number of classes	Females	Total										
<b>Gjakova</b>	<b>Kadri Kusari</b>	<b>Economy</b>	Accounting	1	21	45	1	17	43	3	57	116	5	67	155	1	0	162	359
			Bank and insurance	2	44	88	2	53	93	3	50	108				7	147		289
			Spedition and logistics	1	12	46	1	8	38	1	8	35				3	28		119
		<b>Law</b>	Legal assistant	2	36	90	2	35	84	2	45	83	2	26	60	8	142		317
			Administrative assistant							1	16	30	1	19	36	2	35		66
		<b>Gastronomy</b>	Toursim assistant							1		41	1		31	2	0		72
		<b>Veterinë</b>	Veterinary technician							1		19				1	0		19
		<b>Agriculture</b>	Technoloy technician	1	19	45										1	19		45
			Horticulture				1		22							1	0		22
			Farming				1		22							1	0		22
<b>Total</b>				<b>7</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>533</b>		<b>1330</b>

## **2. Formation of advisory boards at national and local level**

The National Advisory Board consists of eight members selected from ministries, the business community, civil society and academia. In order to avoid over-representation of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology two persons represent the Ministry and an important member is the political advisor to the Minister which in the first meeting highly appraised the project as being important for the VET system and for Kosovo in general.

### **Members of the NAB are:**

1. Ragip Gjoshi, Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
2. Ryve Prekorogja, Officer for VET technical profiles at the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST): Valbona Fetiu Mjeku: Head of VET Division, MEST.
3. Dukagjin Pupovci, Kosovo Education Center (KEC); Executive Director
4. Arta Uka, Senior Education Officer, Department for Economy and Trade Ministry of European Integration
5. Besim Mustafa Head of the Department for Vocational and Further Education/Luljeta: Kosovo Chamber of Commerce
6. Lutfi Mani: Joint Union of Education, Science and Culture; Vice President
7. Habit Hajredini, Director at the Office for Good Governance
8. Mytaher Haskuka: Head of Research Unit at UNDP and Professor at the University of Prishtina - Department of Psychology as an independent academic.

No problems were encountered in establishing the NAB, all persons contacted accepted to be part of the board which confirms that they value the project and were willing to be part of it. A first meeting with NAB was held on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2012 where three main points were discussed:

- Relevant ‘puzzles’ concerning the relationship between VET and social inclusion and social cohesion;
- Appropriate collaborative research strategy to investigate identified puzzles; and how findings from the project could be used in improving VET policy and practice.

Five members participated in the ‘kick-off’ meeting and the remaining three were absent due to their busy agenda.. It is important to note that application of PAR was welcomed and appreciated. The main conclusions derived from the discussion are as follows:

- Apply integrative programmes for socially excluded groups, professional practice makes an essential place for such practices, especially the Practice Firms
- Concentrate on the enrolment period and therefore criteria

- Improve the image of VET and raise awareness about the role of VET among employers, business and the whole society
- Involve chambers of commerce and employers associations in linking VET with the labour market
- Further reform the Matura exam for VET students in line with VET system and preparatory programmes
  
- It was proposed that prior to completion of the final report, the findings should be presented to a wider group for feedback and comments that would add value to the study (NB: this should be done through feedback to the National Advisory Board and through the Local Advisory Boards)

To compile the Local Advisory Boards (LAB) school directors from each school were consulted and asked to nominate one student in the first or last year of studies (12<sup>th</sup> grade); a teacher; and a parent. Part of the LAB will be also the school director; coordinator of the regional office of Kosovo Chamber of Commerce as representative of the business community and one NGO related to VET or social exclusion and cohesion (we have already identified one NGO for the LAB in Prishtina – the European Centre for Minority Rights). For the two other LABs, potential NGOs are those working with people with disabilities, gender issues and others working with excluded groups. The three schools have already provided names and contacts of students, teachers and parent for the LABs.

Once questionnaires are ready, a meeting with each LAB will be arranged to discuss questions and take on board comments and proposals. School directors are informed about the survey and have promised their commitment to support us in this process.

### **3. Methodology of participatory action research**

The participatory action research (PAR) is understood as research approach led by researchers working with those to whom results are relevant and have an impact. In the context of this project it implies a researcher working together with the VET schools, national and local policy makers, school professionals, students, employers, researchers and civil society organisations. PAR also means that the research methodology and tools will be discussed and decided with the co-researchers through the research advisory boards both at national and local level in order to ensure that the methods and methodological instruments to be employed are appropriate and consistent with local moral and ethical standards.

The implementation of PAR will be done by involving stakeholders during all stages of research in order to make sure the adequacy of methodology to Kosovo VET context. Information will be shared with all involved parties and results will be made available during the whole process. In continuity,

guidance and support will be appreciated from the national and local advisory boards (we did point this in the first NAB informing members that we will share documents and findings with them considering their feedback beneficial to this project).

Applying the PAR approach it means that recommendations will not need to be imposed as when other research approaches are applied, but taking into account that those impacted will be part of the research it will be their findings, hence they should see it as something that works well for them. A teamwork approach amongst all involved in the research process is essential to ensure effective outcomes and hence it will be applied during the research projects.

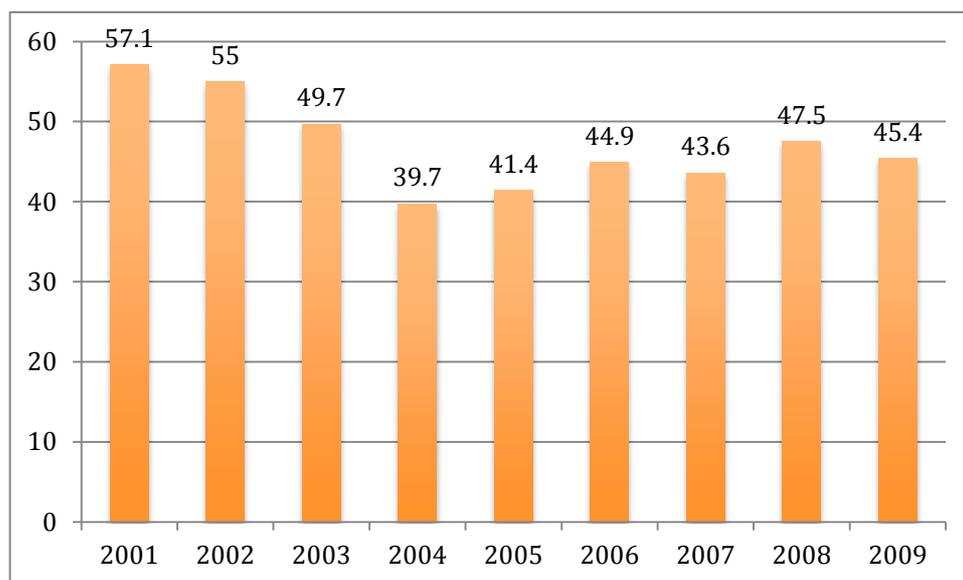
#### **4. Expected problems that may be encountered during the fieldwork with the schools and local communities**

We do not foresee serious difficulties during fieldwork. However, availability of persons for in-depth interviews and focus groups may be a challenge due to busy agendas that people might have but we will arrange meetings well in advance and contact participants before meetings to make sure they take part as they have promised. In cases when it is impossible for invitees to take part we will ask them to nominate someone from their institution that is well informed on issues and can qualitatively replace the one that due to other obligations cannot take place in focus groups or meet us as agreed for the interview. We are confident that with schools we have selected we will not face problems in data collection through student and teacher's questionnaire. Given that population of students in three schools is quite high we will make sure representation issue.

#### **5. Analysis and discussion of statistical indicators gathered at national level**

Some general indicators relevant to the study are presented next. Kosovo has the highest rate of unemployment in Europe and the Balkans. According to the latest Labour Force Survey in 2009 the unemployment rate in Kosovo is around 45% (KAS, 2010). As can be noted from Figure 1, since 2006 unemployment remained almost unchanged with a small decline from 2008 to 2009, but due to the lack of data there is no information about developments in 2010 and 2011.

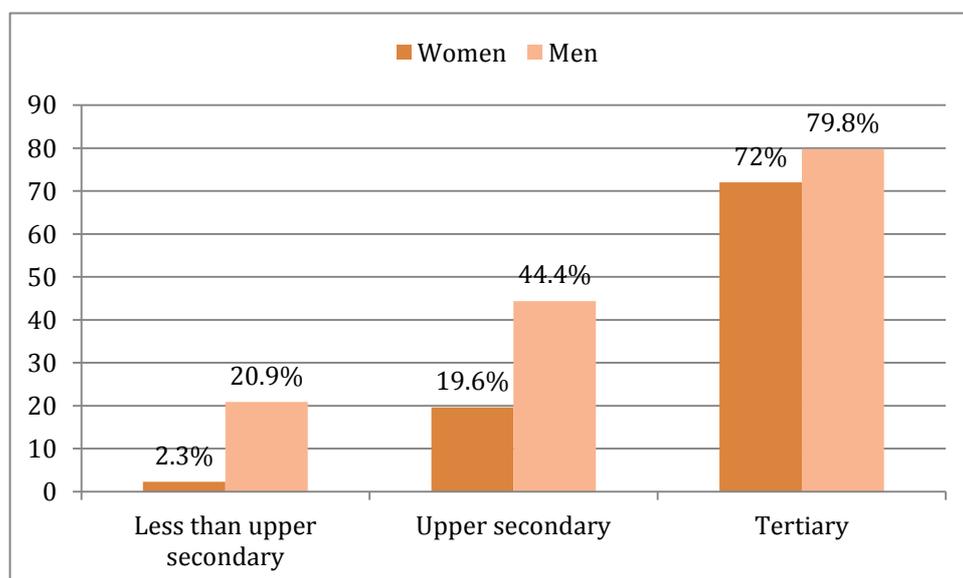
**Figure 1: Unemployment rate in Kosovo, 2001-2009**



Source: KAS, 2010.

There is a positive link between employment and educational level, which holds for both males and females (Figure 2). However, women in Kosovo are less likely to find a job than men, a difference that is very stark at the lowest level of education suggesting the importance of education in improving the employment prospects of women

**Figure 2: Employment rate and educational level by gender**

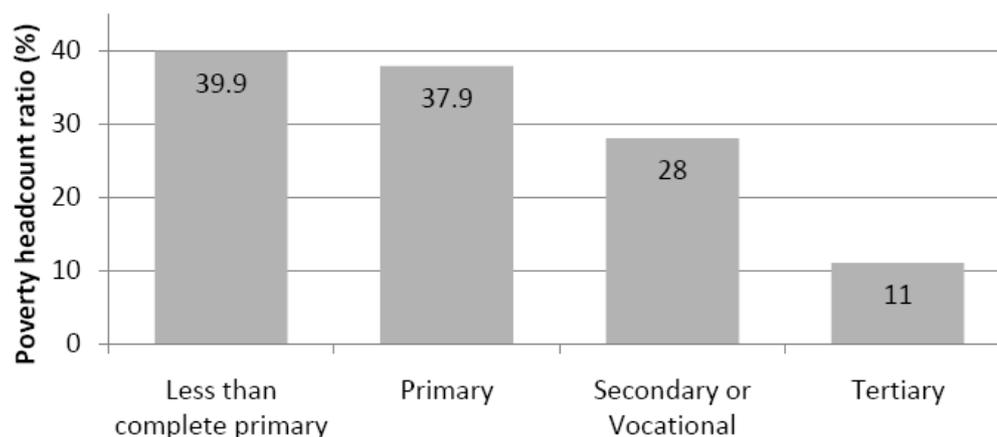


Source: KAS, 2010.

As one would expect, the poverty rate decreases as an individual moves from one level of education to another. Completing primary education leads to slightly better poverty outcomes than not completing primary, and the additional gain is larger when moving from complete primary to complete

secondary, and even larger when going from complete secondary to complete tertiary. The report does not analyse the difference between poverty reduction for those that have completed general versus vocational education which would be an important information. This information can be obtained from KAS which can be derived from the HBS 2011 which distinguishes educational level separately for general and vocational schools.

**Figure 3: Poverty headcount rate by highest level of education completed, 2009**



Source: World Bank, 2011

## MACEDONIA

### **Part A.**

#### **Introduction**

The new economic environment, with fierce international competition, globalisation and fast technological changes have posed large changes in the labour markets. It is no more assumed that a worker would keep his/hers job position throughout the working life, but instead to change the position, company, working mode or even career. Moreover, the skill requirements of jobs are continuously changing, even more so in the countries that underwent deep structural reforms during the transition, such as Macedonia. These changes pose a great challenge for the education systems to produce at the same time relevant skills and adaptable workers.

Structural changes during the transition have led to high rates of structural unemployment and mismatch between the skills supplied in the labour market and the ones demanded by the emerging sectors (Bartlett, 2007; EC, 2012). There are several factors leading to persistent skill mismatches in Macedonia and across the Western Balkan (WB) region. First, the efforts towards adapting the education systems to the national employment, social inclusion and competitiveness goals have been insufficient and generally ineffective (Spasovski et al., 2010). The old curricula have not been adjusted properly and quickly to reflect new occupations and skills requirements in the manufacturing and the fast growing services sector. Moreover, the legislative changes were at times lagging behind the reforms hindering the effectiveness of the latter (ETF, 2010). Second, the education system in Macedonia (as across all the ex-communist countries) was mainly focused on input-based measurement of the effectiveness of educational policy (for instance, through the number of schools and teachers) rather than on outputs, or student achievements. Such a system neglected the key competences and functional literacy leading to low achievements of Macedonian students, as assessed by international comparative studies. Third, a long period of under-investment in education has led to a poor educational infrastructure. Furthermore, the low willingness of employers to invest in on-the-job training and continuous skill upgrading of their workers has exacerbated the problem of skill mismatches (Sondergaard et al., 2011). For instance, the share of the employed workers aged 18-64 participating in education and training in Macedonia is low by international standards, being 5% in 2011 compared to an average of 12.5% among the EU-27 countries (Eurostat database).

