Apprenticeship Schemes for Youth Employability in Albania

"Feasibility Assessment and Road Map for Implementing Apprenticeship Schemes in VET system in Albania"

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.
APPRENTICESHIP SCHEMES FOR YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY IN ALBANIA

FINAL REPORT

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## Abbreviations

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<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>AlbVET</td>
<td>Skills Development in Albania (Project implemented by Swisscontact)</td>
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<td>ATA</td>
<td>Albanian Tourism Association</td>
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<td>BIBB</td>
<td>Bundesinstitut für Berufliche Bildung</td>
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<td>DCM</td>
<td>Decision of the Council of Ministers</td>
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<td>DCT</td>
<td>Dual Cooperative Training</td>
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<td>EQF</td>
<td>European Qualification Framework</td>
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<td>ETF</td>
<td>European Training Foundation</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>GIZ</td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</td>
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<td>HIBB</td>
<td>Hamburger Institut für Berufliche Bildung</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and communications technology</td>
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<td>In-CT</td>
<td>In-Company Trainer</td>
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<td>KPI</td>
<td>Key Performance Indicator</td>
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<td>MFC</td>
<td>Multifunctional VET Centre</td>
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<td>MoES</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Sport</td>
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<td>MoSWY</td>
<td>Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth</td>
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<td>NAVETQ</td>
<td>National Agency for VET and Qualification</td>
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<td>NES</td>
<td>National Employment Service</td>
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<td>NESS</td>
<td>National Employment and Skills Strategy 2014/2020</td>
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<td>NQF</td>
<td>National Qualification Framework</td>
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<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public-Private Partnerships</td>
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<td>SME</td>
<td>Small and medium enterprises</td>
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<td>SWG</td>
<td>Sectorial working groups</td>
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<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<td>VET</td>
<td>Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<td>VTC</td>
<td>Vocational Training Centre</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The National Agency of Vocational Education, Training and Qualifications of Albania (NAVETQ), in close cooperation with the Hamburger Institut für Berufliche Bildung (HIBB), are implementing a project in the framework of the European Programs for Education and Youth, Erasmus+. The goal of the project is to actively support the implementation of a policy dialog and policy design exercise for the VET system in Albania with the aim to ensure employability for the young generation after graduation.

A policy document will be designed to serve as a road map for the Albanian authorities to guide the introduction of a dual-based vocational education and training at secondary level in a sustainable way. During this process, in-depth analyses will be carried out through public consultations and piloting of the dual-cooperative system in close partnership with businesses. These will focus on the best current practices at the European level and previous efforts carried out in Albania to introduce work based learning schemes.

Labour market studies have pointed out that the mismatch between skills offered and those demanded remains considerable. This skills gap has been generating unemployment, especially among youth. To tackle the problem of youth unemployment the new National Strategy for Employment and Skills Development 2014-2020 clearly states the government’s commitment to generate more and better jobs for youth by helping them become better prepared for the labour market. An adapted dual-cooperative VET system based on apprenticeship schemes has proven to be a successful way of bringing education closer to labour market, narrowing job mismatching and facilitating the placement of young people in jobs after training.

The aim of the project “Apprenticeship for Youth Employment in Albania” is to identify a sustainable way, and draft a road map for Albania, to introduce apprenticeship as a systematic and rigorous work-place based learning scheme in Vocational Secondary Education. The methodological approach for the project consists of three milestones, (1) in-depth analyses and feasibility study in order to support evidence-based policy making, (2) participatory policy making process, and (3) piloting as a validation method of policy measures’ absorption.

EXCECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is the declared will of the Albanian government to introduce dual cooperative training in the country. According to the survey that was carried out during the mission, a large proportion of the business community in the tourism sector is committed to supporting the introduction of an apprenticeship scheme. Also, a positive trend in additional job creation in the next years can be predicted. Surprisingly, the businesses expect to employ 60% females whereas currently fewer than 19% of the VET-students are girls. This fact has to be addressed and measures and solutions should be developed to balance the situation.
A basic obstacle for the introduction of DCT which has to be eliminated is the unclear legal situation. There have already been many attempts to introduce dual cooperative training elements in Albania; this has had an impact on different parts of legislation. In the labour law an apprenticeship approach is already considered even though it has not been implemented yet. The task will be to reach a certain harmonization and to introduce apprenticeship in the VET law. It will be essential to define a special status for an apprentice. An apprentice is not a normal employee, so the regulations concerning the minimum wage should not apply here, but the apprentices should have the right to receive a salary as compensation for the work they are doing in the company. This salary could be lower than the minimum wage. An apprentice could be younger than 18 years, should have several weeks of holiday and be obligated to visit the VET-schools according to the given schedule. Also, the social security concerning health and accident has to be defined by legislation. It is important to mention here that the companies will only participate in the project if they have the guarantee from the MoSWY that they will not face difficulties from any government institution if they train an apprentice according to the obligations mentioned in the training contract between apprentice, company and VET-provider.

The important stakeholders of DCT are the companies, the apprentices, the VET-provider, the MoSWY and the institutions of the private sector, like ATA, the chamber or the sectorial committee. Without the commitment and the engagement of the companies, the endeavour will fail. This is why the companies have to be implemented into the process from the very beginning and a win-win situation has to be created. Mutual gain is the basis of any partnership; as soon as one of the partners feels as though they are only spending and receiving nothing in return, the beginning of the end of the relationship is manifested. ATA or another institution of the private sector could play an important role during the foundation process.

Two functions are of crucial importance for the successful implementation of DCT: the In-Company trainer (In-CT) and the DCT-coordinator. The In-CT has the duty to manage the In-Company training with the apprentices but will also be able to organize the training of other new staff in the company. In that regard the In-CT could play an important role in improving the overall quality of partner companies. However, without suitable In-CTs the apprenticeship training cannot be implemented in a professional way and the expected results will not be achieved. Only if the training is done professionally, will the apprentice effectively acquire the needed skills, knowledge and competences to carry out the expected work processes. This will lead to further motivation for the apprentice and also to a certain added value for the company. By carrying out the work processes under the professional supervision of the In-CT the important soft skills can be trained which are so essential in order to reach employability.

The tasks to be carried out by the DCT-coordinator are of extraordinary importance, especially concerning the first steps towards implementing the apprenticeship scheme. The DCT-coordinator will establish and, maybe even more importantly, maintain the contacts and cooperation-mechanism with the companies. To fulfil this task the DCT-coordinator needs to be convinced of the importance and the feasibility of the introduction of DCT. One of the main tasks will be to prepare the practical cooperation between the VET-provider and the company. The challenge will be to encourage the companies to participate but also to guarantee the quality of the training and to interfere in the case that problems appear.

All DCT-coordinators should cooperate intensively to optimize the process of DCT-introduction in Albania as soon as possible. This will help to make the work easier, more efficient and in addition it will increase the trust in the feasibility and sustainability of the approach. The practical introduction could be carried out in 5 steps.

1) Establish regular exchange between vocational school and company
2) Prepare and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)
3) Mutual check of curricula
4) Agreement on number of students and selection of students (in close cooperation with companies and probably with ATA)
5) Contract between company and student (template provided by VET-provider via NAVETQ)
Apprenticeship schemes for youth employability in Albania

The respective curricula need to be evaluated and interpreted according to the real world of work in the companies. It will be essential to carry out this task with a certain level of flexibility but without compromising the quality of the training outcome. This process will be managed by the In-CT and the VET-provider with the focus on employability in the respective profession and not in preparation for passing the state Matura. A good example in this regard is the training of “thermo-hydraulic installations” which was supported by the AlbVET project.

In order to increase the value of the apprenticeship training the setting up and introduction of a preliminary practical final examination would be an asset. The exam could be developed and executed under the umbrella of ATA or another institution of the private sector. This would guarantee the ownership by the respective industry and could also serve as a quality indicator, especially concerning the certificate which will be issued on the basis of the results of this exam. This will also have positive effects for the apprentice. Preparation and participation in this challenge of the practical DCT exam will motivate the apprentice and will make her/him proud. This sense of achievement will create value and improve the standing of these professions in the tourism sector in the educational landscape, which will then radiate back into the society and create a positive impact.

According to the feedback received during the assignment there is a realistic chance of implementing a sustainable Albanian DCT approach in the field of tourism and hospitality. The roadmap at the end of this document draws an outline of how the introduction of an apprenticeship scheme could be realized. However, this roadmap cannot be interpreted like a recipe for baking cookies; the basis here, like in many other challenges in life, is the presence of people with passion. The easiest way to make the introduction of DCT in Albania a success story is to find enough In-CTs and DCT-coordinators who have the passion to support and guide apprentices in their personal and professional development and to create a highly qualified and motivated workforce for the benefit of society as well as for the economy.

**FINDINGS**

The Albanian people always showed great interest in the education policy of the government and the country saw several reforms in recent years. The fact that education is an important factor in life is a statement that most Albanians would agree with, as they are aware of the fact that only a good education can lead to success in the labour market. The restrictive communist regime which ended only in 1991 regulated the access to education institutions very rigidly. Places at the university in Albania were very limited and were mostly reserved for children of the party cadres. After the end of the dictatorship the pressure from the young population to enter higher education was enormous; this, along with an increasing appearance of private universities, resulted in rocketing numbers of students in the academic sector and declining attractiveness of vocational education and training. The consequence of this development is that companies are unable to find qualified staff despite a very high youth unemployment rate.

Through implementing several reforms the different Albanian governments attempted to increase the significance of the VET sector in the country. Starting in the academic year 2009/2010 the so called 2+1+1, 2+2 and 4 years in block system for the initial vocational education and training was implemented. The technical occupations are designed according to a 2(years)+1(year)+1(year) scheme, whereas mainly economic and IT occupations are operating according to a 2(years)+2(years) approach. The two-year long training period at the entry level of the VET systems aims to train semi-skilled workers and is allocated on the level 2 of the national and European Qualification Framework (NQF, EQF).

Theoretically, the learners could enter the labour market after successfully completing the first 2 years of the training programme. For the technical trades, the next one year training period corresponds to level 3 of the Albanian qualification network (equal level 3 EQF), which theoretically coincides with the qualification of a technician. A direct transition into the labour market after this stage is again possible but practically not chosen by the students because the acquired skills and knowledge are still not enough to reach employability. Consequentially, the learners prefer to continue their VET programme and after the year 4 they sit the professional exam and have the chance to pass the State Matura exam in a parallel
session, which allows them to continue their education at a university, which is currently the first choice of most VET students. This results in an unsatisfactory and very expensive situation for the national economy of Albania. The students are kept in education for an unnecessarily long time and often end up not having a fair chance to find a job despite the many years spent in education. Besides this, another paradox situation can be observed; the fact that generally academically weaker students choose the VET qualification pillar of the education system and are thus forced to learn a practically oriented VET occupation (qualification) and prepare for a more academic state mature at the same time, whereas the academically stronger students can solely concentrate on the state mature.

In Albania initial VET is carried out by more than 40 public vocational schools, in addition there are nine Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) plus a mobile one, which are conducting vocational training activities mainly in cooperation with the national employment service (NES). Up until 2013 initial training was known as vocational education under the responsibility of MoES and the further training or vocational training was managed by the Ministry of Labour. Since 2013 the overall responsibility of the Albanian VET system is concentrated at the Ministry of State Welfare and Youth (MoSWY) the former Ministry of Labour. To set the legal basis for this new approach the VET law is currently going through an overhaul as the Professional Schools have to be transferred from the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) to the MoSWY. Another important partner in the system will be NES which is controlled by MoSWY and might take on the responsibility for the administration of the professional schools. The VTCs were under the administrative supervision of NES even before the merger, as the VTCs have the task to develop and carry out active labour market instruments. VTCs are active in the fields of car mechanic, tailoring, IT, language courses or social services.

Another important partner in the Albanian VET system, the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Qualification (NAVETQ), which is also the owner of the erasmus+ activity, was also transferred from MoES to MoSWY. NAVETQ plays a leading role in the development of the occupational descriptions followed by the development of framework curricula and the qualification descriptions according to the Albanian Qualification Framework (AQF). In the future NAVETQ might support regional VET councils and could help to identify and formulate the state-wide recognized occupational standards. In this regard NAVETQ will play a leading role in the development of adopted dual cooperative approaches in Albania in order to improve the employability and work readiness of the VET system outputs. It is the task of the NAVETQ to further develop Albania’s VET sector in cooperation with the VET department in the MoSWY.

A new National Employment and Skills Strategy 2014/2020 (NESS) came into force through approval by Decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM) No. 818 on 26.11.2014. In order to implement the NESS Albania’s VET system is under pressure to undergo a comprehensive reform process where the realization of dual training approaches play a leading role. The NESS is focusing on the following four sub-strategies:

A. Foster decent job opportunities through effective labour market policies  
B. Offer quality vocational education and training to youth and adults  
C. Promote social inclusion and territorial cohesion  
D. Strengthen the governance of the labour market and qualification systems

The dual cooperative training (DCT) has the potential to significantly contribute to the implementation of the NESS 2014/20. The dual training will improve the employability of the involved trainees by closing the gap between the VET schools and the real world of work. By conducting training based on real work processes and acquiring real Handlungskompetenz (occupational competence) the trainees will have the potential to convince employers that they acquired work readiness.
The dual cooperative training will tackle the main problem that was prominently mentioned in the findings of several studies1 carried out by different organisations, which is that the VET system in Albania is not streamlined towards the real labour market demand.

