2019

Investments in two vocational education institutions

During early 2019 two vocational education institutions one in Durrës and one in Vlora were re-constructed and appointed with relevant materials.

2018

VET reform, together with active employment and job creation policies remain high on the Government agenda, which is reflected in budget increases for both areas. The vision to develop 'higher skills and better jobs for women and men' remains unchanged, as do the four pillars of the National Employment and Skills Strategy (2014-2015), namely: (i) fostering decent job opportunities through effective labour market policies; (ii) offering quality VET to young people and adults; (iii) promoting social inclusion and territorial cohesion; (iv) strengthening the governance of the labour market and qualification systems.

Responsibility for VET is recently centralized under the Ministry of Finance and Economy that oversees a state-funded system composed of two types of providers: vocational schools for young people and vocational training centres, mainly for adults.

The completion of VET Legal framework

The reform of VET provision focuses on completing the new legal framework for VET, expanding and developing institutional capacities, providing training for all staff and gradually filling the gaps between labour market needs and the skills and qualifications offered.

Modernizing Albanian Qualifications Framework (AQF) legal framework.

AQF Task Force reflected all the comments by the line ministries in the draft Law on some amendments to the Law No 10 247 of 4.3.2010 “On the Albanian Qualifications Framework (AQF)”. Then, the updated draft Law was submitted by the Minister of Education, Sport and Youth and Minister of Finance and Economy, who are responsible for the AQF, for endorsement to the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers endorsed the draft Law on 28.03.2018. The amended Law 23/2018 was adopted by Albanian Parliament on 10th of
May 2018.

After the adoption of the Law 23/2018, AQF Task Force established three technical working groups to draft Decisions of the Council of the Ministers (DCMs) on “Approval of Detailed level Descriptions”, on “Inclusion of Lifelong learning qualifications in AQF” and on “Organizing functioning, selection criteria of the sectoral committees’ members and respective financing”. These draft DCMs have been drafted by the AQF Task Force and respective technical groups with representatives/experts in the field of higher education, pre-university education - general education and vocational education and training, representatives from the responsible Directorates in the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth and Ministry of Finance and Economy, Institute for the Educational Development, National Agency for VET and Qualifications, the department responsible for education and vocational training at MFE and representatives of providers, business associations, trade unions, etc. These draft DCMs have been consulted with the European Training Foundation (ETF). Besides, with the assistance of European Training Foundation (ETF), 2 workshops were organized during 20-21st of June, with a broader representation of the participants including as well other institutions and donors operating in the field.

The DCMs are submitted during the last week of November to the Minister of Education, Sport and Youth and Minister of Finance and Economy, who are responsible for the AQF, for endorsement to the Council of Ministers.

In order to develop all necessary secondary legislation linked to the new VET law, a working group is established by the Minister in charge for VET in 2017. Currently, it is already adopted the DCM No. 514, dated on 20.9.2017 “On the approval of the National List of Occupations” and there are still 30 sub-legal acts to be developed pursuant to the Law 15/2017.

**VET reforming topics**

Currently, there are several technical working groups in the Ministry of Finance and Economy dealing with the following issues:

- Identification of new short-term vocational training courses
- Recommendations for revising the structure of secondary vocational education
- Analysing the opportunities for implementation of post-secondary vocational education (level 5 of the Albanian Qualifications Framework)
- Optimizing the public vocational education and training providers’ network and establishment of multifunctional centres. In addition, clustering or merging some of these institutions into Multifunctional VET centres is underway.
- Building the VET portal

The expected outputs are clearly defined in the respective orders of the Minister of Finance and Economy.

Meanwhile, ETF and Kulturkontakt is supporting the development of the draft regulation for the implementation of internships in businesses of students in VET institutions. This
regulation includes the involved parties, their rights and responsibilities in relation to the planning, implementation and monitoring of internships, procedures for implementation of internships in businesses of students in VET institutions, and as well modalities for implementation.

2017

VET governance

Following a restructuring of Ministry portfolios in 2017, the Government transferred all responsibilities for VET to the Ministry of Finance and Economy.[1]

Developing VET legal framework

The new VET Law[2] clarifies roles of state and non-state actors. Responsibility for VET is centralized under the Ministry of Finance and Economy. Administration of VET providers will be assigned to the future National Agency for Employment and Skills. This law aims to bring all VET providers under one legal framework, thus potentially achieving better coordination of public VET provision in schools and vocational training centres. The focus is to create bigger and more autonomous VET institutions – or multifunctional VET centres for that matter – which will be established within agreed national qualifications frameworks, quality assurance and accountability.

Further AQF development and implementation

The National Employment and Skills Strategy (NESS) and its Action plan (2014-2020) foresees a review and implementation of the Albanian Qualifications Framework (AQF) law, as an important instrument for quality assurance of the provision.

In 2017, the AQF taskforce mandate is extended for additional 2 years, through the joint order of the Minister of Education, Sports and Youth and the Minister of Finance and Economy. This task force is in charge to support the development and implementation of the AQF. The main tasks include:

- Drafting the secondary legislation based on the amended AQF law
- Referencing the AQF to the European Qualifications Framework
- Facilitating synergies with Sector Council Initiative, with pilots in one to three economic sectors.

Reinforcing quality assurance in VET

National Agency for VET and Qualifications (NAVETQ), with the support of UNDP - within "Quality Assurance and Accreditation of VET providers" Component of the "Developing Skills for Employment" program- has drafted the Self-Assessment for VET providers Guideline. This guideline will be further piloted in VET providers. The self-assessment process is considered as a first step in order to further proceed with the accreditation of the VET providers.

Adoption of the updated national list of occupations (NLO)

The revised National List of Occupations[3] was developed by NAVETQ in cooperation with Business sector. It was adopted in September 2017. The occupations classification itself and especially occupational descriptions/standards are a valuable source of information to develop and maintain vocational qualifications. They form the basis for the National Register of Vocational Qualifications,
compiled by NAVETQ and containing all vocational qualifications at mainly AQF levels 2, 3 and 4 that are provided in vocational education. Among others, NLO is used as a classifier for statistical purposes, but also for example by the employment services for codifying the skills and qualifications of jobseekers.

**Further enhancing work based learning practices**

The Ministry and VET institutions, supported by donors, have given a new impetus to organising students’ practice classes, including company internships. NAVETQ, jointly with the Hamburger Institut für Berufsbildung (HIBB), and partnered with the Albanian Tourism Association, implemented the project "Apprenticeship schemes for Youth Employment in Albania", funded by the European Union Erasmus+ programme and co-founded by former Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth. The project elaborated a Roadmap for the implementation of a dual VET scheme. The Roadmap identified legal interventions necessary to be undertaken and as well introduced slight changes in institutional framework for enabling better cooperation of the vocational schools with the private sector.