Empirical studies show that Vocational Education and Training (VET) might also support social inclusion (at an individual level) and cohesion (at a society level). For instance, Preston and Green (2008) find that besides the labour market function,

VET has a broader social role of reducing inequalities, supporting institutional integrity and value formation. They argue that there is a switch from the socialization role of VET towards a role of building competences. Moreover, Tsakarissianos (2008) argue that VET can contribute towards greater social mobility – the degree to which offspring can move up (or down) the social scale of their parents – in conjunction with broader social policy. However, VET schools in most transition countries fail to provide this social function leaving many young people excluded from education, with little chance of social mobility and inclusion (non-enrolled pupils, irregular attendees, dropouts and early leavers). Social exclusion in VET may have different forms: at entry into VET, completion of VET (i.e. drop-out), educational experience during their education, transition from school to work and the subsequent career path.

With an unemployment rate at about 31% and youth unemployment rate at 55%, young workers face a very difficult school-to-work transition. Besides the general lack of jobs, the inappropriate and less relevant knowledge and skills of graduates raises the probability that they will enter the labour market through unemployment. Urdinola and Macias (2008) find that education in Macedonia is the main determinant of the transition from unemployment into employment. However, employers in Macedonia are unwilling to bear the costs of on-the-job training of inexperienced youth given the existence of experienced unemployed applicants (Mojsoska et al., 2009).

There is a widespread national debate about skill mismatches. However the extent of such mismatches has not been analyzed and assessed precisely. There is no systematic monitoring or assessment of the demand for labour, and no forecasting of the future skills need of employers, which constrains effective reforms of education, in general, and, the VET system in particular.

In 2010, the European Training Foundation (ETF) and the Centre for Vocational Education conducted a collaborative study to assess the effectiveness of the reformed 4-year vocational education (ETF, 2010). The study (field research) showed that, in general, employers are not satisfied with the skills possessed by students graduating from secondary vocational education. In their opinion, students lack practical and soft skills (team work, leadership, self-initiative, creativity, communication skills). Hence, employers complain that they face high costs for the initial on-the-job training of workers. However, the findings from the study also reveal that employers do not have an incentive to cooperate with the schools, though they say that are willing to help schools develop better study plans, provide co-mentors for students, provide in-work training for teachers, etc.

A Skill Needs Analysis carried by the Employment Service Agency acquires information from employers about their short-term recruitments in the following 6-12 months, their need for skills and occupational shortages. Results from the 2011 survey showed that about two thirds of the demand would be for workers with

completed secondary education, 16% for workers with primary education and 9.9% (or in total 1,135 jobs) would require tertiary education. Employers report that they place high value on work experience and additional qualifications and skills, including IT skills and foreign languages. One-fifth of the companies surveyed in 2011 reported that they had experienced difficulty in finding an appropriate worker, mostly complaining about the lack of work experience among applicants, as well as a lack of soft skills, such as communication skills, ambition, responsibility, reliability, precision, team work, flexibility, sales and management skills.

However, these findings cannot be used as guidance for the educational policy and especially the reform of the VET system as they are too general and usually refer to the soft skills. Hence, there is no solid ground for evidence-based policy-making in the VET so that the educational policy “operates in the dark”. The skills mismatch breaks the link between the education and the economic growth (Mojsoska-Blazevski and Ristovska, 2012).

The aim of this study is therefore to provide a detailed analysis of the role of the VET system in Macedonia in promoting social inclusion and cohesion, as well as the policy and reform developments in this area. Special focus would be given to the barriers to policy reform towards enhancing the role of VET in social inclusion and cohesion.

In particular, the research tasks are the following:

*Research task 1: to map the different policies towards VET, social inclusion and social cohesion and assess the relationship between them;*

*Research Task 2: to map the influence of selection and tracking on social inclusion;*

*Research Task 3: to map the extent of drop-out from vocational education and assess the influence of drop-put on social inclusion;*

*Research task 5: to map the transition from vocational education to work and assess the different ways in which this transition reflects differences in social inclusion;*

*Research task 6: to map the different patterns of continuing vocational education and training and assess the influence of continuing training institutions on social inclusion.*

The findings will be used to support a comparative regional study, which will help countries in the region to share best practices.

The structure of the study is as follows. In Part A we examine the system of VET, the institutional framework and policy options for VET and social inclusion. The detailed methodology for the field research is presented in Part B.

## **1. Institutional framework and the policy process at national level for VET, and for social inclusion:**

## 1.1 Situation analysis at national level

A majority of young people in Macedonia (about 60%) in 2011 attended VET schools (Table 1), although the share of pupils attending VET schools has been on a declining trend over the last decade (from 70% in 2001). Slightly less than half of the vocational education pupils are females (44 to 48%).

Table 1 - Enrolled pupils in secondary education, by type of program

Type	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
Secondary education, total	94,545	93,843	95,343	94,155	93,064
Gymnasium	38,214	38,373	38,527	38,013	37,646
Arts	854	1,015	1,221	1,071	1,080
Vocational education	55,477	54,455	55,595	55,071	54,338
VET, as % of all	59%	58%	58%	58.5%	58.4%

Source: State Statistical Office, various years.

Changes and reforms in the educational system during the transition have also affected VET schools. However, only the 4-year vocational secondary education in Macedonia was reformed comprehensively. The 3-year vocational education was not reformed on a larger scale and the curricula are dating from the period of ex-Yugoslavia. Only the mechanical/automotive and electro-technical/electronics tracks were reformed under a GTZ reform which aimed at introducing a “dual system” with 50% of the curricula being covered by practical learning. However, so far, such reform is not possible on a broader scale (except in the pilot schools) due to a lack of qualified teachers, equipment and links with industry.

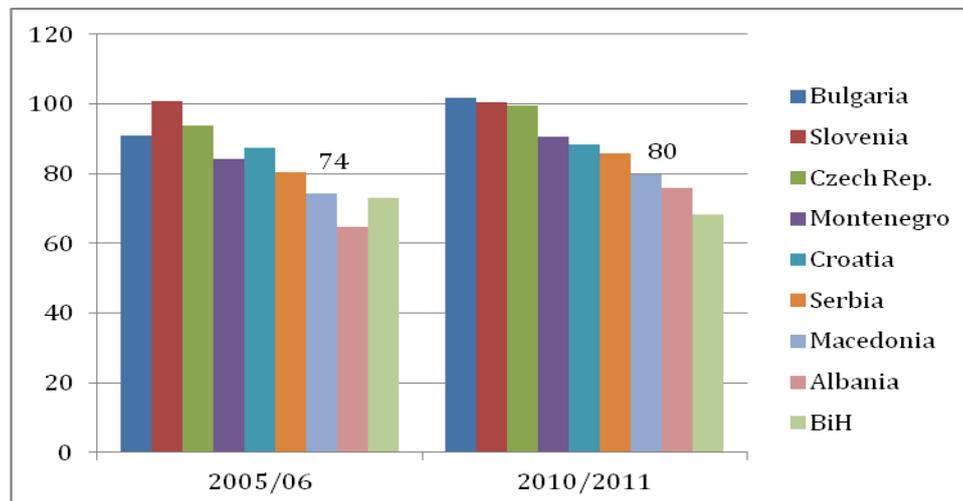
One of the major reforms in the Macedonian education system was the introduction of mandatory secondary education from the school year 2008/2009. The Law on Secondary Education imposes a penalty (of EUR 1,000) for parents whose children are not enrolled or do not regularly attend classes (Official Gazette, No. 49/2007). As a support to the policy for establishing a compulsory secondary education the Government in recent years, has implemented several programs/measures for increasing the enrolment into primary and secondary education, some of which are general whereas some are targeted towards vulnerable groups. These programs include:

- Free books and transportation from the place of residence to the school for children enrolled in the secondary education;
- Establishing a system of mentoring and tutoring for the students from poor families, especially for Roma students;

- Providing scholarships for students with great achievements in the secondary education;
- Introduction of the Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) for children from the poor families who regularly attend secondary schools. The transfer is given when a child from a family that receives social financial assistance is enrolled and regularly attends a school with an aim to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the social safety net, as well as to enhance the human capital of children from the socially disadvantaged families. The total amount that children receive is 12,000 Macedonian denars (about EUR 200) per school year.

Despite the educational reforms and the increased supply of secondary (and tertiary) education, important gaps remain in the secondary school enrolment, attendance and completion in Macedonia with the EU countries and the new Member States (NMS). Figure 1 shows the gross enrolment rates into secondary education (both general and vocational) in Macedonia and the countries in the region. Clearly, the countries in the region, including Macedonia, lag behind the enrolment rates in the NMS, meaning that a larger proportion of young persons in these countries are left out of the schools. Although there has been some progress in Macedonia, with gross enrolment rate increasing from 74% in 2005/06 to 80% in 2010/11, the country is among the worst performers in the region and the EU. This increased enrolment to a large extent can be attributed to the introduction of compulsory secondary education (see below).

Figure 1 - Gross enrolment rates (for population aged 15-18) in ISCED 3

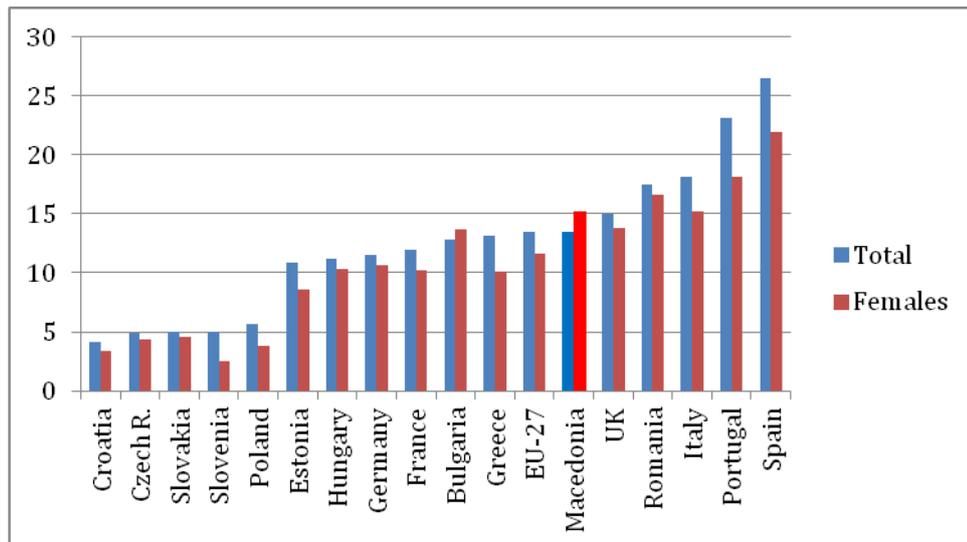


Source: TransMonee database.

The introduction of the compulsory secondary education has also contributed to a declining share of early school leavers. The share of population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education (and not in further education and training) in Macedonia in 2011 was at same level as in the EU-27 (see Figure 2). The country has managed to reduce the share of early school-leavers by 41% in only five years.

However, females in Macedonia have a higher probability to exit schooling with at most lower secondary education compared to females in the EU-27 countries: the share of female early school-leavers in Macedonia was 15.2% in 2011, whereas it was at 11.6% in the EU-27.

Figure 2 - Share of early school-leavers, Macedonia and the EU countries, 2011



Source: Eurostat statistical database, extracted on 5 June, 2012.

There are however many young person's which are not in employment and not in education and training (NEET). The share of NEET among youth in Macedonia was around 14% in 2011, twice the EU-27 average of 7%. Only Bulgaria has higher NEET compared to Macedonia across the EU countries. However, the country has made a significant progress given that the NEET rate in 2006 was at 33% (a 60% decline).

The educational poverty in the country (share of population over 24 years of age with less than secondary education) affects 36% of the population, whereas the EU-27 average is at 26%. UNDP (2009) argues that poverty in Macedonia tends to be both a cause and an effect of low education levels, with an existent vicious cycle of poverty transferring between generations. The educational gaps are disproportionately represented among the poor, those from rural areas and Roma population (UNDP, 2009; EC, 2012). Girls from the ethnic Albanian and ethnic Turkish community living in rural areas are particularly vulnerable in terms of enrolments and completion of secondary schools, as they face high chance to be taken out of schools in order to preserve their virginity (Spasovski et al., 2010). Primary and especially secondary school enrolment is substantially lower among the poor than among the non-poor and ethnic minorities. While the enrolment discrepancy is already visible in primary education, it becomes striking in secondary education. The gap is evident between the poorest and richest household quintiles, namely only 34% of children from the poorest quintile attend secondary school in 2006, compared to 90% from

the richest (SSO, 2007), gaps are identified with respect to the ethnicity of students: primary and especially secondary school enrolment are substantially lower for the Roma: 60% of Roma children attend primary school, and only 17% attend secondary. However, these indicators are likely to have improved with the introduction of compulsory secondary education.

## **1.2 The institutional framework for vocational education at national level covering also the degree of decentralisation**

The VET Centre is the main institution in the vocational education and training system. It was established in 2006 with a role of integrating the public interests and interests of the social partners in VET. Its main functions are the following:

- to plan the further development of the VET system and its adjustment to the technological and social context in the country;
- to support social partnership, development and the implementation of VET;
- to link education and work in a context of the lifelong learning;
- to prepare concepts for VET, occupational standards and curricula;
- to develop a model of the curricula for the courses;
- to suggest exam structures for the vocational subjects in the VET curricula, etc.

Despite the improvements in the operation of the VET Centre, the EC (2012) finds that the overall capacity of the VET Centre (as well as the Centre of Adult Education) remains insufficient.