For the time being only few contacts between professional schools and private business are established and maintained. As a consequence of this fact only little information about the demanded level of skills and knowledge by the labour market is available in the VET institutions. However, it has to be assumed that European benchmarks are relevant in this context when taking into consideration that Albania is an accession candidate. The implementation of a dual cooperative training (DCT) approach has the potential to carry out efficient adjustments of qualifications or programmes to better reflect the actual situation in the economic sector because the needed information could easily be collected and used for a continuous improvement process.

Another factor of the VET system which could be vitalized is the active involvement of company representatives in school boards. These formally exist but currently lack actively involved business representatives who mainly do not see themselves to be in a position to guide and promote VET institutions in their performance improvement efforts in order to increase and eventually reach employability of the VET-graduates.

This finding is also backed by a baseline survey carried out by GIZ in cooperation with ETF2 which makes it unambiguously clear that the current VET system is not in the condition to provide the trainees with the skills, knowledge and occupational competence (Handlungskompetenz) that is needed to guarantee employability and to supply the companies with the human resources they need to perform and to be competitive in the European Union economy. The mentioned survey provides another alarming finding, namely that one third of VET trainees are placed in occupation programmes offering no realistic job opportunities (e.g. economics/business, ICT, business office administration or economics of agriculture) in Albania.

A possible obstacle for the introduction of Dual Cooperative Training might have its origin in the fact that the current VET system overemphasizes the Matura related general academic subjects at the expense of the technical and hands-on subjects3. This circumstance is significantly reducing the time available for training in job-relevant practical and technical skills and knowledge, which has a direct negative effect on the employability of the young VET-graduates. In cooperation with all stakeholders pragmatic methods have to be developed in order to implement relevant and efficient practical training sequences by gaining companies as second i.e. dual training venues. The availability of the physical in-company training place will not be enough. The In-Company training has to be carried out in a certain quality to guarantee the intended learning success and to reach real employability.

Addressed in the above mentioned baseline study and prominently positioned in the NESS 2014/20 is the quality of VET training-personnel and the weak governance and administration of the professional schools and VTCs. These are structural conditions which could become problematic obstacles for the successful and sustainable implementation of Dual Cooperative Training in Albania. To illustrate the governance and administration situation of the VET system in Albania it has to be mentioned that since the beginning of the transition phase of Albania some 20 years ago all school directors, with few exceptions, were replaced by new staff whenever a political change in the government occurred.

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1 e.g. E. Vertopi, Tracer Study on graduates of vocational schools, commissioned by the project EuropeAid/128450/C/SER/AL (EU IPA 2008), June 2010.
3 Generally, students with lower grades in the lower-secondary school choose to do professional school (duration of professional school is 4 years to gain state Matura, general secondary school 3 years); this leads to the paradox phenomena that weaker students are confronted with double the load of learning, as they are not only taught a profession but are also preparing themselves for the State Matura. Whereas the students who tend to perform better academically are able to concentrate exclusively on the State Matura Exam.
Additionally, the desk study showed that a large number of the VET training-staff is close to retirement age and that many teachers are not fully prepared to conduct the technical curriculum in the needed professional way. The reasons might be found in a lack of comprehensive knowledge about the technical subjects and the non-existence of profound practical skills in the respective field. The missing structured pre-service and in-service training for VET staff is not helping the situation and could be identified as another challenge for the introduction of dual cooperative training.

In order to attract motivated and qualified specialists and engineers to become VET training staff the payment should at least reach a level which allows the teachers to make a living. There has been an increase in the salary for the VET personnel in Albania over the last years but the basis is still very low. Total transparency in the hiring process of VET training staff is mandatory and another precondition to implement dual cooperative training (DCT) successfully. It is not a secret but rather common sense that training can only be as good as the quality and the motivation of the training staff.

VET-providers need workshops and facilities which are complementary to the work environment of the partner companies supporting the DCT approach. This is not only important for the apprentices but also for the partner companies, which can be considered as customers in this context, in order to foster their trust and commitment. The resources which have been subject of the desk study indicated that most workshop facilities of the professional schools in Albania are outdated and located in highly depreciated premises in a significant number of cases. However, there are also isolated cases where new equipment is available but it is not being used due to non-existent demand or a lack of competent training staff. For the implementation and sustainability of a well-recognized and efficient DCT system, workshops and training rooms have to be upgraded.

> **Core challenge of the VET system in Albania** is the deficient orientation of the training towards the demand of the labour market. The gap between the training activities in the professional schools and demand of the companies is tremendous. The target of the Albanian VET system, which is to provide the trainees with employability, is currently not being reached. By implementing Dual Cooperative Training (DCT), in cooperation with partner-companies the apprentices will be provided with the opportunity to carry out real work processes and to acquire occupational competence (Handlungskompetenz). If this concept is realized, apprentices will achieve work readiness and the trained young Albanians will have significantly better chances on the labour market.

All points mentioned above are covered by the National Employment and Skills Strategy (NESS 2014/20), the sustainable introduction of the Dual cooperative training (DCT) has the potential to significantly contribute to the successful implementation of the national strategy.

**METHODOLOGICAL STEPS**

After finishing the desk study, the gathered findings were verified and diversified during a field mission, which took place at the end of October. Consultations and interviews with possible important stakeholders which are potential partners in the implementation of the Dual-cooperative training system were conducted and organized by NAVETQ.

In order to use the time efficiently and to generate the biggest possible outcome a workshop was organized in order to bring the key players together for the means of an exchange of views and expectations, as well as to receive inputs for the drafting of a realistic implementation road map. Small expert groups were formed in which possible implementation scenarios were developed and presented. The result of this group work is the basis of this report.⁴

⁴ The Minutes of the workshop is in the Annex of this document.
In addition to this important activity a questionnaire with in-depth questions was answered by the participants of the workshop and was sent to more experts in the country. The purpose is to validate the likelihood of success options for possible DCT implementation strategies which have been developed in the European context. Extensive interviews with the most important key-stakeholders were conducted during the first field mission in order to be able to base the feasibility study and implementation strategy on a solid foundation. The interviews were organized by NAVETQ.

This first draft of the implementation strategy including a preliminary road map was presented during the second field mission in December 2015. In consultation with NAVETQ a second workshop with the relevant stakeholders was organized on 16 December aiming to reach commitment and ownership for the feasibility/implementation plan. The proposed road map was finalized after the workshop by taking the comments and recommendations from the stakeholders into consideration.

**BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF DCT**

The common VET system in Albania is currently school based. A characteristic of this system is a relatively wide gap between the training in the school and the requirements of the world of work. In addition the school based system is very expensive since all technical training will be carried out by VET providers which indicate that technical training equipment needs to be provided and regularly updated for each individual learner. The teaching staff of the VET providers needs to be permanently trained according to the rapidly changed requirements of the labour market.

School based VET is generally not able to offer successful employability unless the gap between the VET provider training and the job requirements is permanently minimized. DCT allows the learner to gather the requested skills and competences directly during the execution of real work processes in the companies. The availability and readiness of companies to train young women and men in a professional manner is essential to this approach.

The judgement of the feasibility concerning the introduction of an apprenticeship scheme which follows the logic of dual cooperative training is based on the following definition of the concept.

**OCCUPATIONAL COMPETENCE (HANDLUNGSKOMPETENZ)**

The philosophy behind DCT is the occupational competence or “Handlungskompetenz” which has the reliable mastering of a complete work process focussed on learning. Training can only be successful if the trainee is able to perform a realistic, holistic and complete work action process. If this is the case, employability is achieved and success on the labour market is guaranteed given that open positions are available. Occupational competence (Handlungskompetenz) consists of four important factors, which are: professional competence, individual competence, methodical competence and social competence.

- **Professional competence** is the ability to recognize technical interactions, develop professional creativity, and execute self-responsible, independent, and professional tasks according to the demands of customers.

- **Individual competence** is the ability to appear and act authentically, creatively, and persuasively, all with a positive attitude.

- **Methodical competence** is the ability to recognize action structures and to gather information systematically. To choose and apply successful theoretical and working methods for every professional situation.
• **Social competence** is the ability to interact with others, to work actively in a team, to develop the capability to carry out productive dialogs in teams, to work together toward a mutual goal, and eventually manage a team.

*Handlungskompetenz (occupational competence) is the integration of professional competence, individual competence, methodical competence, and social competence. An employee has reached employability and the ability to solve problems when she/he has the necessary Handlungskompetenz.*

**COMPLETE ACTION PROCESS**

The Handlungskompetenz could ideally be implemented via the execution of complete action processes during the training. Especially during the In-Company Training this method will become the normal procedure to train apprentices as well as new staff. The following chart shows the essential steps that this approach entails.

![Diagram of the complete action process](image)

It is the task of the trainer to develop or identify a comprehensive task which fulfils the condition of a complete action process. Those tasks will become more and more complex to allow the learner to increase skills, knowledge and competences gradually.

Requirements for future education instruments are not only based on the reproduction of knowledge and skills but also on education, the creation of values and the satisfaction of the customers of a VET system.

Talking about DCT, the added value aspect could be considered as a supporting argument, due to the fact that during the training process products and services are generated that are useful for the enterprise or the customer. Also goods and services will be manufactured during the training process that the company would have produced anyway. At this point it has to highlighted, that an absolute added value orientation, or in other words, using production as the only aspect of training, is not desirable.

In-Company training is an essential part of DCT and has to be carried out by taking the special conditions of a company into consideration. Different didactical methods could be used by an In-company trainer (In-CT) and will be chosen according to the learning objective which should be achieved.
However, the training methods in the schools should eventually become modernized and adapt to the demand of the labour market in order to prepare the trainees for the work related tasks. In the future the success of the VET schools will be measured according to the employment chances the VET graduates have on the labour market; the didactical and pedagogical intervention has to take this into account.

**BENEFIT AND COST OF IN-COMPANY TRAINING**

The benefit of DCT and In-Company training could be seen in three dimensions. There are benefits

- for the companies,
- for the individual, which is the future apprentice and her/his parents and the benefit
- for the society.

In times where youth employment rates are rising worldwide, vocational training becomes an important pillar in any national education system. Countries with a strong VET system have been able to react much better to economic turbulences. Highly skilled workers are doing demonstrably well on the labour market and companies that rely on a highly qualified workforce are able to react quickly to market changes and can profit from this comparative advantage. A government which is interested in providing decent jobs for people will undoubtedly work towards establishing a functioning and competitive VET system.

The companies are benefiting from the DCT system because the apprentices are integrated into the real company’s workflows and will become familiar with the company’s processes. This provides the trainee with all needed skills, knowledge and competences desirable to become a successful and valuable employee after completing the training. Following the principle that training should be oriented around authentic work processes and dealing with real customers, the apprentice will produce products and conduct services during the training which generate additional productivity for the company. During the training period the company can evaluate the performance of the apprentice and will be able to place the new staff member in the positions where she/he is most productive. The training period gives the company the opportunity to establish corporate identity and loyalty of the apprentice who will see himself as a valuable member of the company’s staff if a DCT contract is signed between the apprentice and the company.

People who promote DCT should be able to discuss the cost - benefit issue with all stakeholders. It will be important for the DCT implementation team to be transparent in order to build up trust. Most important is the commitment by the companies and the strong conviction that DCT will help to guarantee the supply of highly skilled workers needed to guarantee the economic success of the firm. It is not expedient to start an aggressive discussion of cost issues with partner companies but it is important for the DCT-coordinator and other supporting personnel to understand the importance and some technical details of the subject dealing with costs and benefits of DCT in order to be able to respond in a professional and convincing way.

There are benefits of DCT for apprentices and schools which could be used to persuade the personnel of the professional schools to become strong supporters of DCT. The apprentices receive hands-on training within a company setting, i.e. exactly what they need to perform well in a real work environment and in the labour market. Training and supervision by technical experts helps the apprentices acquire knowledge of work-related processes and learn to properly use equipment. Apprentices can establish contacts and networks within the world of work, which are helpful for their future career and they receive a decent compensation (wage) for their time spent at the company. Depending on the nature of the cooperation between professional schools and companies the vocational schools might have more resources available for training purposes and after an In-Company training period they receive better trained and more motivated students.
FEASIBILITY OF IMPLEMENTING DCT IN ALBANIA

This feasibility study will focus on how an implementation of DCT in Albania could be successful. A practical oriented training with sequences conducted directly into actual work processes is not new for Albania. In fact, this was somehow the normal procedure in the state owned companies during the communist dictatorship until the year 1991. The main problem in the country seems to be the actual low reputation of VET and the unwillingness of the private small and medium companies to become partners in a dual training approach. The Albanian government is an avid supporter of realizing DCT and the professional schools have to develop approaches to establish the needed link with the interested companies. It will be essential for the success of DCT that the companies are able to identify a win-win constellation; only then will they be convinced to spend efforts and time for the realization of the DCT approach.

A precondition for the successful implementation of DCT is the availability of participating companies. The businesses need to be in the condition to host apprentices in a professional manner. Someone should be readily available to receive the apprentice and to train her or him according to certain quality standards. The environment of the companies should offer acceptable training conditions. It would be very challenging to start DCT in a country-wide approach without being aware of the country specific parameters that need to be considered. Sectors which have already developed self-governing bodies offer good opportunities for a successful introduction of DCT.

After the first positive developments of DCT in promising sectors become tangible and an adaptation to the local conditions is realized other sectors should be allocated for the continuous expansion of DCT. In the framework of this project the implementation of DCT or the apprenticeship scheme will be piloted in the tourism sector, which is highly important for Albania.