Although the VET Centre is the central institutions in the VET system, its function and responsibilities in some areas overlap with those of the other educational institutions, such as the Bureau for Development of Education (BDE), the Adult Education Centre (AEC), the State Education Inspectorate (SEI) and the State Examination Centre (SEC) all of which play an active role in VET. For instance, the BDE is competent for the teachers teaching general subjects in 4-year VET, whereas the VET Centre is competent for teachers teaching vocational subjects – hence the different interests of the teachers and institutions involved in the delivery of VET. Such inefficiencies in the organization of the VET system suggest the need for a clearer division of responsibilities between the different actors (mainly the VET Centre and the BDE), as well as greater accountability of the institutions.

The main laws governing the vocational education and training system are the following: the Law on Secondary Education (Official Gazette, No. 52/2002), the Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Secondary Education (Official

Gazette, No. 49/2007), the Law on Vocational Education and Training (Official Gazette, No. 71/2006, and most recent changes 17/2011), the Law on the Bureau for Development of Education (Official Gazette, No. 37/2006), the Law on Adult Education (Official Gazette, No. 7/2008), the Law on the State Examination Centre (Official Gazette, No. 142/2008) and the Law on Education Inspectorate (Official Gazette, No. 52/2005). These laws are accompanied by numerous bylaws (rulebooks, norms, regulations, guidelines, etc.) which regulate the relations in the programme, process, personnel, technological, organisational and financial areas, and in the other educational components of secondary education. ETF (2010) argues that despite the continuous legislative improvements and changes, the new legislation still has some of the old weaknesses which limit the effectiveness of the education policy. Most of the weaknesses are systemic ones, with unclear division of responsibilities and competencies between the several newly established institutions (see the discussion above) and lack of synchronization between laws. In spite of a number of successful interventions, certain issues in the area of education remained unregulated or insufficiently regulated. The ETF study also found that the Law on Secondary Education is not coordinated with the other laws, such as the Law on Vocational Education and Training and the Law on Local Self-government.

The Law on Secondary Education prohibits the display of religious and political party symbols in schools, prohibits discrimination and guarantees minority-language instruction. The discrimination included social, political, religious discrimination and/or discrimination based on the social status.

Besides the main legislation, education is also covered in several strategic documents and action plans, such as the 2007 National Action Plan for Gender Equality, Child Protection Programme, and the 2009 Social Protection Programme. However, these programs do not give specific recommendations and do not treat the (vocational) education as a tool for increasing social inclusion and cohesion. The National Strategy for the Development of Education 2005-2015 more directly covers the issue of inclusion, through: non-discrimination; improved physical access to schools; increasing participation in education through awareness-raising in ethnic communities; expanding coverage of pre-school education; etc. At the secondary level, new elective courses were added on the themes of Civic culture (in general secondary schools/gymnasiums) and Culture of protection, peace, and tolerance (in both grammar and vocational schools). The National Action Plan for Education for the Decade of Roma Inclusion emphasizes access of Roma population to scholarships and tutoring, and also calls for the legal obligation of supplementary instruction to be delivered. However, the National Strategy for Reduction of Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010-2020 does not make specific reference to the education system as a potentially powerful means for promoting social inclusion and cohesion.

Spasovski et al. (2010) argue that the legislative and policy support to the diversity of the students and the promotion of social inclusion is not effective in practice. For

instance, there are separate public schools or separate classes in public schools for pupils with disabilities or pupils from ethnic (and linguistic) minorities.

As part of the overall efforts for decentralization of the delivery of public services, the competencies and responsibilities over the delivery of the VET were to some extent transferred to the local self-governments. However, there is no clear division of the responsibilities between the central and local level of government. The Law on VET states that the local self-government should analyze the local labour market and inform the VET Centre about the latest developments on the labour market, give suggestions for development of new curricula and programs, for enrolment quotas in the VET, etc. However, in the assessment of the 4-year VET, the ETF (2010) found that local self-government has insufficient information about the local labour markets, and that VET education is not a priority for them. Hence the decentralization did not bring the expected benefits in terms of greater links between the curricula and the local labour market needs and the demand for workers. The draft Strategy for VET envisages a review of the current model of division of responsibilities and financing over VET education between the central and local government level.

The education system including VET has undergone significant changes during the last two decades. However, the VET sector is one of the public policy fields where reforms are difficult to implement because of the strong unions usually resisting policy change. Large structural changes that occurred during transition were not accompanied by appropriate reforms in the VET education. Educational policy and reforms in Macedonia were considerably influenced by the international organizations and donor support. The most influential international actors are the European Commission, World Bank, UNDP, OECD, GTZ, etc. However, the policy transfer and the effectiveness of the implemented policies is at times constrained by the weak administrative capacity, cultural traditions, domestic reform management, insufficient public resources, etc.

Some of the most important reforms in the VET system are the following ones:

- Improvement of the legislative environment;
- Changes in the structure of the VET, through extension of the compulsory education, introduction of curricula with different duration and level of qualifications acquired,
- Incorporation of the adult education in the overall education system, etc.;
- Initial steps in the establishment of the National Qualification Framework (occupational standards, qualifications and standards for VET);
- Decentralization of the management of VET from central to local level;
- Initiatives for strengthening the social partnership;
- Establishment and capacity building of the main VET institutions;
- Changes in the curricula, introduction of new subjects, interdisciplinary approach;

- Some steps to building an inclusive education, etc.

The enrolment into VET education is in most cases a second best alternative for pupils (ETF, 2010). There is greater pressure for enrolment into general secondary schools but because of their limited capacity, students that fail to enrol in those schools (due to the low prior performance) end up studying in VET schools. In addition, for some pupils a VET school or a specific type of VET school is the only available choice as they are financially constrained to travel to the preferred schools in other town/city. This raises a need for rethinking the nature of the schools in small towns, or might give a case for organising combined secondary schools (general/vocational).

Across the VET schools, the most attractive ones are the economy-law and trade, the medical, the electro-technical and the machine engineering. However, given that the supply (quotas) of these occupational areas is large, relatively large enrolments might reflect only the availability of places. Pupils and their parents prefer 4-year VET programs over the 2- and 3-year programs, as the 4-year programs provide a possibility for enrolment into tertiary education. About 80% of the pupils completing the 4-year VET continue their education at universities.

In the last couple of years, the Government has prioritised VET education, especially technical profiles, mainly as part of its efforts and goal to increase the number (and proportion) of graduates from technology and math studies. In 2012, the Government has started a public campaign to promote enrolments into VET education.

Currently, the authorities are preparing a National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training. It is prepared by a National Council, including representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science (MES), the VET Center, the Association of Local Self-Governments, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Employment Service Agency, the BDE, the CAE and the Chamber of Commerce. The Strategy (which is in a draft version) builds on the National Strategy for the Development of Education 2005-2015, and aims at addressing the main dilemmas in the future development of the VET system, such as the policy design (aim, mission and vision), the systematic organization of the VET (occupational areas, profiles, network of schools, curricula), the challenge of meeting the needs of the multiple clients (pupils, parents, business sector, the society), and in the delivery of the programs.

The Strategy has the following goals:

- To increase the attractiveness, relevance and quality of VET, and to promote its role in business performance, competitiveness and innovations;
- To offer a flexible and different opportunities for acquiring knowledge and skills, promoting an entrepreneurial spirit, continuous education, and active citizenship; and
- To promote high quality and social inclusion, to ensure greater employability, mobility and security of the workplace.

The Strategy establishes nine key areas for intervention, which are then elaborated in detail and measures for improvement proposed:

1. Quality and attractiveness of the VET;
2. Curricula and study programs in VET and their relevance to the labor market and further education;
3. Teaching process and grading criteria;
4. Cooperation between the VET schools and the business sector;
5. Ensuring quality VET;
6. Decentralization of management and financing of the VET;
7. Monitoring and evaluation of VET;
8. Legislative environment;
9. Internationalization of VET.

## **Part B.**

### **2. Choice of schools**

Three case study schools have been selected according to the comprehensive selection methodology and the criteria which included:

- presence of inclusive and/or segregation practices (new and/or longstanding)
- consideration of diversity (accounting for economic, socio, cultural, religious, and linguistic differences, urban/rural)
- instrumental learning (academic attainment and practical learning)
- dialogic and/or cooperative learning
- family/community/employers collaborative involvement in the school
- commitment of the school staff to inclusive approaches for all learners
- level of motivation (of students, school staff and families)
- academic expectations (of students, teachers, and family members)
- inclusion of democratic values in the educational programme
- school's capacity to contribute to the research (carrying out research activities/  
reporting/participating in externally designed researches)
- commitment from the Government to support financially either through donor funded projects or state funds

The initial ranking of the schools based on the above listed criteria has been made and the list of ten (10) VET schools has been established and agreed between the partners in the project, the MES, ETF and the LSE enterprise. Further on, the ten (10) ranked schools were mapped across regions in order to select schools from

different regions. Following this procedure we case study schools from the Pelagonia region, the Polog region and the Skopje Region.

The selected case study schools that are part of this research are as follows:

- Pelagonia region, municipality Prilep, VET school – “SOU - Riste Risteski-Ricko”
- Polog region, municipality Tetovo, VET school - “SOU - Nikola Stejn”
- Skopje region, municipality Gazi Baba, Vet school- “ASUC -Boro Petrusevski”

## **2.1 Case study school SOU “Riste Risteski - Ricko “, municipality Prilep, region Pelagonia**

### **2.1.1 VET School in the wider context - region and municipality characteristics**

VET School Riste Risteski Ricko is located in region of Pelagonia, in the municipality of Prilep. The Pelagonia Region is in the south of the Republic of Macedonia and is the largest region covering 18.9% of the total land area of the country. In 2011, 11.3% of the total population i.e. 233,628 citizens lived in this region. This region has pronounced emigration of the population and as a result has negative natural increase. The Pelagonia basin, which is the largest plain in the country, the Prespa lake, the specific climate, the extensive hydrographic network, as well as largest coal deposits makes this region the largest producer of tobacco, apples and milk as well as largest producer of the electricity. Pelagonia region covers 9 municipalities - Dolneni, Krusevo, Demir Hisar, Krivogastani, Prilep, Mogila, Resen, Bitola and Novaci with 343 settlements.

The literacy rate in the region is 96%, activity rate is 64%, employment rate is 44% and the unemployment rate is 31.4% (SSO, 2012). There are 8,308 active entities in this region.

There are 17 secondary education schools out of which 12 are VET schools. Total number of enrolled students in secondary education in 2011/2012 in the school year in Prespa region encounters 10.423 students.

The municipality of Prilep has a mainly Macedonian population who account for 93.2% of the population of 76,768, while 6% are Roma and 0.8% are from other ethnic minorities. The business activities in this municipality are mainly distributed in the tobacco industry, agriculture, food industry, mining, textile industry, construction, metal industry, trade and tourism. The municipality is characterized by a high unemployment rate and, as elsewhere in the country, the majority of the unemployed have either no education or only primary education and are over 50 years old. In this municipality there are four (4) VET schools.

### **2.1.2 VET school SOU “Riste Risteski – Ricko”**

VET School “Riste Risteski-Ricko” is 4 year VET school and is offering 5 educational programs, mechanical, electro technical, traffic, graphic and sport gymnasium. Each of the educational programs has different education profiles (specialization area). The Electro technical education program has 3 education profiles: computer and automatics, electronics and telecommunications, and energetic. The Mechanical education program has 2 education profiles: mechanical technician and mechatronics. Traffic education program has 1 education profile: transport and forwarding. Graphic education program has 1 education profile: graphic technician

The total number of enrolled students in the school year 2012/2013 is 907 students, out of which 281 in electro technical education program, 217 mechanical, 195 traffic, 97 graphic education program and 117 in the sport gymnasium. The distribution of the students per education program per year of studying is provided in the Table 2 below. Total number of teachers is 76. The student/teacher ratio is 11.9.

Table 2: Distribution of the students per education program per year of studying

Overview of the students among education programs per year of studying												
Education program	Students per year of studying											
	First year			Second year			Third year			Forth year		
	Students	Classes	Average students per class	Students	Classes	Average students per class	Students	Classes	Average students per class	Students	Classes	Average students per class
<b>Electro technical</b>	65	3	22	72	3	24	74	3	25	70	3	23
<b>Mechanical</b>	55	2	28	70	3	23	50	2	25	42	2	21
<b>Traffic</b>	66	2	33	65	2	33	33	1	33	31	1	31
<b>Graphic</b>	24	1	24	22	1	22	28	1	28	23	1	23
<b>Sport gymnasium</b>	34	1	34	29	1	29	23	1	23	31	1	31
<b>Total</b>	244	9		258	10		208	8		197	8	

Table 3 shows the average performance of the students in the respective school, per year. The average grade is 3 (good) using the ranking 1-5 where 5 is excellent, 4 – very good, 3-good, 2 – satisfactory, 1 – repeat. Still the average performance of the students is gradually declining from the first year of studying onwards. The further research will focus on detecting the reasons for declining the student’s performance while approaching in the upper classes, as well as the teaching methods and the techniques that are applied by the teachers in order to improve the student’s performance. This is very important especially for preventing the drop out from the school.

Table 3: Student Performance per year of studying

Student performance per year of studying								
	First year		Second year		Third year		Forth year	
	Students	%	Students	%	Students	%	Students	%
Excellent (5)	60	25	25	10	28	13	35	18
Very good (4)	81	33	71	28	38	18	32	16
Good (3)	75	31	97	38	67	32	70	36
Satisfactory (2)	15	6	56	22	73	35	60	30
Repeaters (1)	13	5	9	3	2	1	0	0

Mapping of VET educational policies and practices for social inclusion and social cohesion  
Country Study: Macedonia

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	244		258		208		197	
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The initial interview with the school director was carried out by the research team on October 24, 2012. The aim of the discussion was to introduce the research team, to present the aims of the research study, the participatory action research (PAR) method and the establishment of the Local Research Advisory (LRA) board as well as to gain initial knowledge about the school and the respective school environment.

It has been agreed the following stakeholders to participate in LAB:

- The school Director,
- The school Psychologist,
- A teacher,
- A representative from the Parent counsel,
- A representative from the Chamber of Commerce from Prilep,
- The counsellor for education in the municipality of Prilep.