Estimates assume that there are around 1200 Hotels in the country. Most of the hotels are quite small and around 80% are only open during the summer months. Approximately 10000 Restaurants and Cafes are doing business in Albania. The sector is creating between forty to fifty thousand jobs. This number could jump to 140,000 during the short summer season. As tourism is identified as one of the most promising economic sectors of Albania it makes sense to support this industry. This would also have a direct positive impact on other industries, such as agriculture. To attract more customers and make them return, the offered service quality is of essential importance. Most professionals in the sector understand that to attract more European tourists European standards have to be offered and maintained.

Representatives of the tourism industry expressed during the workshop on 29 October 2015 that they are willing to participate and to contribute to the introduction of dual cooperative training in the sector. A questionnaire which was later sent to 60 companies mainly hotels and restaurants provided very positive and promising feedback.

The companies did express a very positive outlook concerning the development of the number of employees. The average company had 45 employees in 2015 and planned for 55 in 2018. They expect a proportion of more than 60 % females which is alarming since there are only less than 19 % female students in the VET system. Even though most businesses in the hospitality sector are small enterprises 87.5 % of them agree to accept apprentices. The other 12.5 % of businesses might accept apprentices if they were to have an In-CT who will not only train apprentices but also other new staff. The companies accept apprentices only if the implementation phase of the project will not involve a fee from the businesses. The main concern of the companies revolves around the legislation because they must not run into a situation where they are sanctioned by a government body or face a financial penalty.

Also, the VET-providers could increase the number of students willing to learn an occupation in this field. However, it is not known how many of these students are really interested in the profession or just targeting the state Matura to eventually attend the university by studying any random subject. This structural problem is an obstacle for the introduction of DCT, but no exclusion criteria. This issue has to
be addressed and could be managed by allowing the participating companies to select “their” apprentices. **Apprenticeships with students who are not interested in the profession will not only fail; but will also have a negative impact on the feasibility of implementing DCT.** Due to traditional and archaic reasons employment in the tourism sector is still not attractive for females in many Albanian families; a factor which has to be addressed and overcome.

In the survey the VET-providers identified the following factors as the most important for a successful introduction of DCT: the availability of appropriate curricula, the motivation of the students/apprentices, the focus on practical skills and competences and the willingness of the companies to cooperate. Other factors targeting the school’s environment are the gaps in the existing legislation, proper financing of the DCT approach and better infrastructure at the VET-schools.

Especially the tourism industry offers a good opportunity to introduce DCT in Albania. This prosperous sector offers a promising business outlook for the future. After a period during which the supply side of the market was growing too fast and concentrated only on quantity, the consolidation will be triggered by quality. But even the bigger hotels and restaurants in the country are having difficulties to recruit motivated young staff. The first choice is often a university graduate who naturally has no skills and knowledge concerning the special demands of the profession.

There is another important factor, which was discussed during the workshop and with experts, which must not be neglected. Even if the companies are ready to accept apprentices it has to be proven that the staffs in the hotels and restaurants have the professional skills and knowledge to act as an In-Company trainer for the apprentice. The fact that VET was nearly abandoned in Albania over the last 20 years has resulted in a situation where professional licenses systems are not working properly and more and more people are opening businesses in fields in which they have no proper qualification. When qualifying the In-Company trainer this point should be considered by offering technical training as well as pedagogical training.

**FRAMEWORK OF DCT**

The basis of the feasibility concerning the introduction of DCT in Albania is the legal framework. The existing regulations on Vocational Education and Training already mention the dual approach. The research below was done by Mr. Ilir Aliko:

- Article 4/nj defines “the dual form” in VET as follows “… combines education and training in a VET institution with the work and practical training in a company, according to the definitions in the agreement arranged between the participant, VET institution and company;”
- Article 6/ç of the law recognizes “the dual form” as one of VET forms in Albania;
- Article 7/e includes “the company” among other VET institutions;
- Article 7/1/1 defines the governing board of public VET providers as “collegial body, which represents the interests of students/trainees, business community, social partners, as well as local government”;
- Article 7/1/2/a includes among seven members of the board of public VET provider “two representatives from private sector related to the profile of VET provider”;
- Article 7/1/3 defines “the board elects its chairman from the representatives of private sector”;

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6 Ilir Aliko; Evaluation of the existing Work-based learning models in secondary and post secondary VET Albania; Tirana, October 2015
Apprenticeship schemes for youth employability in Albania

- Article 18/1 defines “the company is the entity where work-based training courses can be organized and where practical trainings for students and trainees of VET system can be implemented”;
- Article 18/2 defines “the companies which receive students of vocational schools to implement internships in the frame of respective curricula, get the state support”; (limiting it only to students without mentioning other categories like trainees of training or multifunctional centres or individuals of special needs groups, who might get trained through individual programs which include work-based training, can be seen as a constraint);7
- Article 18/3 defines “the participation of companies in the VET public system is regulated through agreements between the companies and the public VET providers; the duration of companies’ involvement in the public system is conditioned by the programs of practical trainings and vocational courses”;
- Article 21/dh includes among 9 participants of the 3-partite advisory National VET Council “two representatives from employer organizations”;
- Article 26/b defines “social partners participate in the development of VET standards”;
- Article 26/ç defines “social partners participate in the final examinations committees”; 
- Article 26/d defines “social partners assist in the implementation of practical trainings for students and trainees”;

The labour law8 already gives a more detailed definition of apprenticeship and it would be recommendable to use the same terminology in the whole legislation of the country if the same subject is targeted. This will avoid confusion and will create a sense of security for all stakeholders involved.

- Article 17 recognizes the contract of apprenticeship.
- Article 17/1 defines “the training master is obliged to train the apprentice according to occupational standards and the apprentice on the other hand is obliged to work with his training master in order to be qualified”.
- This provision of the Labour Code is supplemented with the respective decision of the Council of Ministers8, which contains definitions related to relationship between the training master and apprentice, the payment for the apprentice for the time she/he works with her/his training master, gives the apprentice the right to pursue vocational education without employment interruption and enter the exams without deduction of salary for the time he dedicates to them, and even provides no less than 5 weeks annual holidays for apprentices up to the age of 20 years. Besides that, the training master has the right to issue the certificate.
- There are not known implemented cases as per this provision in the current Albanian reality.
- Articles 98 – 103 provide on "Special protection to minors".
- These code provisions are supplemented by two specific decisions of the Council of Ministers10,11. They define that vocational training and traineeships in enterprises are allowed for minors under 14 years old with authorization of labour inspectorate. The latter is not necessary if these activities are organized by the authorities in charge with the education and vocational training.

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7 It needs to be considered that apprenticeship is different to internship. An apprentice has a different status compared to a student. The status of an apprentice has to be defined by law, also in order to give the companies more security during the practical training phase of the apprenticeship.
The work duration for minors 14-16 years old, which include the 10th class students of secondary vocational education, cannot exceed 6 hours a day or 30 hours a week. Hazardous and hard work is excluded for this category. The minors aged 16-18 years, which include the rest of students in secondary vocational education, are not allowed to work more than 6 hours a day or 30 hours a week in hazardous and hard work. This time limitation is not applied for normal work.12

As documented by the “Evaluation of the existing work-based learning models in secondary and post-secondary VET Albania” by Ilir Aliko, the status of an apprentice is already subject of the labour law. This definition has to be recognized by the VET law in order to create a special status for an apprentice to allow training in a company without considering the apprentice as a “normal” employee. This would be an important step to create security for the companies participating in DCT and expecting difficulties from the Labour Inspectorate. However, the exploitation of apprentices for cheap labour needs to be avoided.

Another important legislation in this context is the law on Social Insurance13

The regulation about the social insurance against accidents should also count for apprentices even if they only receive small apprenticeship compensation.

In case that the adjustments of the affected pieces of legislation needs more time MoSWY has to find an interims solution for the security of the companies participating in the erasmus project as well as for the apprentices. As the introduction of dual cooperative training is a prominent target of the Albanian government a solution concerning the legal uncertainty of the status of an apprentice is likely.

CHARACTERISTIC OF DCT

The essential characteristic of the DCT is the existence of two or more learning venues. The company is taking over the more practical oriented In-Company training part and the VET school is covering the general and mainly theoretical part of the curriculum. As a company is only operating in a specific technological field the VET school has the task to cover the complete content which is defined in the core curriculum based on the national occupational standard.

DCT in Albania is proposing that half the time is to be spent on In-Company training and the other half on presence in schools. The duration of the training could last from two to three years. The legal basis of the In-Company training is the VET law and the training contract between the apprentice, VET provider and the company. The company is paying the apprentice a training allowance. It provides

12 Ilir Aliko; Evaluation of the existing Work-based learning models in secondary and post-secondary VET Albania; Tiranë, October 2015
14 Decision of Council of Ministers No. 77, date 28.01.2015, “On mandatory contributions and benefits from social security system and health insurance”
15 Ilir Aliko; Evaluation of the existing Work-based learning models in secondary and post-secondary VET Albania; Tiranë, October 2015
systematic training under real working conditions, and the training should be managed and carried out by qualified In-Company Trainers (In-CTs). After the training the apprentice should be able to carry out complete and complex work processes independently. After consulting with the company, the VET school will make In-Company training available for the apprentice. The legal basis of the whole DCT approach is the VET law and the labour law.

An important characteristic of the dual approach is the DCT contract. With this contract the company shows commitment to training the apprentice in a professional way. For the apprentice the contract is a sign that the company cares about the training and that a sustainable link has already been established with the company. During the training the apprentice will develop a sense of belonging to the company, which has the potential to increase loyalty. The DCT contract is similar to a work contract and is the legal basis for in-company training. It regulates the duration of the training as well as the start and end date. Furthermore, the place of training, the duties of training provider and student, the content of training, the vacation, the certification, and the training allowance is defined. The contract has to be signed by the apprentice, the training company and the responsible VET school.

**STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITY**

**Companies**

The essential partners in a successfully operating dual cooperative training are the companies. Work readiness can only be achieved if training is taking place directly in the real working process. Especially the well-established Hotels and Restaurants in the country expressed their willingness to take part in DCT. An opinion-forming-process of the tourism industry concerning the right modalities of the approach is still ongoing. The Albanian tourism association could play a leading role in this process.

Employability can only be achieved, if the practical training is at least partly carried out in the real working environment. By carrying out work processes with real customers important soft skills can be trained, which is nearly impossible in a pure school situation. Because of the critical physiological development phase in adolescents it would be preferable to work with apprentices who are not too old.

Companies need to provide a training environment which allows the apprentice to manage the transfer from school to the world of work. The apprentice should be protected but will be able to experience real work conditions. This makes it necessary for the companies to rely on In-Company Trainers who are able to work responsibly with young people and are qualified in sharing all knowledge and skills mandatory to become professional in the respective technical field. The In-CT must be capable to understand the applied curriculum and to transfer it to the reality of the company. The cooperation with the VET provider is obligatory to guarantee that the envisaged target can be reached.

The selection of the apprentices will be done by the companies if they are willing to carry the responsibility for the training success. This will not work if the students of the professional schools are not interested in the occupation but only in taking the state Matura at the end of the programme.

The companies should treat the apprentices like their own staff to generate cooperate identity and to motivate them. The preparation for the practical exam will be done under the responsibility of the company; this will help the tourism industry take on ownership for this DCT approach. The apprentices will receive a training allowance paid by the companies as recognition for their efforts and contributions to the success of the company.

**Trade unions**

As the representatives of the workforce in the civil society, the trade unions could play a positive and important role in the DCT system of the country. It is in the interest of the union that its members are qualified and play a vital role in their respective companies. Furthermore, the union will be able to shape the society especially in the economic perspective for the benefit of all partners.
Normally there is a contradiction between the expectation of the companies and the employees. The companies would prefer to focus the training on their specific demand, whereas the employee is looking for a more comprehensive vocational training in order to build up a stronger position in the labour market. The unions could help to negotiate a compromise between these two poles. The goal should always be to encourage more people to become active partners of DCT in Albania.

**VET providers**

The VET institutions will cooperate with the partner companies and will treat them like customers. The companies will need support while setting up the In-Company training, especially at the initial phase. The curriculum has to be interpreted according to the demand of the companies but the quality of the training needs to be guaranteed. The practical training at the VET provider institution should reflect the reality and will prepare the apprentice for their service in the companies. Interaction with the companies gives the VET provider the opportunity to streamline the activities according to demand of the labour market. This allows the schools to initiate a continuing improvement process.

A permanent training of the VET-providers teaching staff will help to increase the professional performance and the reputation of vocational education and training. Target of DCT is the creation of employability and not the fulfilment of the entry conditions of the universities. Accepted apprentices should be interested in the profession that they are learning or the apprenticeship will fail.

**Apprentice**

The apprentices are the future specialists who guarantee the future performance of the industry. The young women and men should see the start of a successful work career in the profession which they are learning. It is important for them to feel proud of what they are learning. If this is the case the apprentices will challenge the teaching staff in the VET providers and the In-CTs in the companies for the benefit of all partners.

If the apprentices are interested in that what they are doing they will perform well during the daily work as well as on the exams. This motivation would spread to the peers and younger cohorts which could help to improve the reputation of VET step by step. This positive move will only be sustainable if the graduated apprentices are able to find a decent job in the profession they learned. Further career development opportunities alternative to a university programme would be very helpful in this regard.

A motivated apprentice is the key factor in the DCT approach and decides upon its success or failure. Companies will only contribute if they can work together with young people who fit into the business environment and have developed a passion for the profession. The young women and men should be open-minded and curious to explore the world of work. This will only work if the parents support this approach and if the general schools will help the pupils develop a realistic view of the job reality in the country.

**NAVETQ**

DCT will need a flexible interpretation of the curriculum without compromising the quality aspect of the apprenticeship training. NAVETQ can supply VET providers and companies with guidelines on how the apprenticeship training can become a success, by taking all legal framework conditions in consideration. The establishment of the sectorial committee coordinated by NAVTQ will support the introduction of DCT in Albania. With the help of this approach more responsibility can be transferred to the private sector and market orientation could be maneuvered into the focus.

The training of the DCT-coordinators as well as of the In-CTs is essential, not only at the beginning of the DCT implementation but also as a continuous process. Only if a win-win constellation with all stakeholders can be maintained will the introduction of the apprenticeship approach be successful; and training and professionalism will be a key instrument in this regard.
Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth

By concentrating the responsibility of VET into one ministry Albania made a big step forward to set up a well performing vocational training sector for the benefit of the young generation and the business sector. A major step and precondition for the implementation of the apprenticeship scheme in Albania is the preparation of a realistic and supporting legal framework. The legislation will aim to encourage the companies to actively participate in DCT. However, the quality standards must be maintained to avoid the risk that the apprentices could be exploited by untrustworthy companies as cheap labour.

The political level could support the implementation of DCT using several measures. First of all, a clear and persuasive commitment by the government should be announced. Furthermore, the participation in DCT could be an obligation for the participation in public tender. Another encouraging factor could be the introduction of tax reductions for companies with apprentices. Of course there are also many other possible incentives which are suitable for the Albanian environment.

The funding of VET providers should guarantee their good performance by allowing them to maintain good learning conditions and practical training opportunities with sufficient consumables and up-to-date workshops and laboratories. Employment of teaching staff needs to be totally transparent and based on performance criteria. To allow a further development of the system a functioning professional training approach needs to be applied.

ATA / Chamber / Sector committees

In the long run it will be not easy for the VET providers to manage the contacts to the companies by themselves. It would be more efficient if a separate body were responsible for combining the interests of the sector, a body which would become the partner for the VET providers. Possible partners could be the Albanian tourist association (ATA), the chamber or the to-be-setup sector committee. It will be important that one institution will take over the ownership of DCT. The new law concerning the introduction of the chamber of crafts will be very supportive in this regard. This has to be considered as a supporting instrument to implement DCT as soon as it comes into effect in 2016.

This responsible body of the industrial sector will manage the distribution of important information to all enterprises, will help to recruit more and more partner companies and to guide and support the apprenticeship, even if problems arise. Another activity field of this responsible body could be the organisation or at least the support of the final exam from the prospective companies. The apprenticeship certificate will extract its value from the recognition by the private sector which will be represented by the responsible body. This strategy has been proven to increase the reputation of VET.

HOW TO SET UP DUAL COOPERATIVE TRAINING

The setting up of the DCT in Albania could be structured according to five steps. This is under the condition that the legal issues are addressed and sorted out. The steps mentioned here could be realized through the conducting of workshops, involving VET providers, companies and the responsible body. A clear statement from the ministry that proves the commitment of the Albanian government to the introduction of apprenticeship schemes would be helpful.

A strict institutional setup might not be very helpful especially during the introduction of DCT. The basis of DCT is the commitment of the companies to invest in apprenticeship because of the understanding that there will be a return of investment at the end of the training period. It is counterproductive to try to order companies to participate in apprenticeship schemes. Instead it is important to convince businesses to introduce DCT and support them in taking on part of the responsibility of the training. This should be done actively by the responsible people of VET-providers and self-governing bodies of the respective economic sector. DCT will not work in a top down approach ordered by a government body.
The following steps could be carried out by each VET provider, preferably with the support of the responsible body and NAVETQ.

1) Establish regular exchange between vocational school and company:
   a. Discuss potential cooperation.
   b. Identify specific skill needs of the company.
   c. Assess whether the VET provider is able to provide apprentices in the required area.
   d. Assess whether the company has adequate training infrastructure (In-Company trainer and technical equipment to conduct training according to curricula).
   e. Identify responsible contact persons.

2) Prepare and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which contains
   a. Clear objectives.
   b. A clear definition in which fields cooperation takes place.
      i. DCT
      ii. Training of In-Company Trainers (In-CTs)
      iii. Provision of technical equipment
      iv. Financing of activities
   c. Tasks for both the vocational school and the company.
      i. Information of future apprentices (vocational school)
      ii. Identification and selection of apprentices (both)
      iii. Provision of training contract (template from VET provider or responsible body; signature by company, VET-provider and apprentice)
      iv. Conducting training (company)
      v. Assessing apprentice at the end of the training (company, responsible body)

3) Mutual check of curricula to
   a. identify training that can take place in the company (with technical experts).
      i. Existing curricula might contain modules which can be directly outsourced to companies. Both the VET-provider and the company have to identify and select these modules based on the skill needs of the company.
      ii. The identification process should be guided by certain flexibility and by the comparative advantage of the specific learning location within the company.
      iii. Criteria for the identification of training content/modules should therefore be the availability of technical equipment and instructors (In-CTs), the possibility to apply the necessary theoretical knowledge in a work-based setting and gain further technical knowledge, as well as the participation of apprentices in the workflow process.
   b. define training periods
      i. Intervals of days.
      ii. Intervals of weeks.
      iii. Intervals of months.
   c. define assessment methods
      i. Company assesses training which was delivered by company (Which staff member? What’s their qualification? Is additional training needed?).
      ii. Vocational school assesses training which was delivered by company (Which staff member? What’s their qualification?).
      iii. Decision whether newly acquired knowledge and competencies should be displayed via practical or theoretical examination.
      iv. Decision whether apprentices should be assessed after the end of each training module or at the end of the training programme.
4) Agreement on number of students and selection of students
   a. The company has to communicate how many apprentices could be provided with training (and how often based on the intervals agreed upon).
   b. Selection of apprentices could be done together or even under the responsibility of the company (added value for the companies).

5) Contract between company and student (template provided by VET-provider or responsible body) which contains
   a. Training duration, start and end date.
   b. Place of training.
   c. Duties of training provider (company) and apprentice.
   d. Wage level and additional information on lump sums
   e. Regulations on work safety
   f. Regulations on vacation and on leaving the apprenticeship
   g. Regulations on issuing a certificate at the end of the training

CURRICULA FOR DCT

There is already a rich history concerning several projects trying to realize different approaches of work-based-training in Albania. To benefit from the momentum and the successful introduction of the curriculum of “thermo-hydraulic installations” which was supported by the AlbVET project (implemented by Swisscontact) and was applied in 10 professional schools I would recommend to follow the principals developed here but to adapt it to the special demand of the tourism sector, if necessary.

If a tripartite apprenticeship contract, as mentioned in the existing legislation, will be signed by the apprentices, the VET provider and the companies the training time should not be limited to the 36 weeks which is the current planning figure in the school based VET. It is strongly recommended to follow the approach described in the Albanian labour law that would give even more room for practical training in the work place.

Example of how the curriculum could be realized (has to be adjusted)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10 weeks</td>
<td>Training projects in VET school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10+16 weeks</td>
<td>Training in companies at the work place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16 weeks</td>
<td>Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>Training projects in VET school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14+ weeks</td>
<td>Training in companies at the work place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14 weeks</td>
<td>Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>Final exam part 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>Training projects in VET school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20+ weeks</td>
<td>Training in companies at the work place</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
<td>Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>Final Exam part 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18 weeks</td>
<td>Training projects in VET school</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18 weeks</td>
<td>Theory - Preparation state Matura?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16 According to the definition of an apprenticeship in the Albanian labour law an apprentice has 5 to 6 weeks holidays. The + indicates that the rest of the weeks will be spend for training purposes in the company
With the help of NAVETQ it needs to be guaranteed that the content of the curriculum can be covered. The centralized final exam can guarantee the compliance with the market demand under the condition that the private sector is actively involved in the design of the assessment.

To reach a sustainable In-Company time contingent for the apprentice the first three yours should concentrate on VET. An additional programme could be developed together with MoES in order to set up a bridging course for those students who wish to transfer to the university. The target will be that the majority of the apprentices will enter the job market after grade 12.

**IMPLEMENTATION STEPS**

Especially during the introduction phase of DCT, the main responsibility for the dissemination of the apprenticeship scheme lies with the VET-provider, unless the responsible body is able to take over the responsibility right from the beginning. The implementation of DCT will be feasible if the VET-providers are well prepared and supplied with the necessary resources. In order to take the high information demand of DCT by all stakeholders into consideration it will be essential for the VET-provider management to rely on qualified staff. A DCT-coordinator (PASO) should take on the role of an ambassador for the introduction of the apprenticeship scheme. The DCT-coordinator will play a key role in the implementation of DCT; without this position the implementation of DCT might fail. The main cost for the government concerning the implementation of DCT will be the provision and funding of the position of the DCT-coordinator. Compensation might be possible if the apprenticeship approach is functioning and a significant part of the training will be carried out in the companies and not in the schools.

An important basic knowledge of any DCT-coordinator as well as for the In-CTs is the national regulation of VET in Albania. If the counterpart from the private sector or other institutions is requesting information, the DCT-coordinator should be able to explain the Structure of the Albanian VET system including the role of DCT in the country. Information should be available concerning interfaces of the VET system with the labour law. How is the VET system allocated in the education system of the country? DCT-coordinators as well as In-CTs should know what could be said about the importance of the school-based and not in-company training. Answers to the most relevant questions concerning the function of DCT should be made available, possibly in the form of leaflets or brochures.

The feasibility of the introduction of DCT in Albania will depend inter alia on the following steps. As long as DCT is new in the country the DCT-coordinators play a very important role.

1. Introduction of motivated DCT-coordinators in each participating VET school who take on the role of promoters and developers are a key element of the success of the implementation and dissemination of the DCT approach. In addition to the understanding and the cognitive mastering of the DCT concept the effective dimension is of extraordinary importance. The DCT-coordinators need to establish an emotional relation with DCT in order to be convinced that this approach has the potential to change and improve the VET system in their school and in Albania. PASO teachers could become DCT-coordinators as well as representatives from chambers and associations.

2. DCT-coordinators will carry out a survey concerning the DCT potential in the region (how many companies, what demand for skilled personnel, what sectors, matching school portfolio and demand by companies).

   a. The intention is to make the VET-provider familiar with the economic environment and increase the understanding for the demand of the possible customers of the professional school.

3. DCT-coordinators, in cooperation with a DCT department based at NAVETQ, evaluate if the school is prepared for the introduction of DCT or if significant gaps can be identified. The DCT department will supply the DCT-coordinators with relevant information and will be able to report to the ministry or other interested partners.
a. Is there already enough potential in the form of operating companies available? Was it possible to get a clear picture of the companies in the region? Is there missing information? What resources are available?

b. Do the occupations offered in the professional school match the demand of the partner companies?

c. Are there enough good qualified VET teachers available in the preferred occupational profiles? If not, what actions have to be taken? Does an in-service qualification program for VET teachers exist? Would it be possible to recruit part-time teachers from industry? Could the school report its demand to the VET-teacher qualification institution and will there be a reaction?

d. Are there enough interested potential apprentices in the pipeline? If not, what could be done to attract more qualified and motivated youth?

e. Is there more and/or better teaching equipment needed to fulfil the request of the partner companies? What alternative solutions would be possible in case missing equipment is identified? Is there an opportunity to add missing material into a school development and investment plan? Are there alternative purchasing and investment channels available? Would the companies support the professional school (financial, equipment, consumables)?

4. Companies (In-CT) and DCT-coordinator will select the apprentices together. It will be important to identify motivated young women and men who are interested in the offered profession.

a. The companies should be encouraged to identify apprentices by themselves. They can offer open positions for apprentices and carry out a recruitment process in order to select persons which fit to a business environment. After signing the training contract the apprentices will also be accepted at the part time VET school

b. In parallel the VET school can organize the first weeks of the first year of the training as an exposure phase to identify motivated future apprentices and bring them in contact with interested companies. The companies will select the suitable apprentices and sign the training contract with them and the VET-provider

5. DCT-coordinators organize workshops with all staff at the professional school in order to spread information and to gain more active supporters

a. For the success of the DCT dissemination it would be important that a majority of staff from the professional school become active and convinced promoters of the new approach. It will be the task of the DCT-coordinator to identify possible obstacles in the school processes and culture affecting DCT. Steering measures should target to convince the staff, since just giving orders will not lead to satisfactory results

6. DCT-coordinators and their supporters organize information sessions in the region with different target groups – parents, companies, other groups of the civil society

a. **Parents and future apprentices:** Information and promotion of career opportunities in the field of DCT highlight connection with companies and information about income opportunities, in contrast to the university qualification which might offer fewer chances. The actual low reputation of a VET qualification in Albania has to be considered and addressed. This may be achieved through a special campaign involving training activities and success stories.
b. **Companies**: Special sessions for companies could start off as a short workshop (possibly in form of a working breakfast) with the topics: success stories of Albanian companies already supporting DCT, brief display of benefits for participating companies, and an overview of the procedure. The arrangement of individual appointments and company visits for more detailed counselling and an evaluation of the suitability of the company to become a partner of DCT can be discussed. The envisaged outcome of the session is that the companies realize that DCT is a win-win situation and that the professional school is not just asking for alms.

c. **Civil society**: Investigation on whether the sectorial committee, chambers, associations (ATA), NGOs or other relevant groups in the region could become potential partners, who will help to support the DCT approach and to establish a positive impression of this modern practical career path. In general, the professional school is a significant part of a functioning community. School staff is well accepted and normally well known in the neighbourhood. The civil society will closely follow the development at the professional school or MFC which inherits the potential to spread the new ideas of DCT and implant it into the collective consciousness.