According to the agreed plan, the LAB should be established by mid November, 2012.

Based on the initial discussions made with the school director, students choose to enter this particular vocational school because of the attractive educational profiles, possibility for finding a job, and possibility to continue education towards university. Hence, the school is their first choice. Nonetheless it should be noted that the entry process in the school is followed by the strong campaign of the school management and staff for promotion the education programs and attracting students. The pupils' professional orientation is not performed. The tracking and the streaming might be an area for further investigation in the focus group discussion and interviews with the LAB. According to the school' data, about 60% of the graduated pupils are entering tertiary education and it has been noted that the introduction of the State matura opened the door for the students to enrol in any type of undergraduate studies-concentration regardless of their previous education background. This change influenced on the increased interest of the students to enrol in the VET schools.

The school drop-out is negligible and all of the students that exit the school switch to other school. The State Labour Inspectorate (SLI) has set an effective procedure to track the children that are dropping out, meaning that each student that drops out from the school must present a statement from other school in which he/she enrolls otherwise the school must report that case to the SLI.

The school is financially dependent on the Central budget and the municipality. There are no income generating programs established in the school in addition to the transfers made by the Government and municipality. The experience of the school ASUC Boro Petrusevski-Skopje shows a good

example of how schools can develop income generating activities which might be used for improving the school premises, more quality practical teaching, teacher training, etc.

The practical work of the students is largely performed within the school, in the so-called laboratories for practical work. Some of the students are also attending practical work in some local business. The connections with the local business are established on the initiative of the Director i.e. personal relations.

The transition from school to work will also be analyzed by the team, as the school did not have information about the employability of the students that finished.

## **2.2 Case study school VET school - “SOU -Nikola Stejn”, municipality Tetovo, region Polog**

### **2.2.1 VET School in the wider context - region and municipality characteristics**

VET school “Nikola Stejn” is located in Polog region, municipality of Tetovo. The region belongs to the northwest part of the Republic of Macedonia, the Polog basin and the valley of the river Radika. It covers 9.7% of the country’s total land area. In 2011, 15.3% of the total population i.e. 315,964 people lived in this region. It is one of the most densely populated regions. The region also has the highest natural increase. The extensive hydrographic network has great hydroelectric potential, which is utilized to some extent by the hydroelectric plants on Mavrovo Lake. The specific vegetation of the Polog basin and the surrounding mountains create favorable conditions for the development of agriculture, and especially cattle breeding, for which this region is renowned. Owing to the high mountain ranges, the specific landscape and the climate, the most popular winter resorts are located in this region.

The region is characterized with low GDP per capita, which in 2010 was 47% of the average national GDP per capita, the lowest across all 8 regions. The region participated with 7.2% in the total national GDP.

Polog region consists of 9 municipalities – Tetovo, Tearce, Jegunovce, Bogovinje, Brvenica, Vrapciste, Gostivar and Mavrovo/Rostuse with 184 settlements.

The literacy rate is 96%, activity rate is 44%, employment rate is 30% and the unemployment rate is 31.8% (SSO, 2012).

There are 13 secondary education schools out of which 7 are VET schools. Total number of enrolled students in secondary education in 2011/2012 school year is 15,650 students. About 7,000 active entities operate in this region.

The municipality of Tetovo is a multiethnic environment with strong predominance of the Albanian ethnic population which contribute with 70% of the total population of the municipality (estimated population 200,000 citizens), 23% are ethnic Macedonians and 7% Turks, Roma and other ethnic minorities. The business activities in this municipality are mainly distributed in wood industry, construction, agriculture, textile industry. There are four (4) VET schools in this municipality.

### 2.2.2 VET School “Nikola Stejn”

VET School “Nikola Stejn” is a 4 year VET school offering 5 medical educational programs - medical nurses, dentist technician, pharmaceutical technician, physiotherapist and 2 educational programs for personal services - cosmetics and optics.

In 2010/2011 total number of enrolled students was 2,631 students in 74 classes, out of which 51 classes with instruction on Albanian language, 19 on Macedonian and 4 on Turkish language (Table 4). The education program for personal service is provided only on Albanian language.

Table 4: Number of students and classes, per language of instruction

Language of instruction	I grade		II grade		III grade		IV grade		Total Students	Classes
	Students	Classes	Students	Classes	Students	Classes	Students	Classes		
Albanian	408	12	656	17	468	12	376	10	1908	51
Macedonian	170	5	126	5	150	5	142	4	588	19
Turkish	34	1	34	1	31	1	36	1	135	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>816</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2,631</b>	<b>74</b>

In 2012/2013 there was an increase in the number of pupils to 2,870, in 76 classes. The specific statistics on the students/teacher ratio, number of students enrolled per education program etc. would be collected and analysed further on. The school employs about 214 employees out of which 200 are teachers and 14 is administrative staff. Classes are organised in provided in two shifts, based on the year of studying where 1<sup>st</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade attend the school in the morning shift and the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the afternoon shift.

The initial discussion with the school director has been made by the research team on October 12, 2012. The aim of the discussion was to introduce the research team, to present the aims of the research study, the PAR method and the establishment of the LAB, as well as to gain initial knowledge about the school and the respective school environment.

According to the initial interview with the director, students tend to enrol in this school as it is a sole provider of medicine related programs throughout the region. There is another VET school in the neighbouring municipality of Gostivar which offers one educational program for medical nurses. The Director holds a view that besides the specific programs, the quality of education and the multiethnic and safe environment are the additional factors influencing pupils' choice to enrol. The school financing is solely through the Central budget. The school is generating some own financial resources through renting school facilities and providing adult education. In the past there has been an initiative for opening a dental cabinet for commercial purposes, supported by the USAID program, for which the overall equipment has been procured. However, due to the legislative restrictions and inconsistencies between the Law on Secondary Education and Law on Health Protection the school did not manage to register company. The school has standard procedure for professional orientation of the students but it is not executed regularly but rather upon a request by parents or a pupil. The drop out of pupils rarely occur and as in the case of the VET school in Prilep the students that intend to exit the school must provide a certification for enrolment in other secondary school.

The practical work of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year students is provided within the school. The school possesses well-equipped laboratories for practical teaching. The students from 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year attend the practical learning in the Public health institution in the town of Tetovo. It is recognized as a major partner of the school in which most of the pupils conduct their practical training. A small proportion of pupils perform the practical learning activity in private health institutions.

Most of the students continue their education in university. Still due to the specifics of the education programs related to the medicine it has been noted that there is relatively high demand for medical workers both in public or private health institutions. Pupils from the medicine education programs tend to find job mainly at the public health institution in Tetovo. Cosmeticians are employed in local business, whereas a small proportion of students are opening own businesses.

The counsel of parents as well as the youth organization are functioning within the school.

The researchers discussed with the school management the obligation for the establishment of the Local advisory boards and it has been agreed that the LAB would be established with the following stakeholders:

- Director/Deputy Director of the school,
- Teacher,
- Representative from the Public Health institution,
- Representative from local business,
- The president of the counsel of parents,
- Representative from the municipality responsible for education.

The LAB should be established by mid November, 2012.

### **2.3 Case study VET school “ASUC Boro Petrusovski“, municipality Skopje, Skopje region**

#### **2.3.1 VET School in the wider context - region and municipality characteristics**

VET school “ASUC Boro Petrusovski” is located in the Skopje Region which comprises the northernmost part of the Republic of Macedonia and extends across the Skopje basin. This region is the smallest and covers only 7.3% of the total land area of the country. With 29.4% of the country’s total population (2011) i.e. 605,899 citizens, Skopje is the most populous region in the Republic of Macedonia. Six of its constituent municipalities have a population density of over 1,000 people per km<sup>2</sup>. This region is the main hub of the country and has the most developed traffic infrastructure. Most of the country’s industrial, trade and service capacities are concentrated in this region.

In 2010, the Skopje Region had the highest GDP per capita (314,809 denars), 50% higher than the national average. Skopje region consists of 17 municipalities with 142 settlements.

The literacy rate is 97%, activity rate is 56%, employment rate is 39% and the unemployment rate is 31% (SSO, 2012).

There are 32 secondary education schools out of which 15 are VET schools. Total number of enrolled students in secondary education in the 2011/2012 school year was 27,661 students. There are 28,095 active entities operating in this region.

Skopje, the capital of the Republic of Macedonia, is located in this region, and it is the economic, administrative, cultural and academic center of the country. As a result, this region represents the largest immigration area. The majority of the population are ethnic Macedonians (60.8%), followed by ethnic Albanians (20.5%), Roma 3% and other minorities.

### 2.3.2 VET School “ASUC Boro Petrushevski”

VET School “ASUC Boro Petrushevski” is a 3 and 4-year VET school offering 3 education programs: traffic, mechanical and auto-technical. The education profiles that are offered under each education program are:

Traffic education program – 2 profiles, technician for road traffic and technician for transport

Mechanical education program – 2 profiles, mechatronic (4 year VET) and auto mechanical (3-year VET – not reformed). The auto-technical education program consists of 2 profiles, auto-electrician and carrosserie mechanical (both programs are 3-year – reformed)

In the school year 2012/2013 total number of enrolled students is 991 students in 40 classes out of which 22 classes on Macedonian language of instruction and 18 on Albanian.

Table 5: Number of students and classes, per year of studying

Education program	First year		Second year		Third year		Forth year	
	Students	Classes	Students	Classes	Students	Classes	Students	Classes
<b>Traffic</b>	95	4	99	4	117	4	123	3
<b>Mechanical</b>	104	5	124	5	140	3	84	2
<b>Autotechnical</b>	41	2	37	2	27	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	240	11	260	11	284	7	207	6

The school employs approximately 80 teachers, out of which 72 for theoretical teaching and 18 for practical learning. Classes are organised in two shifts.

The initial discussion with the school director has been made by the research team on October 14, 2012. The aim of the discussion was to introduce the research team, to present the aims of the research study, the PAR method and the establishment of the LAB, as well as to gain initial knowledge about the school and the respective school environment.

The school has developed a strong strategy for attracting pupils with promotional activities being performed throughout the whole year by specific teams. This strategy has a payoff in large number of pupils enrolling into the school, continuously, even in the period when the attractiveness of the VET schools was low. Based on the school internal survey data, 60% of the students tend to enrol in the school upon a recommendation by other students already studying; 10-20% recognises the education programs and the employment possibility; 10-20% are low performers who cannot enrol in other schools (gymnasiums); about 80% of the students are enrolled in the school as first choice. The professional orientation of the students is performed on regular basis and the school has a possibility for transfer from one to other education program based on the skills and interests of the students. Most of the

graduated pupils (70%) of the 4-year programs are enrolling in the tertiary education, out of which 80% in technical faculties. This is not the case for the Albanian ethnic group which tend to enrol in other faculties than the technical ones.

The drop out issue according to the school management occurs at most in the first grade of studying. In 2012/2013, 15 students dropped out from the school but there is strong evidence that they got enrolled in other schools.

The school is partially financed by the Central Budget, and (in comparatively large part) from own resources. Own resources are acquired through own-operated businesses (driving school, driving training ground, homologation, calibration, technical check, insurance brokerage, etc.). These resources are used for improvement of the school infrastructure, procurement of new equipment for practical work, staff trainings etc. In addition, the services offered by the school are used also for the practical learning of students. Students enrolled in the mechanical education program perform the practical learning within the school and those enrolled in traffic education program have mixed practical learning, partially in the school and in part in some local company. Students must also attend 10 days practical work during the summer. The relation with the business community is established solely on the initiative of the director.

The counsel of parents as well as the youth organization is functioning within the school.

The researchers discussed with the school management the obligation for the establishment of the Local advisory boards and it has been agreed that the LAB would be established with the following stakeholders:

- Director of the school,
- Physiologist in the school,
- Teacher,
- 2-3 representatives from local business,
- the president of the counsel of parents,
- representative from the municipality responsible for education.

It has been agreed that the LAB would be established by mid November, 2012.



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## **MONTENEGRO**

### **Introduction**

The aim of the Study is to deepen our understanding of the main barriers and potential opportunities for building inclusive and equitable VET systems in the Montenegro given the current social and economic challenges facing the country. In order to do this it will provide new evidence on the role of VET in combating social inclusion and contributing to building more cohesive societies. The Study will also assist capacity building of national stakeholders to establish policies and practices for enhancing the role of VET and its multidimensional contributions to the promotion of skills, socialization, civic values, social inclusion and social cohesion.

The Montenegrin Government began a comprehensive reform of education in 2000 which resulted in the changes of legislation at all levels of education. Basic principles are decentralization, equal opportunities, choices based on individual capacity, European standards, implementing quality systems, human resource development, lifelong learning, flexibility, compatibility of the curriculum to the level of education in the gradual introduction of changes. Some basic principles have led to the introduction of indicators and quality standards, increase participation and support of parents and the local community in the school's work, the introduction of an open and flexible approach to the curriculum and promote teaching focused on the child. In addition to general education reform, Montenegro has made significant efforts in the development of policies and legislation in order to create an inclusive education system. In the recent period Montenegro did a lot regarding the improving the VET system, but the overall quality of vocational education are still underdeveloped. Occupational profiles and secondary vocational education curricula in Montenegro have been expanded and updated in order to be able to respond to the current restructuring processes in the economy, but students who complete secondary vocational schools continue to face a high probability of being jobless. Education system is does not carefully follow situation at labor market.

The main methods used in the research are desk research, interviews and focus groups.

In the first part of the Report is presented institutional framework and policy process at national level for VET and for social inclusion (situation analysis at national level concerning vocational education, skills mismatches, social

exclusion and social cohesion at national level; the institutional framework for vocational education at national level covering also the degree of decentralization; the policy process and the policy debate at national level). The second part present statistics data of schools and on national level, plan of the research and expected problems in the research.