7. DCT-coordinators and the professional school will host information workshops for teachers from general secondary and primary schools to spread the information of DCT and its promising career opportunities to an important multiplier target group.

a. The envisaged target is that the teachers from general schools will be able to inform and educate all students about the existence of DCT in Albania and its opportunities for the personal career. In order to be able to reach the young people the general teachers should be committed to the chances DCT offers for the professional career. During the information session staff from the professional school, possibly accompanied by partners from industry, will visit the general schools in order to give a more realistic view of the world of VET and its potential. A side effect of this could be the promotion of the partnering company, allowing them to receive more attention which will in turn result in them being able to choose between apprenticeship candidates with higher potential in the future.

8. DCT-coordinators, in cooperation with NAVETQ and the VET department in MoSWY, will produce information material which could be used for different purposes and target groups, for youth, parents, companies and schools. The material for schools should include valuable information about the world of work and opportunities for career development in different directions with special focus on DCT.

a. The funding of this awareness campaign might be an issue and has to be addressed on different levels.

9. DCT-coordinators, together with specialists from the partner companies (In-CT’s if available) and NAVETQ, will develop a DCT final assessment as a quality oriented additional certificate with the aim to certify realistic and labour market oriented and relevant occupational competence (Handlungskompetenz) and guaranteed employability.

a. This could be realized by choosing a lifelike work process as the subject of the action oriented (handlungsorientierte) final exam. The board of examiners should consist of representatives from companies and VET-providers (a chamber or another suitable and trustworthy responsible body could manage this board). It will assess if the performance of the apprentice meets the expected professional standard. The signatures of the company representatives will give the certificate its value, since other companies are likely accept and trust the evaluation carried out by a colleague from the business sector.
10. Training of In-Company Trainers will be carried out by qualified staff organized and monitored by NAVETQ in cooperation with ATA. Apprenticeship training will only then lead to the expected result if the companies are able to conduct it in a professional way. An In-CT will be able to carry out the training efficiently and effectively and will play a role in improving the quality of the services in the company. Besides the normal duties the In-CT will not only instruct and supervise the apprentice but also other newly hired staff of the company.

a. After the qualification of motivated master trainers, In-CT courses could be conducted to reach as many companies as possible. NAVETQ can organize these tasks together with partners, such as the project supported by Biznes Albania and DEKRA or others. This qualification module could be a first step in setting up a fair and transparent licencing system in order to guarantee defined standards in the sector.

11. In order to make the VET career more attractive and to transform it to a valuable qualification option for the young Albanian generation an attractive pathway to higher qualification has to be offered and promoted.

a. In this regard it is recommended to develop a practical oriented qualification similar to the German Meister (crafts master) which directly follows the VET and DCT approach. This qualification should be reflected in the NQF and be placed on the same level as a university based Bachelor degree. Unlike a university degree, the Meister will not focus on research but on practical skills, knowledge and competences (especially Handlungskompetenz) which are desperately needed in the middle management level. The companies should be invited to define and to assess this practical qualification programme to generate ownership and implant the commitment that these Meister graduates are paid a similar salary as a university Bachelor. Hereby, the common and destructive prejudice that VET is a second choice and lower level education could be overcome and the quality level of VET could be increased significantly as more demanding students with high potential will enter the sector and VET teachers will be more motivated to perform better.

To ensure the success of the implementation of the DCT dissemination process, it is essential that the quality aspect is given particular priority. The areas mentioned above present fields of action which have a high potential of achieving a significant and sustainable impact. The quality aspect in VET has several dimensions and is always a challenge for the stakeholders involved. The most important feature of an implementation strategy is to gain not only the brain but also the heart of the VET systems customers. The customers are the companies and the young generation, Albania’s future work force. If the system is able to attract motivated young women and men willing to work as highly skilled employees, the companies will be motivated to support these young potentials as future top performers in the company. Unfortunately, the young potentials can only be attracted if they see promising opportunities in this specific career path. In the explicit situation in Albania it will be the task of the VET system to manage the communication between the two customer groups and match their expectations by offering optimized qualification routes.

DCT is offering the opportunity to develop the quality aspect as a unique selling proposition of this qualification pathway with the direct involvement of the companies. Entering DCT and signing a training contract with a company and the VET-provider leads directly to a future job opportunity. The whole construction of the DCT implementation could only be feasible if the companies are willing to employ the former apprentices and offer them decent job opportunities if available, which they will only do if the training quality has met their expectations. In this regard, the quality of the DCT approach is dependent on feedback of a closed loop system between professional Schools/MFC and partner companies.

As there are many companies in Albania that are unable to find the qualified staff they need to perform better in a competitive environment, and are thus awaiting more changes to come through the EU accession process, there could be more willingness to support VET institutions. In this context the development of the society in Albania, like in other countries, is currently one step behind these new
circumstances, as the trend towards academisation of the education system is still unbroken. As a side effect of this situation the social status but also the salary of a VET trainer remains very low. In many cases there is an obvious proportionality between teacher salary and motivation. Once the salary has reached a certain level which provides a decent family income this proportionality becomes less important. This is the direct challenge for the important DCT-coordinators. It will be her/his task to create a motivating environment in the professional school which allows the teachers/instructors to perform and to find satisfaction in their work. It will be important to identify where support is needed and what has to be done in order to increase the quality of the training concerning DCT. Nonetheless, the provision of an appropriate salary for the VET-teachers is one of the most critical factors which decide on the success of the whole implementation strategy of DCT in Albania. This factor will not be discussed further in this document, which should not lead to any conclusions made concerning the importance of this issue.

**DCT-COORDINATOR WORKING GROUP**

I would recommend that the DCT-coordinators (or PASO teachers) from the participating VET-providers form an active working group to exchange experiences and best practice examples concerning the cooperation with companies and attracting apprentices with high potential. The intended goal of this initiative is the continuous improvement of the system and perfect adaptation to the Albanian context. As a group the DCT-coordinators could reach more relevance and weight in negotiations with political institutions and other relevant stakeholders. As part of the NESS 2014-20 and with the support of IPA II there will be opportunity to develop instruments which make it more efficient to support all partners and to understand regional issues and structural deficiencies which may need special observation. The DCT-coordinator working group has the potential to become the spearhead for the implementation of the DCT system given that a positive team spirit is generated and the members feel as though they are carrying responsibility. The DCT-coordinators could become real ambassadors of the VET system in Albania which would support the sustainability of the whole endeavour.

More and more responsibility could be handed over from the donors including the erasmus+ project to the DCT-coordinator team, their performance could be measured upon KPIs which reflect quantity and quality indicators of the VET system, including the satisfaction of the customers and the increasing number of partner companies and apprentices. The DCT-coordinator team could have a rotating system concerning the nomination of the speaker of the group. The mandate of this group should be limited to the implementation of DCT; if the performance of the group was satisfactory a transition of this format in order to target other important issues could be considered.

**FINAL DCT EXAM**

Another very important issue concerning quality is the performance and the employability of the apprentices. The question is if whether they are able to carry out work processes in a professional way as it is required in the world of work. Here we could follow different approaches to measure the gained skills, knowledge and labour market relevant competences. Low level sub-competences could be defined and evaluated continuously during the training process or at the end of the training programme a final exam could be implemented, where the learner proves that real professionalism is reached and she/he is now able to fill a position as is requested by the labour market in order to guarantee the competitiveness of the enterprise. The last option follows the philosophy that you could only become a professional after completing the whole training program considering that you will need to master all competences, skills, knowledge and attitude to be able to produce those products and services the market and the customer requests. Isolated sub-competences could not lead to the comprehensive occupational competence (Handlungskompetenz) which is a precondition to reach employability. The availability of occupational competence lays the foundation for a lifelong learning competence that puts the learner in the position to continuously update the individual qualification profile according to the ever changing labour market requirements.

In this regard it will be important to design and set up an assessment which is recognized and trusted by businesses but also by the society. Especially in the school based system the capacity to assess the ability of a candidate and to certify professionalism in a specific trade is not perceived as a key competence of VET-schools and colleges by the society. In order to increase the value of an occupational qualifying-
certificate it would be of essential importance for the economic sector to take over at least a part of the responsibility in this envisaged quality oriented examination and certification process. Experts from companies should work out the practical assessments together with experts from VET-providers. The assessment tasks should reflect real working situations; thereby the apprentices can prove their competence for the job. If the representatives from the companies become active members of the examination committee they will take on ownership and become a part of the whole training process. This will lead to the factum that candidates who pass this exam and receive a certificate signed by the private sector will eventually gain a significant advantage on the national and regional labour market. Companies will stop complaining about the training outcomes of the VET institutions as they are now a part of the system. Simultaneously, they will increase the pressure to continuously improve the quality of the training delivered at the VET schools and during the In-Company training.

The exam task could be embedded directly into the work of the company, for example the execution of a customers’ request for the manufacturing of a chair or a table. The task could be varied from trade to trade; other examples could be the maintenance of a machine or the repairing of a car. Important for the board of examiners is the calibration of the assessment methods and the grading scale. As an alternative to this practical approach a fixed practical exam taking place over 2 days could be organized at a neutral venue. Following this approach all apprentices will have to fulfil the same task, which could be designed close to real work conditions but is still an artificial setup. The second option brings about more logistical and financial implications. Materials and tools have to be provided which come along with costs that could become significant depending on the nature of the task.

However, the exam should be valid, reliable, fair, but also affordable; only then can the certification system be sustainable and credible. It is a sensitive issue which has to be carefully discussed with all stakeholders. The compromise found should have the potential to establish a DCT quality label and to become an important pillar in the dissemination process of the system. The new law on crafts which might come into effect beginning of 2016 should be taken into consideration here.

In relation to this another effect could be initiated. Along with the engagement of the company representatives in the examination board it could be assumed that DCT might eventually become a normal part of the company’s cooperate-culture with a permanent positive impact on all staff members. It is desirable that apprenticeship becomes a regular mechanism inside the partner companies. In this regard the examination policy could also be used as a dissemination instrument for DCT.

**SETTING UP MULTIFUCTIONAL VET CENTRES**

Despite many useful interventions in recent years and the long tradition, the VET system in Albania neither succeeded in offering higher quality training products nor in increasing the reputation of VET in the country. However, it should be recognized that there has been a significant increase in enrolment in VET in the period 2015-2016. In order to boost DCT in Albania and to improve the quality and efficiency of the VET system, it is recommended to convert VET-providers into Multifunctional VET Centres (MFC).

One key aspect of setting up MFCs is the awareness that an efficient and target-oriented functioning and financing of VET-providers can only be realized if the available resources are used economically and if additional resources can be utilized, on top of the restricted state budget. A significant investment by private partners will only take place if a return of this investment is likely. This is the case if the VET-provider (MFC) follows a transparent, efficient and realistic business plan and if the investors are directly involved in the decision making process.

The approach of setting up a network of MFCs offers the chance to create a constructive environment that fulfils the conditions for an active participation of the private sector. Each MFC will preferably concentrate on a specific industrial sector which has significant economic potential in the country and where potential motivated business partners are available. Most relevant for the success of the
eramus+ project would be the establishment of a MFC concentrating on hotel industry and tourism, preferably in cooperation with the Albanian Tourism Association (ATA). If possible, a MFC should work as public-private partnerships (PPP) to emphasize and institutionalize the integration into the economic system and to consider focusing on efficiency. If this approach of setting up strong MFCs is successful, the national implementation of DCT will be supported tremendously and its impact and coverage will be increased dramatically. If a significant part of the practical training is conducted inside the companies under real work conditions and apprentices are reaching work readiness and employability after completing the VET program the MFC can establish a successful training program which should become an essential part of MFCs product portfolio.

Besides a public basic financing according to the number of VET trainees, it is up to the management of a MFC to generate other sources of income, and to develop a business portfolio that serves the industrial sector or the specific region where it is located. The role of the state will be to control and ensure the defined qualification standards for the training. A mechanism controlled by a central unit must be in place, which guarantees that the target numbers of envisaged VET apprentices reflecting the real demand of the labour market can be reached.

As independent bodies or PPPs, MFCs will enjoy autonomy in the area of business development. To encourage efforts to increase performance and quality offered by MFCs, a bonus could be paid by the government for every successful and sustainable job placement of a VET graduate. A MFC will use curricula and training methods that follow the standards set in cooperation with NAVETQ and targeting the recognition by European standards.

The MFCs will also offer short-term courses for different target groups in line with the government policies. One of the customer clusters should be vulnerable groups, offering them market-oriented courses for initial training and job seekers by utilizing the VET facilities available in the region. In some industrial sectors, there might be a chance for the MFC to offer products and services to the market to fulfil two particular targets: firstly, to offer realistic practice-oriented training projects to apprentices; and secondly, to generate income for the centre. In order to cover the whole VET qualification stream including the post-secondary qualification sector, internationally recognized craft master (Meister – still has a positive image in the Albanian society) certificates might be offered. This could be done for a target group that is already part of the labour force and has several years of practical experience; the program could be offered both in full-time and in a part-time setup. This Meister programme could also play an important role in offering young Albanians who hold a VET certificate a promising career opportunity bypassing the scientific oriented university education but reaching the same level as a university Bachelor according to the EQF.

A MFC could consist of more than one location. Provided a structured business plan is available, other training centres or VET institutions even those that are managed by other authorities or ministries at the moment could be transferred to a well performing and managed MFC. Following this approach, qualification measures could become more efficient and available expensive training equipment will be used more effectively. The MoSWY will be relieved from the burden of administrating single VET schools and the MFC could utilize the capacity available by using market-oriented business methods. The result will be that more people could be better trained at much lower costs. The MFC will be encouraged to open branches in rural areas and to run high standard dormitories in order to serve the population of the entire country with a special focus on girls and rural areas.

The MFC could be steered by a board of governors, which would consist of representatives from the MoSWY and the local industrial sectoral business community: However, independent management staff would carry out the daily business operations. Hiring the staff including the teaching personnel would be the responsibility of the MFC management, as it is a strategic factor of the economic success of the endeavour.

Independent MFCs managed according to market economic rules but serving VET goals of the state will become the backbone of the VET system. Funding of facilities and equipment could be diversified and streamlined along the guidelines of the centre’s executive management. Individual MFCs will serve
different industrial sectors but will compete in terms of quality and implementation of efficient and effective business processes. A permanent improvement process is to be expected in this regard. As the MFC is taking over the management of other government driven VET facilities in the region equipment and teaching staff could be utilized more efficiently and the funding will become more transparent. This will increase the acceptance of the VET system by the people and the private sector as well as the trust in its performance and usefulness.

**IN VolVEMENT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

There are not many big firms in the Albanian company landscape; the economy is dominated by micro and small enterprises, which often do not operate continuously or only for certain periods of time. Chambers do exist but do not act independently as representatives of the member companies. Many companies operate informally. These circumstances make it difficult to find businesses that can be potential partners for the implementation of DCT.

When setting up a sustainable and demand-driven VET system, it will be essential to actively involve the employer organizations. The financial and structural situation of the VET system, where workshops and modern equipment is missing, needs to be improved significantly. Employment relevant training can only be successful if it is carried out in an authentic work environment and deals with real customers. Simulation in the VET institutions will fail if carried out by teachers who have never been actively involved in a current business process.

A potentially positive role in this regard could be played by the sectorial working groups (SWG), who are currently only partly functional. SWGs are supposed to be a supporting power for the steering of the VET and the DCT activities towards targeting the real qualification demand of the industry. Here, the quality expectations could be clarified and the activities of the future MFCs could be streamlined according to the actual employability level of VET/DCT graduates. Regional VET Committees would be another option in order to build bridges between VET and industry.

Empowered and functioning VET institutions offer a great opportunity to institutionalize a mutual benefit-based cooperation between local and regional companies and VET-providers (MFCs). Local industry and hotels should be encouraged to support the MFCs by contributing to the development process of curricula and training programs, by means of providing In-Company training for apprentices as well as practical in-service training phases (internships) for VET teachers, trainers and VET school managers. VET-providers, in turn, will offer products and services which will help the private sector become more competitive in the EU context.

It is the declared aim of the Albanian government to introduce a DCT based national VET system. To realize this plan, companies must be in a position where they can allocate their own benefit and feel ownership in this regard. This can only be brought about if companies are directly involved in the decision-making process of the system. The government has to focus on the legal and infrastructural framework to make this approach possible. However, if companies are able to determine the conditions of the final exams taken at the end of the DCT program, they can no longer complain about the bad performance of VET graduates and will convert to strong supporters and further developers of the national VET system. The approach has to be aligned with the new law on crafts which will come into effect in the beginning of 2016.

**PROMOTION OF DCT**

Without the necessary degree of knowledge and understanding of the importance of the introduction of DCT and the need for structural changes in the VET system among stakeholders at all levels, the reform may be put at risk because of indifference or ill-informed resistance and opposition. VET in Albania is connected with low esteem – of employers, parents and the young generation (potential apprentices) themselves. Other education pathways, especially the academic path is generally seen as superior in terms of employability, income and status. The introduction of DCT has the potential to reverse this situation and implement a modern and relevant system that meets the needs of employers and learners and provides a genuine foundation for careers. However, the public perception of VET
constitutes a real threat to the success of the implementation of DCT. There is a need to create public awareness concerning the DCT introduction and all success stories about improvements in training quality and about the increased employability, to receive the widest publicity and media coverage.

This activity should not just be seen as an effort to ensure visibility for project achievements and good public relations; it is ultimately about changing the public perceptions of VET and raising the awareness of its potential for the economy, the individual and the society. Above all, it is about creating real enthusiasm about the prospect of creating a world-class VET system that will meet the skill needs of the Albanian economy, contribute to economic development and make a real contribution to the life chances of citizens, especially of young people, including vulnerable groups.

The implementation of awareness raising activities will be based on messages which provide a distinctive brand image for VET and DCT that connects it to the modern world, i.e. with the needs of industry and commerce and with Albanian future as an EU member country. However, we have to recognize that public opinion cannot be changed overnight, but will evolve over time as success stories emerge.

A range of awareness raising, marketing and public relations activities are possible which could be used to promote recognition and support for the successful implementation of DCT. Different modes of communication could be thematic seminars and media events, press conferences, radio and TV interviews, articles placed in newspapers, internet chat rooms, social media and other publications and so on. Radio, TV and of course social media coverage is probably the best way to reach as many people as possible but consideration should also be given to the opportunity of utilizing alternative and more traditional ways of dissemination, such as providing information that can be discussed at villagers’ gatherings, municipality council meetings and other appropriate ways with the aim to involve the traditional ‘key actors’ in rural areas as well. Of course all these activities will only have an impact if the “DCT product” i.e. the training of the apprentices is of good quality.

Not only printed materials should be produced to support the awareness activities. As part of the rebranding of the VET system as something new, modern and exciting, there should be a distinct visual identity to all materials produced for the purpose of awareness raising and promoting DCT. Designs and slogans will be important in creating a recognizable identity associated with the positive messages that need to be promoted. Even if the content is perfect, people will not read something that is visually unappealing.

A DCT website could be set up, displaying all relevant information about the DCT introduction and dissemination. It should include links to the websites of all appropriate Albanian, EU and international institutions. Documents should be included in searchable format, and key documents should be downloadable in PDF format. Any video and audio spots produced for the promotion of DCT should also be incorporated in the website. It should be updated regularly, normally on a weekly basis and it would be important if the ownership of the website is taken over by Albanian stakeholders, such as the DCT-coordinator working group.

Newsletters should also be produced at regular intervals (e.g. quarterly) and should be distributed electronically by email to all persons on the DCT stakeholder mailing list. Additionally, a social media presence could be set up to connect to the young generation. It could be an option to cooperate with partners to realize DCT promotion not only because of possible budget constrains but also to get more people involved in spreading the message.

DCT AND SME

Considering that the corporate landscape of Albania is characterized by SME it would be an option to elaborate if DCT could be disseminated to this specific customer group. DCT is not exclusively adapted to large companies, but on the contrary it works quite well in the craft sector in the originating DCT applying countries. Most societies on our planet know the centuries-old tradition of crafts masters who
train apprentices. It has only been a few decades since this system went out of the focus of the “modern” education system in most counties.

Given a situation where the master craftsmen who are professional in their trade exist, for example as a joiner, a barber, or a cook they might be the perfect trainers for apprentices. The apprentice would learn significantly more about the hand-skills of the profession from a “Meister” than from a teacher who might have never carried out the trade teaching professionally in the real world. There are several challenges to be tackled in this setting. How can the matchmaking between the DCT promoting schools and the craftsmen be realized? Are the craftsmen willing to accept apprentices? Is this form of apprenticeship attractive for the young Albanian generation? Would it be possible to also cooperate with informal enterprises?

In order to put the dissemination of DCT on a broader base I would recommend evaluating if the cooperation with the craft sector is an option in Albania. It would open a possibility for the DCT philosophy to increase its penetration into the economic sector and to develop new customer segments. Other positive effects in this regard are the job creation potential and the strengthening of specific trades which could help to improve the overall investment climate.

**DCT-COORDINATOR AND IN-CT**

The success of the implementation of DCT depends on the selection and qualification of the right DCT-coordinators and In-Company Trainers (In-CT). The motivated DCT-coordinator who supports her/his VET-provider in creating the link to the world of work is an important part of embedding the philosophy of DCT into the VET intuitional landscape of Albania. This activity has to be seen in connection with the continuous training of In-CTs who will take on the responsibility of the training which is conducted in the companies.

The VET-provider will be prepared for the cooperation with the companies by the DCT-coordinators and the In-CTs will take over the function of the link between the two most important partners (companies and professional schools) in VET. For the successful implementation of DCT a sustainable and trustworthy public-private-partnership has to be established which will only operate sustainably if a win-win situation for all involved stakeholders can be generated.

A suitable number of In-CTs but also of DCT-coordinators (including PASO Teachers) have to be qualified and supported in order to guarantee the needed tangible and recognizable impact on the system. The motivated people are making the difference they can create trust in the VET system on all levels of the society including the decision makers. Dissemination will be successful if the VET-provider interprets DCT as “their” product and as a most suitable way to qualify the young generation in Albania to become successful on the labour market, given that the governance and management of the Albanian VET system is not creating too many obstacles.

**QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND CERTIFICATION**

In order to maintain or even to improve the quality of DCT a quality management system would be helpful. Quality standards can be developed by the VET providers with the support of NAVETQ. The standard could help to develop the quality of the institution and its products, and measure its performance. The standard might help to strengthen societal confidence in VET quality and institutional services. For government and communities, the standard facilitates decision-making about financial allocations. It could provide quality information to learners, parents, government and other interested groups regarding institutional mechanisms. A working quality management system could enhance transparency, equity and accountability in education, particularly for public institutions. Such a system might also have a positive impact on the societal relevance of the DCT certification.

Certificates are the general form of a performance confirmation, which serve a purpose in the authorization system at the same time (e.g. access to education areas, permit for professional activities, etc.). Degrees, in contrast, are formalized final evaluations of longer-lasting educational or training
programmes that are higher in status and play a role in professional life and professional image. Without attending the respective courses degrees can only be completed in exceptional cases.

In their "Memorandum on Lifelong Learning" the European Union differentiated equally between formal, non-formal and informal education, in which the "lifelong learning" will be realized. The Certificate discussion focuses on the proof of knowledge and skills acquired in the context of formal education. Certificates give information about their holder to those interested. The holder is certified to have achieved nameable and comprehensive learning contents and learning outcomes proven by marks or similar classification systems. She or he has challenged themselves for a certain time with comprehensive learning requirements and has passed an exam in front of certain individuals or institutions.