## **1. Institutional framework and the policy process at national level for VET, and for social inclusion**

### **1.1 Situation analysis at national level**

The Government of Montenegro adopted relevant strategies which are define main goals and issues in education system and labour market: Inclusive Education Strategy (2008) which is main goal to provide and promote quality and accessible education for all children and youth with special education needs according to the their interests, abilities and needs; the National Strategy on Employment and Human Resources Development (2012-2015); the Strategy for Introduction of the Montenegrin Qualification Framework (2008–2013), the Strategy for Lifelong Entrepreneurial Learning (2008–2013), Strategy of lifelong career orientation (2011-2015). Vocational education in Montenegro is implemented as: *lower vocational education* (two years), *secondary vocational education* (three or four years) and *post-secondary vocational education* (up to two years, which is a continuation of secondary vocational education).

Development of vocational education cannot be observed without taking into account the labour market situation or the overall economic system and education system trends. Bearing that in mind, it is necessary to establish the system of vocational education, developed in cooperation with social partners, which will produce human resources qualified for efficient work according to contemporary standards of education levels and which will facilitate personal and social development of each individual.

In last years, during the transition process, structure of Montenegrin economy has been changed. Now, service sector has a bigger share into economy in comparison with industrial sector. As a consequence of this is present “structural unemployment” reflected in the mismatch between supply and demand of certain vocations. The register within Employment Agency contains a relatively high number of occupations not demanded in the labour market or not registered occupations, while there is a demand for them. In order to satisfy demand, high number of non-residents is employed, while the same number of domicile labour force remains unemployed.

It seems that education system does not sufficiently take into account the trends and changes in the labour market, as well as present changes and differences in supply and demand (particularly pronounced in certain occupations) which imposes an obligation of continuous operation of harmonization on relationship between education system and labour market through the enrolment policies and through other mechanisms and program activities.

Despite diplomas, high number of unemployed in schools did not acquire practical knowledge. The low quality of elementary education<sup>1</sup> is also one of the reasons for which the vocational education and training system (VET) has not so far been able to produce good quality results and contribute to decreasing the skills shortage and mismatch on the labour market. Occupational profiles and secondary vocational education curricula in Montenegro have been expanded and updated in order to be able to respond to the current restructuring processes in the economy, but students who complete secondary vocational schools continue to face a high probability of being jobless, compared to those who have chosen a path of general education. According to the data from LFS (MONSTAT, 2Q 2012) the unemployment rate of secondary VET graduates is 20.4% and 25.5% of lower VET. While lack of interest among students in some occupational profiles represents one of the reasons for the mismatch between skills' supply and demand, it is evident that the VET policy has not been sufficiently pursued and based on comprehensive analyses and prognoses relating to skills needs. Additionally, key competences and „soft“ skills are not sufficiently, or systematically included in secondary (general and vocational) education curricula, which impedes adaptability and flexibility of work force at later stages, i.e. in terms of ability of the employed persons to move relatively easy across sectors and professions on a rapidly changing labour market.

In addressing the relationship of supply and demand of labour, at the macro and local level, it is necessary to take in mind the fact that now around 30% of secondary school graduates report to the Employment Agency, and that more of them (about 70%) continued his education in higher degree of the same, similar or other professions.

In the recent period Montenegro did a lot regarding the improving the VET system. Occupational profiles and curricula for secondary vocational education have been broadened and updated in order to respond to the ongoing processes of economic restructuring. Also, projects regarding the preparation of teachers for inclusive education in the context of social and cultural diversity have been conducted, but there are improvements still necessary. While the changes introduced in recent years in VET curricula have been positive and even though

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<sup>1</sup> According to the PISA assessment 2006 (the major performance of Montenegro on the scale including science, literacy and mathematics, was below the OECD average).

the professional standards and curricula have been revised, training in practical skills, training in key competences, and the overall quality of vocational education are still underdeveloped. But, due that new VET curricula were introduced on the country-wide basis in 2009/2010, expected positive results will be apparent after four years.

Montenegro reflected the importance of cooperation between education and business for increasing the employability and entrepreneurial potential of the labour force, as well as for fostering the competitiveness of the country's economy in its national legal and policy framework and invested a lot of effort in strategic considerations and legal provisions for establishing education and business cooperation. While there has been a proliferation of policy papers and legal acts, their coordination and consistency has not always been assured and connection is still weak.

The important issue are career orientation and career planning to which the Ministry of Education and Sport, VET Centre and many educational and other relevant institutions pay special attention (Strategy for Lifelong Career Orientation has been adopted). Also, in process of implementation is modularisation of curricula in order to raise the quality of VET and to be better connected to the labour ofmarket and economy. The curricula will consist of small parts (modules) that will lead to gaining the qualifications or part of qualifications, that would be certified recognised at the labour market. This is a support to inclusive process, because if the student is not able to achieve all curricula and gain the full qualification of level od education, what he can do will be posible to evaluate, certify and recognised from the employer that would possibly hire him.

The education system is accessible to all children in Montenegro. In order to improve social inclusion, Government of Montenegro adopted Strategy to Improve the Position of RAE Population (2008-2012) and Strategy for integration of Persons with Disabilities (2008-2016). Also, the government provides support free textbooks in primary and secondary schools<sup>2</sup> for the children from poor families and RAE families in order to decrease social exclusion. The Montenegrin Constitution guarantees the right to education of minorities at the level of the objectives and principles of general education, as well as individuals. Based on the rights of the Constitution, national legislation guarantees the education of students from minority groups in their mother tongue, and their literature. Secondary vocational education is provided in Albanian language in the three mixed secondary schools.

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<sup>2</sup> The free textbooks or financial aids are provided for 15 058 children in 2012/2013. Free textbooks are provided for children of primary school and students of gymnasiums and 50€ for books for the students of vocational schools

## 1.2 The institutional framework for vocational education at national level covering also the degree of decentralisation

The education system in Montenegro was centralized before the beginning of reform. The Ministry of Education and Sport was responsible for all activities related to education system. defining national policy in education, structuring and financing education, establishing and managing education institutions owned by the state, preparing legislation in the field of education and science, implementing legislation that refer to pre-school, primary school, secondary school, special school, high and adult education, teacher training, adoption of curricula and syllabi, approval of textbooks and reference books, development of research and science and research organizations and services. Reform of education system involved decentralization which means an increased participation of the representatives of local community, citizens, their associations and parents in educational changes. Larger number of institutions ensures better distribution of work, but at the same time it is a challenge in terms of coordination of activities and strategies for achieving the overall reform goals. In the situation in which every institution is responsible for its own sector, there is a danger of fragmentation of reform activities and lack of coherence in the implementation of the overall reform goals. They ensured direct influence on the work in schools and on the education process. With the aim of decentralization of the education system, new institutions and bodies were established and the part of competencies of the Ministry was transferred to them.

**The Ministry of Education and Sport** is in the charge of the activities related to the establishment of national policy in education, setting the framework of the education system, financing education, implementation of the national policy of education in coordination with other institutions, establishing and managing national education institutions, preparing legislation in the field of education, implementing legislation, international cooperation in the field of education, support and coordination of the activities of education institutions responsible for research, development, counselling and other activities. The Ministry appoints the school principals, decides on the number of students to be enrolled, is responsible for financing the schools, curricula and textbooks and, through the Inspectorate, monitors the work of the schools in the classrooms.

**Vocational Education and Training Centre** is in the charge of the advisory, research and expert activities in the field of vocational and adult education: expert activities of monitoring, analysing and developing education system; working in cooperation with the institutions on the enhancement of education work; preparing expert tasks in the fields decided upon by the responsible councils and Ministry of Education and Sport; doing expert activities in

preparing curricula, catalogues and standards of knowledge, occupational standards, norms and standards for teaching aids and equipment; doing research and monitoring experiments; advisory work in the institutions in the field of vocational and adult education and in the institutions connected with education; preparing education and pedagogic and methodological standards for textbooks and manuals for vocational subjects in vocational education; preparing professional standards for teachers; organising training for teachers and principals.

**Council for Vocational Education** as an expert body is in charge of: passing the curricula for subjects and examination catalogues for practical, vocational, final, master's, graduation exams and other exams to be taken in the field of vocational education, establishing curricula for vocational education, curricula for vocational education of children and the young with special needs.

**The Council for Adult Education** was appointed by the Government of Montenegro based on the proposal of the social partners. The Council for Adult Education brings knowledge catalogues and exams catalogues, establishes educational programs for adult education, customized programs for adult education, establishes educational standard in the educational field of certain professions, establishes equally valuable educational standard in the educational programs of private organizers of education. The Council has jurisdiction to approve textbooks and teaching aids when the need arises. It proposes educational programs of training, retraining, additional training, advanced training and specialization of employed and unemployed people and it also gives instructions for performing customized educational programs and a number of other tasks pertaining to this issue.

**Council for General Education** similar as the Council for Vocational education and the Council for Adult Education, provides expertise in decision-making processes and drafting regulations for the education sector, related to curricula; catalogues of knowledge; examination catalogues; textbook development standards; training programmes for school headmasters standards for school facilities; teaching aids and equipment; profile and professional qualifications of teachers; list of compulsory elective subjects.

**Examination Centre** is responsible for external testing of the achieved standard of knowledge and skills. It is also responsible for the preparation of tasks, organisation and implementation of exams according to the law; training institutions for preparation for external examinations; advising and providing services related to external examination; research and development of the external evaluation of knowledge; international comparability of the education system quality and other tasks according to the law and memorandum of association.

**The Bureau of Educational Services** is component of quality assurance, including also the performing of professional tasks related to the drafting of curricula within the area of preschool education, primary education, general secondary education and general section of the curriculum of vocational education and provides support to the work of the Government body-Council for General Education.

**Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare** regulates labour market and is in charge of the labour legislation policy. More precisely, the following issues are under jurisdiction of Ministry: Working relations; Wages and other benefits; Employment; Education of adult people; Employment of foreigners; Work protection; Suggestions, negotiations, conclusion and implementation of the agreements and other contracts within labour and employment field; Implementation of the obligations and directives related to EU; Ministry is the body competent for one part of the coordination of the social insurance system and it monitors responsible implementers; System of pension and disability insurance in cooperation with the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund; System of unemployment insurance in cooperation with the Employment Agency of Montenegro; Social protection of persons with disabilities policy (direct protection is provided by public institutions); Protection of mother and child and the rights of a child policy; Negotiation in bilateral agreements in social insurance, etc.

**Employment Agency of Montenegro** is: agency between employers and employees; preparation for employment; research, planning and development; ensuring insurance rights in the case of unemployment; offering of professional information and guidance, organised in specialized centres; statistics. However, the main role of the EAM is to intermediate in employment process. This role is performed through: monitoring of actual and expecting needs for the certain employees profiles, technical and other labour requirements; notifying employers about possibilities to provide necessary employees; notifying unemployed persons and others about conditions and possibilities for employment and realization other rights based on the unemployment; participation in creation and delivering passive and active labour market policy measures; management agency in announcing and fulfilling free job positions, participation in candidate selection, and preparation for employment. The representatives of Employment Agency cooperate with institutions from education system related to the enrolment policy.

Education sector puts efforts in starting the implementation of decentralisation in financing education, but the transfer of the part of competences for financing education to the level of local government has not yet been done. The overall education system in Montenegro is financed from the central level.

Schools are autonomous in development of their annual plans and programmes of work. Curricula developed and adopted on the national level and in line with occupational standards are designed in such a way that they define goals to be achieved through education process. Through development of annual and operational work plans the manner of achieving the goals defined in the curricula and programmes of individual subjects are set, choosing the forms and methods of work for achieving the set goals.

In the recent period, in Montenegro have been conducted some research related to vocational education and social inclusion and social cohesion. Some of them are: *A study on the prevention of early school-leavers without qualifications in vocational schools in Montenegro* (research has been conducted in the 6 secondary vocational schools in Montenegro. Working group was consisted from the representatives of VET centre, Ministry of Education and Sport and pedagogues from schools); *Education and Business Study* (the main goal was drawing up an inventory of current cooperation between education and business, identifying to what extent EU approaches and policies are relevant to the EU neighbors; Providing tailored information and recommendations to national policy makers and donors for future programming initiatives and capacity-building measures); *Policies and practices for mapping the preparation of teachers of inclusive education in the context of social and cultural diversity* (it is done by the representatives of the Ministry of Education and Sport, The Bureau of Educational Services, VET Centre and ETF).

### **1.3 The policy process and the policy debate at national level**

The main aim of the development of vocational education to serve better employability is also participation of social partners in policy formulation and planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of vocational education, which is provided by their participation in working bodies and the National Education Council. Employers and unions are regularly involved in consultative processes in the VET system. The Government of Montenegro support financial incentives for employers, notably via the employment of trainees, employment preparation programs (e.g. professional training, additional training, retraining), as well as programs for acquiring specific knowledge, like ICT literacy, languages, accounting, etc.

Since the beginning of the education system reform, social partners and participants in the social dialogue have been involved on the national level in the processes of defining strategies of development and goals of changes in the

education through the cooperation with the line Ministry. Social partners have their representatives in school boards of vocational schools.

General Law on Education stipulates that association of employers and Montenegrin Employment Office is not only included in managing the Vocational Education and Training Centre but they should also participate in financing the Centre. Representatives of employers and employees participate in working groups for development of new occupational standards and they are members of the bodies that adopt such standards. Representatives of the Chamber of Commerce of Montenegro, Union of Employers, Trade Union of Employees in Education and Confederation of Trade Unions of Montenegro participate in the accreditation of curricula and training programmes through their representatives in the Councils. Social partners are involved in development of curricula through expert discussions they participate in.

Department for adult education in the VET Centre works on development of adult education and promotion of lifelong learning, trying to include all the social dialogue participants into that process: representatives of employers, trade unions, state institutions, NGOs.

The Examination Centre conduct external examination of pupils in the schools and organise meetings in order to present and discuss results with representatives of schools and representatives of VET Centre, The Bureau of Educational Services and Ministry of Education and Sport. Depending of the results some policies can be changed.