For the labour market and career, the importance of continuing education certificates strongly depends on the awareness and purview of the certificates themselves. This is determined by the type of training providers, their image on the demand side and the regional and sectorial expansion of its infrastructure. In this regard it could be helpful if a recognized organisation representing the respective industry in Albania is issuing the certificate. It might also be supportive if HIBB could recognize the DCT certificate if international standards are reached.
To be as realistic and practically oriented as possible the roadmap considers tourism as pilot sector. As the recommended dissemination strategy suggests including step by step all relevant economic sectors into DCT as soon as the respective interested self-governing bodies could be found, an adaptation of the roadmap could easily be realized.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Task (What has to be done to achieve the objective)</th>
<th>Time Frame (by when achieved)</th>
<th>Success criteria (How to identify the success)</th>
<th>Responsible (Who guarantees delivery)</th>
<th>Resources (Resources needed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Legal status apprentice is defined</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clarify the legal situation together with the MoSWY. How can the definition of apprenticeship as it is defined in the labour law be used in the VET law</td>
<td>01/2016</td>
<td>Written statement by the Ministry which protect the status of an apprentice</td>
<td>Project office NAVETQ</td>
<td>MoSWY, NAVETQ and other external experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare a constructive proposal on dual system in general and status of apprentices, in particular, to be included in the draft law on VET, which is in process of being finalized</td>
<td>01/2016</td>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>Project office NAVETQ</td>
<td>MoSWY, NAVETQ and other external experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Until the law is endorsed, preparation of an order by the ministry which defines the status of an apprentice in order to give security to the participating companies that the apprentice will not be counted as a normal employee by the labour inspectorate.</td>
<td>01/2016</td>
<td>Order from the Ministry which protect the status of an apprentice</td>
<td>Project office NAVETQ</td>
<td>MoSWY and other external experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revision of the tripartite contract.</td>
<td>01/2016</td>
<td>Revised contract draft</td>
<td>Project office NAVETQ</td>
<td>MoSWY, NAVETQ and other external experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Insurance situation for apprentices during the practical training is clarified</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clarify if the Decision of Council of Ministers No. 77, date 28.01.2015, “On mandatory contributions and benefits from social security system and health insurance” is valid for apprentices</td>
<td>01/2016</td>
<td>Written statement by the Ministry which guarantee the coverage</td>
<td>Project office NAVETQ</td>
<td>MoSWY, NAVETQ and other external experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If not covered – Decision of Council of Ministers has to be amended and apprenticeship has to be included together with unpaid internship</td>
<td>02/2016</td>
<td>Written statement by the Ministry which guarantee the</td>
<td>Project office NAVETQ</td>
<td>MoSWY, NAVETQ and other external experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Qualification of In-CT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Certificates indicating passing successfully the In-CT training programme</td>
<td>NAVETQ, ATA</td>
<td>Funding for the training course. Possible in cooperation with Work-based T+t-T programme for the Albanian tourism industry (ALBtrain) based in Durres and carried out by DEKRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Qualification of DCT-coordinators</td>
<td></td>
<td>DCT-coordinators qualification programme is developed and carried out</td>
<td>VET-provider management, NAVETQ</td>
<td>Funding for the development and execution of the qualification programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Cooperation between VET-school and companies is established</td>
<td>02/2016</td>
<td>List of potential partner-companies including address and contact person</td>
<td>DCT-coordinator</td>
<td>ATA, NAVETQ,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VET-schools identify relevant cooperation partner-companies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NAVETQ, ATA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discuss potential cooperation. DCT-coordinator is visiting the potential partner companies. Give information about DCT, explain mode of possible</td>
<td>02/2016</td>
<td>Minutes of all visits to and from companies</td>
<td>DCT-coordinator</td>
<td>NAVETQ, ATA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Time Frame</td>
<td>Success criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>cooperation</td>
<td>Identify specific skill needs. What kind of training could be done in the company? What categories of staff are needed?</td>
<td>02/2016</td>
<td>Minutes of all visits to and from companies</td>
<td>DCT-coordinator</td>
<td>NAVETQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assess whether the VET-school is able to provide apprentices in the requested area. A meeting in the VET-school between DCT-coordinator, school management and school board will decide</td>
<td>02/2016</td>
<td>Minutes of the meeting in the VET-school</td>
<td>DCT-coordinator, School management</td>
<td>NAVETQ, sector committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assess whether the company has adequate training infrastructure. During the visit of the company the DCT-coordinator will judge if an In-CT is available and the environment is suitable for an apprentice</td>
<td></td>
<td>Minutes of the visit</td>
<td>DCT-coordinator</td>
<td>NAVETQ, ATA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify the responsible contact person. A database of partner companies including addresses should be developed. It would be an advantage to have one central database, managed by the DCT-coordinator working group or by ATA.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Database of partner companies</td>
<td>DCT-coordinator, DCT-coordinator working group</td>
<td>NAVETQ, ATA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the company is prepared and signed</td>
<td></td>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>VET-provider management. DCT-coordinator Company management In-CT if available</td>
<td>NAVETQ, ATA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Task (What has to be done to achieve the objective)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Specific curriculum is checked and interpreted according to the individual situation in the company</td>
<td>Identification of the company's training needs</td>
<td>Minutes of meeting concerning definition of company training plan</td>
<td>In-CT of the company, DCT-coordinator, NAVETQ</td>
<td>NAVETQ, ATA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identifying curriculum content which can be trained in the company</td>
<td>- Parts of the curricula might be directly outsourced to companies. Both the vocational school and the company have to identify and select content based on the skill needs of the company</td>
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<td>- Suitable specific learning location within the company should be identified</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Identification and selection of training content should be based on suitable environment and available In-CTs, the possibility to apply important knowledge in a work-based setting and to gain further technical skills as well as the participation of students in the work process</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Definition of the training periods</td>
<td>- Intervals of days</td>
<td>Minutes of meeting concerning time planning and assessment procedure of the apprenticeship</td>
<td>In-CT of the company, DCT-coordinator, NAVETQ</td>
<td>NAVETQ, ATA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Intervals of weeks</td>
<td>- Intervals of months</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Definition of the assessment method</td>
<td>- Company assesses training which was delivered by company</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Vocational school assesses training which was delivered by company</td>
<td>- Decision whether newly acquired knowledge and competencies should be displayed via practical or theoretical examination</td>
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<td>- Decision whether students should be assessed after the end of each training module or at the end of the training program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Agreement on number of students and selection of students</td>
<td>- The company has to communicate how many students could be provided with training (and how often based on the intervals agreed upon) - Selection of students should be done together with company</td>
<td>Rotation plan indicating when the individual apprentice is in which training venue</td>
<td>In-CT, DCT-coordinator</td>
<td>NAVETQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Contract between apprentice, company and VET-provider is signed</td>
<td>Discuss the content of the contract with all relevant stakeholders. Possible content of the training contract: - Training duration, start and end date - Place of training - Duties of training provider (company) and student - Wage level and additional information on lump sums - Regulations on work safety - Regulations on vacation and on terminating the apprenticeship - Regulations on issuing a certificate at the end of the training The contract is registered by ATA in cooperation with NAVETQ (template of the contract is provided by NAVETQ)</td>
<td>Signed Training contract Apprentices register</td>
<td>In-CT, DCT-coordinator, ATA, NAVETQ</td>
<td>Training contract template Database for apprentices’ register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Final exam for DCT is prepared and ready to be carried out</td>
<td>Decide upon the characteristic of the final exam. - Content - Duration - Timing For the time being there should be the traditional exam from the school based system and in addition the DCT exam as an indicator of more quality training and the participation of the private sector Setting up of an examination and certification</td>
<td>Statute prescribing the DCT final exam</td>
<td>NAVETQ, ATA</td>
<td>Examples from the European context</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apprenticeship schemes for youth employability in Albania
## Apprenticeship schemes for youth employability in Albania

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>system</td>
<td></td>
<td>examination board</td>
<td>NAVETQ, ATA</td>
<td>European context</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Statute of the examination board</td>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate sample</td>
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<td>- Members of the examination board</td>
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<td>- Issuing procedure of the certificate</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Recognition of the certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>DCT becomes an essential part of the Albanian education landscape</td>
<td>Information campaign about DCT in Albania Creation of information material tailored for different target groups (students, companies, parents, media) Permanent internet/media presence talking about career opportunities and success stories</td>
<td>Information material 80% of 9 grade students know about DCT in Albania</td>
<td>MoSWY, NAVETQ, ATA</td>
<td>Content management Funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX

TIME AND WORK PLAN

Start of the desk study:

22 September 2015

First field mission to Albania:

27 October to 31 October 2015 = 4 days
Workshop was on 29 October

Start drafting feasibility study/ implementation strategy and road map

1 November 2015

Second field mission to Albania:

15 December to 19 December 2015
Workshop on 16 or 17 December – Debriefing with NAVETQ on 18 December

Final report on 31 December 2015

LIST OF POTENTIAL LIST OF SCHOOLS/STAKEHOLDERS TO INTERVIEW AND MATERIAL REVIEWED

During the first field mission to Albania from 27 October to 31 October 2015 interviews with the following experts have been carried out:

- Ms Sonila Limaj, Director NAVETQ
- Ms Zyhrada Kongoli, Legal Expert concerning VET legislation in Albania
- Ms Elona Daci, Project Manager of “Apprenticeship schemes for Youth Employability in Albania”
- Ms Sabine Hartig, Programme Director Vocational Education and Training Programme, GIZ Albania
- Mr Ilir Aliko, Local VET expert
- Ms Silva Banushi, Director General, General Directorate of Employment and VET Policies, MoSWY
- Mr Stavri Lako, Expert TVET, MoSWY
- Ms Lulieta Dauti, Expert TVET, MoSWY
- Mr Zak Topuzi, Owner Hotel Montial, Chair Tourism association
- Mr Florian Kuka, Owner Hotel Baron
- Mr Bashkom Sykia, Director of Entrepreneurship Policy Support in MZHETTS (Ministry of Economy)
Apprenticeship schemes for youth employability in Albania

- Mr. Florence Qosia, Austrian Development Cooperation
- Matilda Naço, ATA Albanian Tourism Association

A workshop (ca. 40 participants have been invited) took place on 29 October including all stakeholders of the project

- Delegates from industrial associations and chambers (main focus was on this group)
- VET department MoSWY
- NAVETQ
- Directors of professional schools and VTCs offering tourism
- Interested partners from international organisations

The following material listed below was reviewed and used as basis of this report.

E. Vertopi, Tracer Study on graduates of vocational schools, commissioned by the project EuropeAid/128450/C/SER/AL (EU IPA 2008), June 2010
EC; ET 2020 Working Group on Vocational Education and Training (WG on VET); High-performance apprenticeships & work-based learning: 20 guiding principles (DRAFT); 2014-2015
Final report draft: Baseline Survey of Public VET Providers in Albania, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GIZ and European Training Foundation (ETF), p. 11, May 2014
Ilir Aliko; Evaluation of the existing Work-based learning models in secondary and post-secondary VET Albania; Tiranë, October 2015
ILO-UNDP, Assessment of training providers in Albania, 2012, report unpublished
Tobias Wolfgarten, Isabelle Le Mouillour, Volker Fotios Grünewald, Ilona Medrikat, Betriebliche Ausbildung in Partnerschaft - Vorschläge für neue Ausbildungsformen in Griechenland Zusammenfassung von fünf branchenspezifischen Machbarkeitsstudien, German office for international Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training, Bonn, 2014
L. Rama & A. Sulstarova, Multifunctional VET Centres in Albania - Feasibility study, February 2014, publication by the European Training Foundation (ETF) upcoming.
Risi Albania, Market System Analysis - Tourism sector in Albania and business constraints to growth
W. Heitmann, A. Pasha, S. Dibra, A. Huibregtse, ETF/ GIZ VET school baseline survey – Findings and recommendations (working title), draft 8 April 2014, publication upcoming
ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development, Implementing Post-secondary VET programs in Albania, July 2013

In addition to the above mentioned documents several pieces of law and COM proposals have been reviewed. A reform of the legal framework became necessary in order to make the transfer of the responsibility for VET from MoES to MoSWY possible. Below there are some examples from the reviewed pieces of legislation. However the author has not the latest information of all proposals have been already endorsed:

The purpose, composition and operation of the boards of public vocational education schools, Pursuant to article 102, paragraph 4, of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, and Article 7/1, paragraph 4 of Law No. 8872, dated 29.03.2002 "On Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Albania"

The purpose, composition and operation of the boards of public vocational education centers, Pursuant to article 102, paragraph 4, of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, and Article 7/1, paragraph 4 of Law No. 8872, dated 29.03.2002 "On Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Albania"

Guideline on definition of admission criteria and procedures in vocational education schools, To support article 102, point 4 of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania and article 10, point 1 of law No. 8872, dated 29.3.2002 “On Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Albania (Amended)"


Guideline on criteria and procedures for appointment and dismissal of managers in public vocational education and training institutions, To support article 102, point 4 of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, article 23 of law no. 8872, letter d, dated 29.03.2002 “On Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Albania”, amended.

Council of ministers decision on status of public vocational education and training institutions, To support article 100 of the Constitution, letter (dh) of article 23 of law no. 8872 dated 29.03.2002 “On Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Albania”, amended; of law no.10247 dated 04.03.201 “On the Albanian Qualification Framework” upon proposal of the Minister of Social Welfare and Youth and Ministry of Education and Sport, the Council of Ministers

Joint guideline on supervision of the activity of vocational education and training institutions, In support of article 23, pointg, of law No. 8872, dated on 29.03.2002 “On Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Albania”, amended, the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MoSWY) and the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES)

MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP 29 OCTOBER 2015 IN TIRANA

Workshop on feasibility study in the framework of "Apprenticeship schemes for Youth Employability in Albania" project

Held on October 29, 2015, at Xheko Imperial, with the participation of representatives from the business hospitality sector, representatives from the professional schools of Tirana, representatives from the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MoSWY), National Agency of Vocational Education, Training and Qualifications (NAVETQ), other interested stakeholders, also the international and legal consultant.

In this meeting took part 27 persons:
- 7 representatives from the business hospitality sector
- 5 representative from the NAVETQ
- 3 representative from the MoSWY
- 2 representatives from the UNDP
- 2 representatives from the Professional Schools of Tirana (VET Tourism School & MCF Kamza)
- 1 representative from GIZ
- 1 representative from Developing Education Institute
- 1 representative from Albanian Tourism Association (ATA)
- 1 International Consultant
- 1 legal Consultant
- 1 National Consultant
- 1 consecutive translator English – Albanian
- Project Manager

Opening speech was conducted by Project Manager of "Apprenticeship Schemes for Youth Employability in Albania" Ms. Elona Daci, who presented to the participants the aim of the workshop and activity agenda. She gave the word to Mr. Winfried Heusinger, who will prepare the feasibility report and the road map for implementing dual based practical training for the secondary VET system in Albania.

Mr. Heusinger’s presentation was very interesting and consists on the preliminary findings of the study. He also presented concrete examples on the way how to implement dual cooperative training in Albania. In addition to this presentation, the legal consultant Ms. Zyhrada Kongoli, presented legal aspects to be considered in this context.

The workshop was conducted including two working group phases. The three groups with mixed compositions were asked to identify a possible successful way to implement dual cooperative training in Albania.

The group members were very active and cooperative with each other during the working phase.
In the second phase a questionnaire was distributed to the participants gathering relevant information concerning the introduction of apprenticeship schemes in Albania. The organisation and successful execution of this activity was enabled by NAVETQ and with the support of German Organisation for International Collaboration (GIZ).

**Output Report**

Recommendations provided from working groups on improvement of the current situation on dual system modalities

**Group I**
- Improvement of the legal framework and addressing of dual system in more comprehensive and systematic way. How will the enterprises and companies function as VET providers;
- Implementation of the improved legal framework in two stages, firstly piloted and afterwards implemented in whole system;
- Institutionalization of dual system through involvement and cooperation of all actors such as: MoSWY, VE Schools, Trade Unions and Chambers, other associations of enterprises and companies;
  - The status of the trainer in the company, to be defined;
  - To be defined the status of the student;
  - To be set the responsibilities of the company in this relation.

**Group II**
- 1. Improvement of legislation including the age of the students part of the scheme, duration of the practical training and the benefits, development of a model form for the contract, minimum wage for the students, determination of evaluation methods, external evaluation;
- 2. Determination of partner businesses, and the set of criteria for eligible companies to be considered including being formally registered and with positive balance sheet; determination of probation period while accepting students; elements of the contract;
- 3. Revision of curricula: division of the curricula in to two parts, that to be implemented in school and that part to be implemented in the practice in the business; negotiation with the business on curricula to be implemented in the company; decision making;
- 4. Training of the responsible persons: The role of PASO in the school, review of their workload, the logistic to support the PASO position;
- 5. Training of trainers (ToT) in the business; Professional and methodical training of mentors; development of the training program by defining the tasks and responsibilities;
- 6. In business training performance matrix: Planning of the duration of the training; the performance of training graph; monitoring mechanisms (who will be in charge of doing what);
- 7. Development of assessment and certification scheme: development of internal evaluation instruments, division of responsibilities on their implementation, training of business people on how to evaluate the students performance.

**Group III**
- Update of the teaching personnel for professional aspects;
- Optimization of the role of the school for the development of the capacities within businesses;
- Providing incentives for the businesses;
- Improvement of the legal framework;
- Review of the curricula and standards;
- Current cooperation between the school and the business is weak;
- The lack of in business trainer;
Apprenticeship schemes for youth employability in Albania

- Limited info for the dual form of VET;
- Limited knowledge and physical capacities of the businesses;
- Limited organization of businesses in professional organizations;
- Apprentice status;
- Determination of the time and wage;
- Facilitations for small companies;
- Promotion of best practices.
STANDARD DUAL-COOPERATIVE TRAINING (DCT) CONTRACT

Between

(Name and address of the employer)

and

(Name and address of the apprentice)

and

(Name and address of the VET-provider)

Date of birth (DD/MM/YY):

Legally represented by:

(Name and address of the legal guardian)

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<tr>
<th>Elements / Issues</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contract Title</td>
<td>Apprenticeship Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Partner [a]</td>
<td>Company name, registration number, physical address, postal address, contact numbers, e-mail address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Partner [b]</td>
<td>Apprentice name, ID-number, date of birth, gender, postal address, contact numbers, e-mail address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Partner [a]</td>
<td>VET-provider name, registration number, physical address, postal address, contact numbers, e-mail address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Partner [c]</td>
<td>[if applicable] Legally represented by his/her parents/guardian ... Parents / Guardian name, ID-number, postal address, contact numbers, e-mail address</td>
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Preamble

Purpose / Objective

The apprenticeship is considered an important and mandatory part of vocational education and training which allows the student to receive hands-on experience and training within a company setting. The apprentice will acquire knowledge of work-related processes and learn to properly use equipment. Moreover, the apprentice is provided with insights into the working world and can establish contacts and networks for her/his future career.

Occupation

Apprentice

Type of Training

The apprentice will be trained by the Company according to the dual approach training whereby the actual workplace is the main learning environment where, among others, manual skills, work procedures as well as behaviour patterns and attitudes are being trained under real work conditions. The necessary related theory and special skills are taught at a training institution.
which forms the second learning environment.

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<th>§ 1 – Duration of Training</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.1 – Duration</td>
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<td>1.2 – Commencement / Completion Dates</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3 – Prior Learning</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>§ 2 – Training Locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 – Practical Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 – Related Theory Classes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>§ 3 – Duties of the Employer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 – Apprenticeship Objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 - Trainers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 – Training Requisites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 – Related Theory Classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 – Training Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 – Training related tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 – Duty of care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8 – Examinations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>§ 4 – Duties of the Apprentice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 – Instructions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Apprenticeship schemes for youth employability in Albania

4.2 – Duty to learn
To carry out all tasks, duties and activities with utmost care and diligence for the benefit of his/her learning process.

4.3 – Apprenticeship Training Classes in the Vocational School, Tests and other measures
To participate in the apprenticeship training classes in school as well as in training measures outside the company and to take tests, for which the apprentice is being released. Furthermore, to immediately present the vocational school certificates to the training supervisor for his information and to agree that the vocational school and the training company inform each other on the apprentices’ performance.

4.4 – Company Regulations
To learn and strictly observe all company regulations.

4.5 – Duty to Care
To handle with care all facilities, equipment, tools and machinery and to exclusively use them as instructed.

4.6 – Company Secrets
To treat any company secrets with absolute confidentiality. This also applies to the time after the end of the apprenticeship.

4.7 – Training Records
To orderly maintain training records on a regular (daily) basis using the weekly report sheet and to submit it to the supervisor in charge on a weekly basis for confirmation and signature.

4.8 – Notifications
To notify the company immediately if he/she is prevented from reporting to work or attending related theory classes by stating the reasons. In the event of an accident or sick leave, a testimonial from a registered medical practitioner must be submitted to the company not later than on the third day following the incident or of having been taken ill.

4.9 – Final Report
After completion of the apprenticeship the apprentice is required to submit a detailed apprenticeship report to the training organization within two weeks after completing the apprenticeship.

4.10 – Registration
The apprentice registers this contract with the relevant authorities (training institute) immediately after its conclusion.

§ 5 – Allowance and Related Provisions

5.1 – Amount of Allowance
The Employer pays to the apprentice a monthly apprenticeship allowance amounting to:
LEK……………………………..during the first apprenticeship year
LEK……………………………..during the second apprenticeship year
LEK………………………………during the third apprenticeship year
The apprenticeship allowance will be disbursed on the last working day of the month and shall also be paid during leave periods. The apprenticeship allowance should allow the apprentices to cover all costs involved for training at the vocational school (registration and training fees), transportation, accommodation, food and a decent living.

5.2 – Cost of Related Training Classes
All training related expenses incurred at a training institute shall be borne by the Government of Albania.

5.3 – Work Dress / Attire
If for any reason the wearing of a special work dress or attire is required it shall be provided by the employer free of charge.

5.4 – Continued Payment of the Training Allowance
The Employer shall continue to pay the monthly apprenticeship allowance for:
a) The periods during which the apprentice attends theory classes or any other course required by the dual training scheme.
b) A duration of up to six (6) weeks in the event that the apprentice has been taken ill for reasons he/she cannot be held accountable for.
§ 6 – Working Hours and Leave

6.1 – Regular Training Period and Daily Working Hours

The regular training period amounts to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Number of weeks/months (please underline)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2 - Leave

The apprentice is entitled to take ………… leave days per year, in agreement with the supervisor.

§ 7 – Notice

7.1 – Period of Notice

Notice to this contract may only be served

a) by both parties on the basis of important reasons with immediate effect

b) by the apprentice, respecting a period of notice of four (4) weeks in the event that the apprentice decides to terminate his/her participation in the apprenticeship or if the apprentice decides to be trained in a different occupation.

7.2 – Form of Notice

Notice to this contract must be given in written form by stating the reasons.

7.3 – Business Closure and Change of Training Capability

In case of a business closure or changes in the apprentice’s capability to be trained, the employer undertakes to support the apprentice in his/her efforts to find a suitable company to continue with the apprenticeship.

§ 8 – Certification

Upon successful completion of the standard apprenticeship the employer shall issue a certificate stating the type of training, duration, objective and the acquired skills and knowledge which is endorsed by the relevant authority. The logos of all involved parties should be displayed on the certificate.

§ 9 – Liability and Insurance Coverage

9.1 – Damage to the students’ body, health and property

9.2 – Damage to or loss of the cooperating company’s property

9.3 – Damage to the body, health and property of the Company’s staff members

§ 10 – Miscellaneous Provisions

The contract should state the place of fulfilment, any additional agreements, registration number and be duly signed by all contracting parties.
The present agreement has been issued ………….. times and signed by all contracting parties listed below:

**Apprentice**
Full Name: .................................................................................................................. Signature

Date signed: ______/______/______

**Parent/Guardian (If apprentice is under 18 years of age)**
Full Name: .................................................................................................................. Signature

Date signed: ______/______/______

**Employer (authorized representative)**
Full Name: .................................................................................................................. Signature

Date signed: ______/______/______

**VET-provider (authorized representative)**
Full Name: .................................................................................................................. Signature

Date signed: ______/______/______
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF APPRENTICESHIP SCHEMES - COMPANIES

A. Corporate information

1. Company Name: ____________________________________________________________

2. Area of Business: __________________________________________________________

3. Address: __________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

4. Business sector:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services: ..............</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others: ..............</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sum: 100%

5. Please give us a contact person for training and education (name, phone & email):

________________________________________________________________________

B. Employment and training needs

6. Number of employees currently:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>male</th>
<th>female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. locals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. expatriates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Target number of employees: approximately _______ by end 2015; _______ by end 2018 - approximate percentage of women ______ %
8. What are your staffing needs for the following employee groups?

| Employee with a degree (or equivalent qualification) and at least 3 years of experience | low | high |
| Employee with a degree (or equivalent qualification) | | |
| Employee with a diploma (or equivalent qualification) | | |
| Employee without diploma | | |
| Apprentice | | |
| Trainee | | |

Please also indicate the priority of your demand

9. What are your current training needs for these groups of employees?

| Employee with a degree (or equivalent qualification) and at least 3 years of experience | low | high |
| Employee with a degree (or equivalent qualification) | | |
| Employee with a diploma (or equivalent qualification) | | |
| Employee without diploma | | |
| Apprentice | | |
| Trainee | | |

Please also indicate the priority of your demand

C. Training activities in companies

10. What training options do you offer in Albania (for employees)?

| Internal training events | |
| External training: educational leave | |
| External training: participation in conferences, seminars, workshops, etc. | |
| Short internships (up to 3 months) | |
| Apprenticeship (1-3 years) | |
| Work and Study Programme (>12 months) | |
| other: ___________________________ | |

Please tick here:

11. Training institutions you are currently working with (e.g. universities, professional schools, etc.)?

(a) Training institutions:

Name: ____________________________________________

Description of the cooperation: ____________________________

Name: ____________________________________________

Description of the cooperation: ____________________________
Apprenticeship schemes for youth employability in Albania

Name: __________________________________________

Description of the cooperation: __________________________________

(b) What other VET providers do you know?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

D. Need for training activities

12. What training activities, which cannot be covered at the moment, are currently needed in your company?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

E. Willingness to cooperate in dual cooperative training (DCT)

13. Would you be willing to cooperate with other companies and VET providers in an effort to offer In-Company-training activities, such as apprenticeship schemes?

☐ Yes       ☐ No       ☐ Maybe

14. Would you need support to introduce In-Company Training? If yes what kind of support would you need?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

15. What are the four most important factors needed to ensure the success of apprenticeship training in a DCT approach?

1  __________________________________________

2  __________________________________________

3  __________________________________________

4  __________________________________________

16. What kind of training could you offer as a company in the near future?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
F. **Additional comments**

17. Do you have additional comments on the content of this questionnaire? Please let us know:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

18. Please tell us your opinion on the implementation of apprenticeship schemes in the framework of dual-cooperative-training (DCT) in Albania?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your cooperation.
**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF APPRENTICESHIP SCHEMES IN ALBANIA VET-PROVIDER**

**A. VET provider information**

1. Institution Name: ____________________________________________
2. Area of Activity: ____________________________________________
3. Address: ___________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________

**B. VET students and training needs**

4. Current number of trainees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>male</th>
<th>female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5. Target number of VET trainees: _______ end 2015; _______ end 2018
   - approximate percentage of women: ______ %

6. What are your staffing needs for the following employee groups?

   Please also indicate the priority of your demand | low | high
   - VET teacher with experience in industry
   - Dual-Cooperative-Training coordinator
   - Teacher for general subjects
   - Workshop instructors

7. What are your current training needs for these groups of employees?

   Please also indicate the priority of your demand | low | high
   - VET teacher with experience in industry
   - Dual-Cooperative-Training coordinator
   - Teacher for general subjects
   - Workshop instructors
C. Training activities in companies

8. What assistance do you offer to companies? Please tick here:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training events in the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial support from companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply companies with equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short internships (up to 3 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship (1-3 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job placement of VET graduates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other: ________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other: ________________________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Companies you are working with?

Name: __________________________________________
Description of the cooperation: ____________________________________

Name: __________________________________________
Description of the cooperation: ____________________________________

Name: __________________________________________
Description of the cooperation: ____________________________________

What other potential company partners do you know?

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

D. Need for training activities

10. Are there any needed training programmes or activities you could offer to support partner companies? Identify why these are not being offered yet?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training activity</th>
<th>Not offered because</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E. Willingness to cooperate in dual cooperative training (DCT)
11. Would you be willing to cooperate with other VET providers and partner companies to offer In-Company-training activities, including apprenticeship schemes?

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Maybe

12. Would you need support to introduce In-Company Training? If yes what kind of support would you need?

________________________________

________________________________

________________________________

________________________________

13. What are the four most important factors needed to ensure the success of apprenticeship training in a DCT approach?

1 ____________________________________________

2 ____________________________________________

3 ____________________________________________

4 ____________________________________________

14. Please tell us your opinion concerning the introduction of DCT-coordinators to the VET providers in order to establish and maintain an active cooperation with companies?

________________________________

________________________________

________________________________

________________________________

15. What organisational changes are needed within the VET provider in order to introduce DCT?

________________________________

________________________________

________________________________

________________________________

F. Additional comments

16. Do you have additional comments on the content of this questionnaire? Please let us know:

________________________________

________________________________

________________________________

________________________________

17. Please tell us your opinion on the implementation of apprenticeship schemes in the framework of dual-cooperative-training (DCT) in Albania?

________________________________
18. Please evaluate the following statements!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>mainly agree</th>
<th>partly agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>It is easy to introduce DCT into my area of work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I know exactly how DCT should work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>In case of a problem during the implementation process of DCT I am sure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that some form of support will be readily available</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The DCT approach reflects exactly the demand of the companies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>concerning high skilled specialists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The defined national occupational profiles describe realistic work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>situations in Albania.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The equipment available in the VET provider is up to date and sufficient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to achieve the aims of DCT.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>For the VET provider the opinion of the teachers is important and helps</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to continuously improve the system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The work of the VET provider is successful if most of the students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>continue their education in higher education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The introduction of DCT will help raise the quality of the training and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the performance of the student</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>In-Company training confuses the trainees; the time could be used more</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>efficiently.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>DCT graduates will be ready for the labour market.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>There will be no big difference between the traditional school based</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>training and the DCT system</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for your cooperation.