In schools on Albanian language, teachers, parents and schools are jointly responsible for the preparation of 20% of the curriculum in collaboration with the local community. This part of the curriculum typically covers topics such as language and literature, history, art and culture of minorities and other facilities that promote tolerance and collective life.

## PART B

### Choice of schools

The chosen schools are: Secondary School of Civil Engineering "Ing. Marko Radevic" in Podgorica, Secondary mixed school "Beco Pasic" in Plav and Agricultural High School in Bar. These schools are from the different communities and regions in Montenegro. There are clear differences between levels of development. Index of development in Podgorica is 145.97, in Bar is 91.99 and the lowest is in Plav 20.27 (Montenegro =100). It is resulted in inadequate and unequal development of regions. Additionally, there are cultural differences, as well as differences in size and structure of population, social situation, labour market and presence the migration from North to Central or South region.

According to all of above mentioned, selection of schools is very good due that we can see deeply situation in vocational education in Montenegro and its connection with social inclusion and social cohesion.

#### a) Secondary School of Civil Engineering "Ing. Marko Radevic" – Podgorica

The Secondary School of Civil Engineering "Ing. Marko Radevic" has 24 classrooms and 5 four-year courses and 3 three-year courses. The total number of pupils in the school is 599 (58.4% are males and 41.6% are females). All pupils that attend three-year courses are males.

*Table 1: The number of pupils by courses and gender (2012/2013)*

	course	number of pupils		
		male	female	total
four-year courses	architectural technician	70	59	129
	Interior designer	24	91	115
	construction technician for building construction	62	39	101
	construction technician	67	37	104
	geodesy technician	72	23	95
three-year courses	ceramist	29	0	29
	installer in construction	11	0	11
	assembler of construction	15	0	15

total	350	249	599
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Source: *The Secondary School of Civil Engineering "Ing. Marko Radevic"*

In school work 56 professors. The number of subjects is different, depends of the course. For the four-year course the number of subjects is 11 to 14, while in three-year courses the number of subjects is lower, 6 to 10.

There is no one pupil with disabilities and there are three pupils with special education needs (1 at four-year course and 2 at three-year course). Also, there are three pupils from RAE population. School in cooperation with international organisation, social partners and NGOs pay special attention to the pupils from poor families, pupils with special education needs and RAE pupils. Majority of them, are attending the three-year courses.

### **b) Agricultural High School – Bar**

At the Agricultural High School pupils are studying various occupations in the area of agriculture, production, food processing and veterinary. In recent years, due that Bar is the biggest port in Montenegro and increased jobs in the area of forwarding and customs, in schools are opened courses for maritime occupations: mechanical engineering of ship and nautical technician, as well as forwarding and customs-agency technicians.

The number of pupils in the school is 580 (409 or 70.5% are males and 171 or 29.5% are females). There are 22 classrooms (20 of four-year courses and 2 for three-year courses) which are divided in the four occupational areas and 8 four-year courses and 2 three-year courses.

*Table 2: The number of pupils by courses (2012/2013)*

		course	Number of pupils
four-year courses	agriculture, food processing and veterinary	food technician	71
		agricultural technician	50
		veterinary technician	69
	traffic	mechanical engineering of ship	99
		nautical technician	117
		forwarding and customs-agency technician	122
three-year courses	mechanical engineering and metal processing	car mechanic	23

	services	hairdresser	29
total			580

Source: Agricultural High School

The total number of professors is 45 (21 are males and 24 are females) and number of subjects is 13 to 14 for four year courses and 8 to 12 for three-year courses. In the school is one pupil with special education needs who is involved in regular education program for four-year course. There is no one pupil with disabilities and there are 3 pupils from RAE population.

The school has very good cooperation with the all social partners in municipality, NGOs, Organisation - Red Cross, health institutions, as well as other education institutions. The special cooperation is developed with local employers, where school realise practical lessons for pupils of three-year courses (hairdresser and car mechanic).

### c) Secondary mixed school “Beco Pasic” – Plav

The Secondary mixed school “Beco Pasic” in Plav has two types of secondary education: general-gymnasiums and vocational. There are 18 classroom of the secondary vocational education and 7 four-year courses and 5 three-year courses. Some of classrooms are mixed due that small number of pupils for some courses.

Table 3: The number of pupils by courses and gender (2012/2013)

	course	number of pupils		
		male	female	total
four-year course	health technician	28	99	127
	tourism technician (in Montenegrin language)	50	61	111
	tourism technician (in Albanian language)	17	7	24
	<i>tourism technician (total)</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>135</i>
	agriculture technician	35	17	52
three-year course	car mechanc (in Montenegrin language)	18	0	18
	car mechanc (in Albanian language)	12	1	13
	culinary technician/serving - mixed	20	7	27
	seller	10	13	23
	assembler of construction/ceramist - mixed	24	0	24
	electrician/car electrician	21	0	21
total		235	205	440

Source: The Secondary mixed school “Beco Pasic” - Plav

In school work 85 professors. The number of subjects is: I year-135, II year-110, III year-92 and IV year-79. There is no one pupil with disabilities and pupil from RAE population.

The Secondary mixed school “Beco Pasic” is only one secondary school in Plav. About 40% of pupils travel every day from the neighbor villages. School for the some pupils organizes free transport.

The school is opened for cooperation and has very good cooperation with employers and local government, cultural and sport institutions for organizing extracurricular activities. Employers are willing for realization practical lessons in own facilities. Also, school conducts activities to develop private and public partnership in order to achieve certain goals. The professors use modern teaching methods which are focused on the every pupil individually in order to develop their critical thinking, creativity and research activities. Due the national and cultural structure of the pupils which is very heterogenic, the general characteristic is very good atmosphere with successful interpersonal relationships in a spirit of tolerance and respect for differences by age, gender, special needs of students, level of education, social, national and cultural specificities. School informs pupils about their rights and obligations regularly and encourages them to participate in decision making process on issues that are directly related to them.

### **Advisory boards at national and local level**

Generally, so far there is any problem in communication and cooperation with national and local stakeholders. There is the high readiness of all representatives of Ministries and National Agencies for cooperation. We established very good communication. Also, our communication with school directors is very good. There is also great interest for realization of project activities. All of them are provide necessary data and information.

So far, we formed advisory board at national level and did about half of interviews with representatives of the Ministry of Education and Sport, VET Centre and Bureau of Education Services of Montenegro. Also, we informed all other persons about the project and set up the rest interviews at the beginning of November. We had meeting with all members of advisory board where we presented project (tasks, objectives, activities etc.) and where we got useful information regarding to the national stakeholders and potential persons for the interviews.

*Table 4: Members of advisory board at national level*

	name	institution	position
1	Tamara Milic	Ministry of Education and Sport	Senior Advisor
2	Anita Maric	Bureau for Education Services of Montenegro	Advisor
3	Ratko Bakrac	Employment Agency of Montenegro	Deputy Director
4	Vjera Mitrovic	Centre for Vocational Education and Training of Montenegro	Advisor
5	Dijana Vuckovic	Faculty of Philosophy	Professor

We chose people from the different institutions in order to get opinions about issues from the different sides.

Regarding to the local level, in cooperation with school directors of all three schools we finalized list of persons for interviews at local level for all three locations (professors from schools, local employment offices, representative of the parents, local employer etc.). All of them are informed about project. From the beginning of November we will conduct activities related to in-depth interviews at local level.

Initially, we formed advisory boards at local level, but still didn't have common meeting. All members are informed about project activities.

*Table 5: Members of advisory board at local level – Bar*

	name	institution	position
1	Branislav Knežević	Agriculture High School	director
2	Veselin Orlandić	Local Employment Office	Advisor
3	Milanka Okuka	Agriculture High School	pedagogue
4	Branka Čalasan	Agriculture High School	professor of sociology

In the advisory board we plan to include persons who are the most involved in the issues vocational education and social inclusion and social cohesion.

*Table 6: Members of advisory board at local level –Plav*

	name	institution	position
1	Kolašinac Ramo	Secondary mixed school "Beco Pasic"	director
2	Baković Džana	Secondary mixed school "Beco Pasic"	psychologist
3	Omeragić Asmina	Secondary mixed school "Beco Pasic"	professor of sociology
4	Jadadić Edin	Local government	Advisor

## **Understanding of the methodology of participatory action research**

The process of the research is started with activities at national level and goes to the local (school) level and community.

Research is conducting at national and local level. The first steps are establishing advisory boards at both levels and organise the meetings. Results of the discussion are recommendations and suggestions for the future research, as well as proposed list of people for interviews and focus groups. Due that two schools are in other cities we will try to do more interviews in one day. Through the desk research, interviews and focus groups we should get documentary and statistic database, as well as useful information and conclusions.

After conducting focus groups and interviews we should present the research findings from focus groups and in-depth interviews to national and local advisory boards for discussion in order to improve VET policy and practice.

Pupils and teachers questionnaires we will share during the lessons in order to get better answers from the certain groups of pupils.

At the end we will write up country reports, incorporating comments and reflections of advisory boards

## **Expected problems**

Through conducting interviews we are establishing new contacts for the future activities and projects. The expected problems are related to the fact that some experts at national and local level cannot be reached immediately, or during period planned for interviews which resulted in prolongation of some activities. Majority of experts at national level, often are out of country, attending to the conferences or professors at faculties and sometimes communication is slow. It is very important for interviews with people from the other cities. In order to solve such as problems we start communication earlier and inform them about issues for discussing. Also, it is possible that some interviews with experts can be conducted twice, due that work on project can request additional clarifications and opinions.

Expected problems are related to organization of focus groups, too. Sometimes is difficult to gather persons at the same time. In that case, we will invite few more people in order to organize focus group successfully.

## **Statistical indicators**

Generally, there is no adequate statistic data base for indicators in education. It is very difficult to get accurate and complete information for various reasons -

changing forms for conducting educational documentation (old and new registers), none systematically record keeping, lack of unique available statistical databases, etc.

Montenegro has 26 secondary vocational schools, 11 mixed secondary schools (with both high school and vocational secondary educational programmes) and 10 Gymnasiums. VET is an attractive secondary education option for Montenegrin students: approximately 67.4% (21519) of those enrolling in secondary education choose the occupational streams, while 32.6% (10410) take the general education path.

Quality of education does not correspond to relatively high spending in public education (5.5% of GDP in 2011). The overall results of the OECD's Program for International Student Assessment's (PISA) testing in 2009 among 15-year-olds in schools ranked Montenegro 54<sup>th</sup> out of 65 countries/economies participating, which represents decrease compared to PISA 2006 testing. PISA test results illustrate well inadequate quality of education in the country. Secondary school attendance rate is relatively high, still 5.7% of children from 15-17 years do not attend secondary school.<sup>3</sup>

Most recent data on secondary education of Roma and Egyptian population in Montenegro show that only 19% of 24-65 years old have completed second grade, 7% of them have completed third grade, while only 0.2% of population has a high school diploma.<sup>4</sup> According to the research conducted by the Ministry of Education and Sports in 2009, there have been only 36 students on the national level enrolled in high schools.

In the period 2006-2011, total expenditures for public education increased by 84%, rising from 89.4 to 165 million EUR. In 2011 the expenditures for public education represented 5.5% of GDP, which is above the EU average (5.44%), out of which 1% of GDP was invested solely in secondary education.

Even though notable progress has been made in terms of providing all children an equal right to education, there are still number of shortcomings when it comes to ensuring the quality of education, especially for marginalized groups and the poorest. Data obtained from Statistical Office of Montenegro show that in the academic year 2011/2012, there were 199 students enrolled in special secondary schools, of which 42.7% girls. These data did not vary a lot comparing to previous years.

*Table 7: Drop out in secondary education (Upper Secondary (ISCED 3) general and vocational education)*

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<sup>3</sup> UNICEF, 2012, Children in Montenegro – Data from the 2011 Census

<sup>4</sup> Source: UNDP/World Bank/EC regional Roma survey (2011)

School year	Total	Males	Females
2006/2007	2.30	1.41	0.89
2007/2008	2.51	1.49	1.02
2008/2009	1.89	1.63	0.26
2009/2010	1.98	0.67	1.31
2010/2011	2.29	1.54	0.75

*Source: MONSTAT is collecting every 1st September data about the number of students at the beginning current and at the end of last year*

The drop out in Montenegro is at very low level. The pilot research for six vocational schools in Montenegro “A study on the prevention of early school-leavers without qualifications in vocational schools in Montenegro” shows that males and those at the first year of education frequently leave the school, as well as students of the three-year courses.

*Table 8: Students/Teachers ratios by educational level and programmes (VET and general education) (%)*

	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Number of VET students (in VET and mixed schools)	21696	21559	21495	21695	21504	21519
Number of General students (in General and mixed schools)	9951	9822	9838	10063	10410	10410
Total number of students	31647	31381	31333	31758	31914	31929
Total number of teachers	2263	2250	2297	2386	2382	2366
Ration all students/all teachers	13.98	13.95	13.64	13.31	13.40	13.49

*Source: Ministry of Education and Sport*

The ratio between the students who enroll VET schools and those who enroll the gymnasiums is over the time approximately at same level. Also, ratio students/teachers slightly vary during the period from 2006 to 2012.

## SERBIA

### 1. The institutional framework and the policy process at national level for VET, and for social inclusion

#### 1.1 Situation analysis at national level

In the school year 2009/2010, 211, 618 students were enrolled in vocational schools. Three quarters (74%) of pupils attended vocational secondary schools while 24% attended general secondary schools and 2% attended art schools. The most commonly chosen occupational field is Economy, Law and Administration (chosen by 13.2%), followed by Mechanical Engineering (10.5%), Electrical Engineering (10%), Trade, Hospitality and Tourism (9.4%) and Medicine (8.2%). More than half of the primary school graduates who opt for vocational secondary education choose one of these five occupational fields.

In 2010, higher education institutions enrolled 36,127 students from vocational schools who had completed three or four SSOV, representing about 63% of the population of graduates. The remaining graduates of vocational schools try to find a job.

According to NES statistics of April 2011, 61,901 first-time job-seekers completed *three-year* vocational secondary education. Of that number, 49,983 persons (80.7%) were in the five highest-ranking occupational fields:

1. Mechanical Engineering and Metal Processing	17,760
2. Trade, Hospitality and Tourism	12,541
3. Textile and Leather Industry	8,027
4. Electrical Engineering	6,146
5. Agriculture, Food Production and Processing	5,509

There were 68,208 first-time job-seekers with *four-year* vocational secondary education. Of those, 37,149 (54.5%) were in the five highest-ranking occupational fields:

1. Economy, Law and Administration	10,953
2. Mechanical Engineering and Metal Processing	8,499
3. Agriculture, Food Production and Processing	7,247
4. Health, pharmacy and social policy	6,120
5. Electrical Engineering	6,108

The significant difference in the proportion of those who completed three or four secondary school who were looking for a job was due to the fact that many young people decided to continue their studies. By late 2010, the youth unemployment rate (15-24 years) had reached 46.1%.<sup>1</sup> Almost three quarters (73%) of the long-term unemployed had secondary education. Among these, 16.8% had been looking for a job for between 2-4 years 17% for 4-6 years, and 11.1% for 7-10 years.

Some of the elements necessary for monitoring and implementation of quality in the VET system have been achieved or are in the process of being achieved (school development planning, internal evaluation, standards of teachers and institutions, employers' participation in the creation of standards of qualifications, curriculum development and examinations, partly external finishing matriculation examination and in experimental classes and the like).

No precise data are available on early school leaving in vocational schools. Based on the Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS), in 2005 the dropout rate in secondary education was 2.3%. However, other data show that the rate is much higher, perhaps as much as 30% in secondary education (Government of Serbia, 2003). According to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technical Development,

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<sup>1</sup> See First National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction, 2011

a survey conducted for the generation of 2000-2008 shows a dropout rate of 7.3%. But, according to other measurements 10% people did not obtain initial vocational training (EUROSTAT, 2010). In contrast to these figures, the LSMS shows that one-fifth of Serbian children do not attend secondary school, especially boys and young people from disadvantaged areas.

Vocational secondary schools are attractive. Their key advantage is that they give pupils the choice of either continuing with their education or finding employment. The introduction of pilot classes (58% of vocational schools have at least one pilot class, covering about 15% of pupils) has additionally contributed to the attractiveness of vocational schools. The required number of points to enrol in pilot classes is often higher than that required for general secondary schools.<sup>2</sup> The problem is the inadequate network of schools. The enrolment plan does not follow the requirements of the labour market.

The key challenge of VET reform is to modernise the structure of educational profiles in line with the needs of the economy. The current structure is still characterised by a high number of over-specialised and outdated profiles, which correspond neither to the state of technological advancement, nor to the needs of modern businesses, which require individuals who are highly adaptable, equipped not only with technical but also with soft skills (communication skills, problem-solving, team work and self-discipline) and are capable of performing routine tasks, as well as solving unexpected problems. MESTD has been leading the reform of the VET system since 2002. To date, 67 out of 347 educational profiles, across 12 occupational sectors<sup>3</sup>, have been fully revised<sup>4</sup>, in line with revised occupational standards agreed with representatives from the relevant industries through a consultation process. In parallel, new competence-based and outcome-oriented modular curricula have been developed. Revised profiles were piloted in 157 VET schools with accompanying support, training of teachers and new equipment.

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<sup>2</sup> See MES, Results of Secondary School Admission Examinations 2005-2010

<sup>3</sup> There are currently 15 occupational sectors

<sup>4</sup> Only 6 of pilot profiles all are not competence based and outcome oriented modular curricula

Early evaluations of the pilot show an increased attendance and higher average marks for students taught with modernised curricula<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, 86.1% of school representatives think that the pilot profile is much better than the classical one, 13.4% think that the pilot profile and the classical profile are more or less the same, and only 0.5% think that the classical profile is better than the pilot one<sup>6</sup>.

A mere 15% of all VET students are enrolled in the revised VET profiles<sup>7</sup>. This means that the majority of students are still taught in occupations that do not reflect the needs of the economy and with outdated curricula and teaching methods. The reformed profiles need to be mainstreamed throughout the VET system and corresponding final exams need to be developed. From September 2010, nine revised profiles were introduced in the regular VET system in Agriculture, Food Processing and Production (7 profiles), Geodetics (land survey) and Civil Engineering (1 profile), Electrical Engineering (1 profile). The mainstreaming of revised and piloted profiles through the whole VET system will continue in 2011 and 2012 with the support of IPA 2007 project *Modernisation of VET*. The modernisation of profiles, curricula and textbooks needs to be pursued in a more systematic manner in the context of the development of a NQF

Experience from past CARDS and IPA projects shows that extensive support is required to help VET schools manage the transition to new profiles, ranging from training of teachers and management staff, to introducing new teaching methods and techniques, to supplying equipment and materials, to meeting higher standards of quality. Further modernisation of profiles and the development of the NQF will put more requirements on VET schools, which will need further assistance and support.

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<sup>5</sup> 70-80% in metal processing and agricultural schools of students have found employment within three months after graduation.

<sup>6</sup> Comparative analysis of 22 classical and reformed profiles

<sup>7</sup> Equivalent to 11% of the secondary school cohort, MoE (2009)

## **1.2 The institutional framework for vocational education at national level covering also the degree of decentralization**

The institutional framework in VET includes three key institutions – Ministry of Education, Science (MESTD) and Technological Development, VET Council and National Educational Council.

The responsibilities of the **Ministry of Education and Science** are stipulated by Article 12 of the Law on Ministries (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia“, No. 16/11). According to this law, the MESTD is responsible inter for the duties of state administration relating to study, planning, development, and inspection of education including vocational secondary education. It is also responsible for the development, equipping and maintaining of facilities, for teacher training, and for improving social care for pupils and students with special needs.

The **Council for VET and Adult Education** was established by the decision of the Government of Serbia on 5th May 2010. It has 21 members: representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, crafts, Association of Employers, professionals in the field of VET and AE, employers, representatives of institutions in the field of employment, labour, social and youth policy, teachers from the associations of VET schools, representatives of representative trade unions. The council should contribute to the development of human resources needed for establishing of a knowledge based economy and society on the principles of lifelong learning. The Council should include all stakeholders in the development of the VET and AE system in accordance with the needs of the labour market; link the world of work with the world of education; participate in the creation of VET infrastructure including the qualifications system and governing of the system of VET and AE.

A key Institution is the **Institute for the Improvement of Education**. It performs expert activities in the field of education, and it participates in the preparation of regulations within the scope of competences of the ministry, National Education Council, Council for Vocational Training and Education of Adults. Within its Vocational Training and Adult Education Centre, it performs professional work

and activities. Other key stakeholders in VET are the Chamber of Commerce, the Socioeconomic Council, the Trade Unions, the Union of Employers, and the Sectoral Councils.

The ongoing reform of education profiles and curricula cannot be implemented satisfactorily without rationalising the network of schools. In February 2011, the Council for Vocational Education and Adult Education (CVEAE) agreed to define a new network of VET schools reflecting the needs of the country. The Centre for VET and Adult Education, which is an organisational unit within the Institute for Improvement of Education, has been entrusted with the task of drafting a proposal for the new network. This complex and demanding task <sup>8</sup> will be carried out through labour market research and development forecasts in a consultative process involving all relevant stakeholders (Ministry of Education, Serbian Chamber of Commerce with its regional branches, National Employment Service, representatives of the industry, of local self-governance, unions of employers at national and regional/local level) in line with criteria set in the Law<sup>9</sup>.

In 2009, the entry of young people to the labour market was surveyed for the first time along with the regular Labour Force Survey. The survey showed that about 40% of young people wait more than two years for a first job. On the other hand about 30% of young people managed to find a job in the first 6 months after graduation. This suggests the need for more intensive support for youth employment both prior to their entry to the labour market and as soon as they start their job search after leaving school. The survey also showed that the duration of the transition from school to work is lower for those with higher levels of education.

The Ministry of Education and Science has introduced measures of career guidance and counselling, scholarship for students, voluntary work. While volunteering, young people without experience receive financial support from NES through the "First

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<sup>8</sup> Department for Development for Qualifications and Network of Schools

<sup>9</sup> Demographic forecasts of school population by area, geographic characteristics, employment and economic development plans, equal access to education and availability of communication.

Chance" which has been implemented since 2008. In planning enrolment in secondary schools, MESTD organizes local and regional consultation of social partners in order to supply adequate educational profiles. Since there is no accurate data and prediction, development of these processes is often flawed, MESTD insists on their implementation with the aim of creating core predictions of future needs for knowledge and skills.

### **1.3 The policy process and the policy debate at national level**

In 2011 and 2012 the overall strategy of education development was prepared. One part is devoted to vocational education. It is based on the VET Strategy from 2006. Analysis showed that the vision of vocational education set out in the Strategy in 2006 is still valid and relevant with the reform process in Serbia. The modified strategy has clarified the mission and its closer association with the development of the economy and labour market trends.

According to the new Strategy, VET in 2020 should provide the opportunity to gain relevant qualifications that are part of a comprehensive NQF of the Republic of Serbia, in the network of vocational schools and educational institutions, whose work is based on social partnership, forms and methods of teaching and learning, and education and training programs. VET provides the opportunity to gain additional qualifications, which meet the needs of the labour market in accordance with economic, technological and social development of the country.

## **Part B.**

### **1. Choice of schools**

The list of selected schools is as follows

#### **a. Chemical, Food processing and Textile school “Uros Predic”, Zrenjanin**

Today, the Chemical, Food-processing and Textile School is a modern school which uses about 5000 m<sup>2</sup> of space. Teaching is performed in 17 general purpose classrooms, six multi-media classrooms, 12 study rooms, five laboratories, two gyms, as well as a bakery, mini dairy-plant and three textile workshops. The number of employed staff is 115 and about 800 full-time students attend this school in 36 classes. We prepare students (young and the adults) for working life according to labour market demand, in a modern and efficient way.

The three sectors of the curriculum are:

- Chemistry and non-metals (chemical-technological technician, chemical laboratory technician, technician for the protection of environment, technician for the industrial pharmaceutical technology),
- Production and food processing (food-processing technician – pilot curriculum, technician for biotechnology, baker – pilot curriculum, milk manufacturer – pilot curriculum, butcher, foodstuffs manufacturer),
- Textile and leather industry (technician-model constructor of clothes, ready-made tailor, fashion tailor – pilot curriculum).

Introducing new pilot curriculum, which has been implemented since 2002/03, has become an active and direct participant in the reform of secondary vocational education. The most important social partners with whom the school cooperates are: the Centre for Vocational and Art Education, Regional Chamber of Commerce, National Employment Service, General Association of Entrepreneurs, the City of Zrenjanin – Local Municipality, Local Economic Development Office, secondary vocational schools in the region, local corporations and companies, Non-

governmental organisation sector.

The mission of the future activities of School is:

- Development and project realization;
- Patience and hard work on the modernisation of the system and the school;
- Search for a new organisation model;
- Attention to values;
- Raising of the level of human resourcefulness;
- Frequent project activities (with action planning);
- New approaches towards meeting the needs of the young students;
- Further development of the Centre for Continuing Adult Education;
- Social partnership development (market analysis; competence-based modular curricula and training);
- Implementation of a spirit of competitiveness and tolerance in our school culture based on our vision – “the school of positive and creative people”;
- Continuous self-evaluation to improve the quality of the work of the school.

#### **b. “Tehnoart” Belgrade School of Mechanical Engineering and Art Crafts**

Written on the traditions of the former Mechanical Engineering School" Beograd" (founded in 1962. Was), is a unique educational institution in Serbia that their work involves two seemingly disparate fields - engineering and art. Tehnoart Belgrade currently has 935 students, 38 departments and two areas of work: Engineering and culture, art and public information with the following educational profiles:

Area of Engineering (669 students, 23 four-year and three-year 3 classes):

- Mechanical technician in computer engineering (quotas are 90 pupils)
- In computer management (quotas are 90 pupils)
- Mechanic heating and cooling technology (quotas are 30 pupils)

Area of Culture, Arts and Public Information (266 students at 12 four-year classes.):

- Jeweler art objects (quotas are 14 pupils)
- Sign painter - calligrapher (quotas are 14 pupils)
- Conservator of Cultural Property (quotas are 14 pupils)
- Stylish tailor (7 pupils quotas)
- Potter (quotas 7 students)
- Graver art objects (quotas 7 students)

### **c. School of Design, Textile and Leather, Novi Pazar**

In the long years of its existence, the school has undergone many changes in order to adapt to the needs of the economy. It changed its name many times from "School of Commerce," to "School for Skilled Workers", to "Education Centre Zenun Hasković ", which was divided into two schools. It has been called "Leather and Textile School". At the beginning of 2006/07 the Ministry of Education granted permission for the school to be called "School of Design Textile and Leather".

Its Mission is: Vocational education and upbringing of young people in both classical and experimental profiles, ready to respond to the demands of work, in accordance with European standards or for further education.

Its Vision is: To become a regional centre for the acquisition of professional competencies in the areas of textile, leather processing and construction.

The School of Design Leather and Textile educate students for the following occupations:

Four years

- · Designer Clothing
- · Technician modeler clothing
- · Ready Technician
- · Designer leather
- · Technician modeler skin

Three years

- · Mechanic Textile Machinery
- · Garment tailor
- · cobbler
- · haberdasher

## **2. Formation of advisory boards at national and local level**

The National Advisory Board is in the process of formation and I am still waiting for answers from some members. Potential members are:

- Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development – representative is Dr Slavica Jašić
- SIPRO Team – they are in the process of communication who will be representative
- VET Centre within the Institute for Development of Education
- VET Council
- Ministry of work, employment and social policy (3 representatives – one from area of work, one from employment and one from social policy)
- National Employment Service

## **TURKEY**

### **Introduction**

Vocational Education Training is of historical importance for Turkey and dates back to the Ottoman Empire where vocations were taught in the traditional way from master to apprentice. With the impact of the industrial revolution, while still uncentralized, vocational education was brought within a schooling discipline. However the actual underpinnings of the current centralized system of vocational training were implemented with the creation of the Turkish Republic.

The National Ministry of Education of the new republic assumed responsibility for efforts to standardize the vocational education system across the country in 1926. These efforts were augmented with a government act requiring the central state authorities to pay all of the expenses of the vocational schools across the country. In 1923 the existing 20 schools had about 2,558 pupils. Following a gradual yet major increase, there are currently 5,155 schools educating about two million students.

The emphasis put on domestic industrial production in achieving economic development in Turkey added special importance to vocational training. A major jump in opening vocational training schools took place during the 40's and 50's as a way to educate technical personnel for newly opened factories across the country. As a result of this historical perspective, vocational education carries a symbolic importance for the public and decision makers. This is evident in every attempt to

change the system, resulting in controversial public debates. A fine example of this discourse is the motto of a project providing funding to vocational schools and promoting participation in a nationwide innovation competition, called “Meslek Lisesi, Memleket Meselesi”, which translates as “Vocational Highschools are a Homeland Matter”.

This interim report will evaluate the current structure of education in Turkey in relation to where Vocational Education stands. Currently, a large majority of vocational training is offered by the Vocational Education High Schools. Therefore, this report will exclusively focus on these institutions. The following figure illustrates the vocational highschool as well as other tracks of the vocational and technical education system. It is also worth mentioning that lately, some private courses as well as joint initiatives of various government and local agencies assume some vocational training activities.

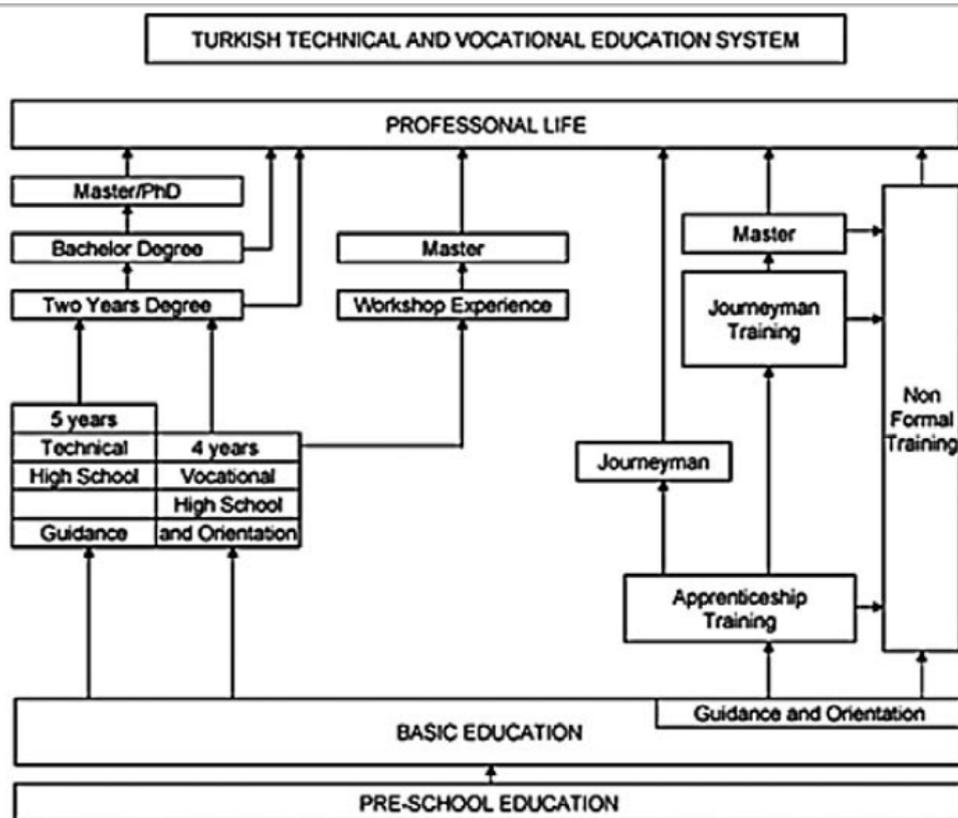


FIGURE 1: TURKISH VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

In the remainder of this report, the current state of VET in relation to the challenges posed will be evaluated, followed by the analysis of the institutional framework for vocational education. Finally, current policy debates on reforming the system will be evaluated.

### 1.1. Situation Analysis

Despite its historical importance and recent efforts for its reform, VET in Turkey suffers from major issues. Some of these relate to a larger set of problems affecting all secondary education institutions such as short sighted government policies and frequent changes in the education system affecting both students and teachers. The following sections will evaluate specific issues in the light of these changes.

**1.1.1 Problems of Basic Education :** As evaluated further in section 1.2 in relation to the institutional framework, there are major deficiencies in the delivering basic education skills to students. This has to do with their emphasis on vocational training, which naturally takes place at the expense of academic training. There is a shortage of competent science and mathematics teachers. Furthermore, due to the selection process at the end of 8th grade, more prestigious and academically oriented high schools recruit students with better skills, leaving the rest to the vocational high schools. Being deprived of basic skills in these areas, students have hard time building higher skills. This creates a major problem for their career enhancement as the scarce quality higher education institutions and young population in Turkey require a national level placement examination. Unfortunately, vocational school students generally score badly in this exam and end up not being placed in a university.

**1.1.2. A poor relation between education and employment i.e. skills mismatch:** Another problem of vocational training in Turkey is due to skills mismatch between the skills students supply upon graduation and the skills firms demand for recruitment. One reason for this is the lack of resources and technologically advanced equipment at the vocational schools. Another reason is the lack of up to date training of the educators. A more systematic reason is the lack of flexibility to adopt to the changing national comparative advantages as a result of globalization. For instance, Turkey's comparative advantage in textile industry changed dramatically once China entered the global market, leaving those Turkish firms and trained labour at odds with the new market structure. Unfortunately, the heavy and centralized machinery of the Turkish VET system has not been quick to adopt to these changes. However, several national and international projects aim at

instilling this dynamism into the system by allowing schools establish closer ties with their community as well as local trade and commerce unions and initiate their own teaching modules and curricula.

**1.1.3 The reputation problem:** One of the important problems of the VET systems is the reputation problem in Turkey. Generally, academic knowledge and education is appreciated more highly by the public and this perception informs many parents' students' and educational guidance teachers' opinions. University education is considered the sole career option regardless of the student's actual skill set and career aspirations. As vocational schools do not prepare students in the academic track sufficiently, they are seen inferior and a last resort for weaker achieving school students. This is also why only 35% of high school students attend these schools which is quite low compared to many EU countries.

**1.1.4 Social Exclusion:** While the aforementioned issues are more or less valid for all vocational training high schools including teachers and students, there are certain groups within these schools that face additional problems. The students who receive vocational training tend to come from low income families, who need immediate employment to remedy their financial needs. As a function of this low income status, these schools become a refuge for the children of separated families, orphans, disabled students and in some cases students belonging to ethnic minorities. In other words, these schools are overpopulated by disadvantaged groups, which either lack a community support network or resourceful immediate relatives. This creates first, a group of uninterested students who would rather be at a different school and second, an unhealthy environment for their concentration in their work in an environment with higher ratio of acts requiring disciplinary action.

The changes introduced by the central government further add to these groups. Women are one of these groups. For instance, until recently, the graduates of the Child Development and Education Programme were allowed to become pre-school teachers after a 2 year higher education training where they used to get preferential placement. This is a programme mostly preferred by female students. With the new changes introduced into the education system, the only a 4 year university graduates were allowed to practice pre-school teaching. This change not only blocked one of the popular tracks for future students, but with its immediate application to all students, it heavily disadvantaged the current students who have already chosen this track.

## **1.2 The Institutional Framework**

Currently, formal education in Turkey is governed by the Ministry of National Education which includes pre-school education, primary education and secondary education. The secondary education system can be classified as General High Schools, Social Science High Schools, Anatolian<sup>1</sup> High Schools Anatolian Teacher High Schools, Anatolian Arts and Sports High Schools, Science High Schools, Vocational and Technical High Schools, as well as Private High Schools. Currently all vocational schools are governed by the Vocational and Technical Education Directorate under the Ministry of National Education. This directorate is responsible for curriculum development, coursebook preparation and providing various education tools needed in Vocational Schools.

Students in Turkey may choose vocational high schools after completing the 8-year-long compulsory primary education. However, most students take a National

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<sup>1</sup> The term “Anatolian” refers to the special emphasis put on foreign language education

Placement Exam in order to continue their education in more prestigious Anatolian or Science High Schools which are selective in their recruitment and base their judgement solely on students' scores from this national exam. This first led to most vocational schools being populated with students with very low scores and low school performance. To deal with this, some vocational schools opened sub-category schools within their premises such as Anatolian Vocational High School, that try to amalgamate vocational training with academic training. This way they could recruit students with somewhat higher scores. Nevertheless, students with low or no scores still constitute the majority of their students.

Vocation high schools operate in 5 major groups.

1. Male Technical Education High schools including Industrial Vocation and Technical High schools with common departments such as Information Technologies, Automotive, Civil Structure, Electronics, Electric, Laveling, and Molding
2. Female Technical Education High schools with common departments such as Child Development and Education, Graphics and Photography, Food Technology, Tailoring, Leather Technology
3. Trade and Tourism Education High schools focusing on trade, finance, accounting, marketing
4. Religious Education Schools focusing on Imam and Preacher education as well as Quran Course teachers.
5. Health Education Schools with departments on Nursing, Midwifery, Health Clerk education.

There is compulsory internship every year except the freshmen year (9th grade) of high school. To be able to graduate, students should complete a total 300 hours of internship at various companies and be evaluated based on their internship reports by school teachers.

Upon completing their education, vocational high school graduates may pursue 2 year-long polytechnics or may continue with a related tertiary degree. However, their focus on vocational training which requires long hours teaching time in workshops, results in less hours of classes for basic courses such as math and sciences. This in return, heavily affects students' National University Entrance Exams (YGS) and results in lower scores and aggravates their higher education placement. Nevertheless, if these students want to pursue higher education in the 2 year polytechnics corresponding their high school specialization areas only based on their high school grades.

As mentioned earlier, the Ministry of National Education is heavily involved in decisions and policies affecting the operation of the Vocational School System including curriculum, placement, teacher training etc. There are recent developments that created some level of decentralization by giving the local units and vocational schools some autonomy in interacting with their community. One of these is the implementation of a European Union (EU) funded project called Strengthening Vocational Education and Training Project . This project aims to establish a more qualified VET by various activities ranging from developing training standards and VET modules to training school principals, teachers as well as students. Being implemented in a total of 145 pilot institutions in 30 provinces with a budget of 58.2

million Euros, this project allowed High Schools with a more flexible module selection and up to date training.

### **1.3 The Policy Process and the Policy Debate at National Level**

The historical importance of vocational highschoools together with the challenges Turkish VET faces, creates a vivid policy debate at the national level. While some of the policy priorities relate to improving the quality of education at these schools, others are about how to locate these schools vis. a. vis. other educational institutions. The following points evaluate the most visible policy issues being discussed in the media, among academics and policy makers.

#### **1.3.1 Problem of Lower Status**

Solving the reputation problems of VET schools is not an overnight endeavour. Various actors at various levels of governance and private sector need to be involved in this quality improvement goal. Current debates in Turkey take the German and Austrian VET systems as an model where commerce unions assume a big responsibility in the process. This is seen as a prerequisite for an efficient labour market and exchange between vocational education institutions and industry. This vision is also supported by various national and EU projects across the country. This trend can not only remedy the low status and bad reputation problems but it should also bring Turkish and EU VET closer thereby better integraing their labour markets.

#### **1.3.2. Life-Long Learning**

The fast pace of today's world, changing techonology and production processes as well as merging world markets require all members of the society to be well educated and equipped to deal with changes. The days of spending a lifetime with one vocation,

one job, in one company seem to be over. Hence, vocational training should adopt to this dynamic structure. The current trend in Turkish vocational training debates and policies is to find ways to create this adaptation. More and more vocational high schools are cooperating with industry for acquiring new equipment in return for training potential or existing employees that would suit the employer's needs. This takes vocational training to a new dimension of lifelong training, benefiting those whose skills are either out of date or no longer in need.

One of these cooperation schemes called UMEM (Specialized Vocational Training Centres Project) is partnered by TOBB ETÜ Centre for Social Policy Research, with TOBB (Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges), İŞKUR (Turkish Employment Agency), and vocational high schools as part of the MEB (Ministry of National Education). With this project, upon collecting data of the skill sets TOBB member firms demand, vocational high schools announce new courses to be attended by the unemployed registered at İŞKUR. During their theoretical and practical training of a total of about 6 months, unemployed students get incorporated into the Turkish Social Security system, get paid about 25 Turkish Lira (equivalent of 10 Euros), and offered guaranteed employment. Vocational schools get new equipment and laboratories as well as extra pay for their teachers and finally firms get a 3 to 5 year waiver from their Social Security system contributions. In the 18 months since the beginning of implementation about 25,000 unemployed were included in the labour force. The success of this and similar projects not only increase the importance of vocational training and life long education, but they also create a collaboration norm much needed to improve labour standards.

### **1.3.3. Problem of Imam Hatip(Preacher) Schools**

In Turkey, Imam Hatip schools are considered a part of the vocational education system and are governed by the same structure. First of all, the purpose of education in these schools is to train religious personnel for various private and public institutions. Therefore, substantially their training is neither vocational nor technical and this makes this categorization questionable. Furthermore, the secularist – Islamist polarization in Turkish politics highly reflects on the issue due to the government-funded structure of these public schools and their increasing numbers. Situating Imam Hatip Schools together within the VET complicates all efforts to change or reform the system. Currently, there are efforts to disentangle these two issues in order to save VET from this deadlocked and politicized policy area.