

Vocational Education and Training (VET) Programme

Fit for the national, regional and European labour market

Skills development against unemployment

Unemployment has been a recurrent problem in Albania over the last 23 years. With unemployment raising higher especially among youth and majored students, the Albanian government has pronounced reforming of the vocational education and training system among its top priorities. The Albanian Government and the German Government have been working together to improve vocational education in Albania since 2010.

What is the VET Programme all about?

The overarching objective of the VET Programme is to reduce unemployment, especially among young people.

The cooperation programme, agreed between the Albanian and the German Governments, is implemented jointly by the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) mbH on behalf of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

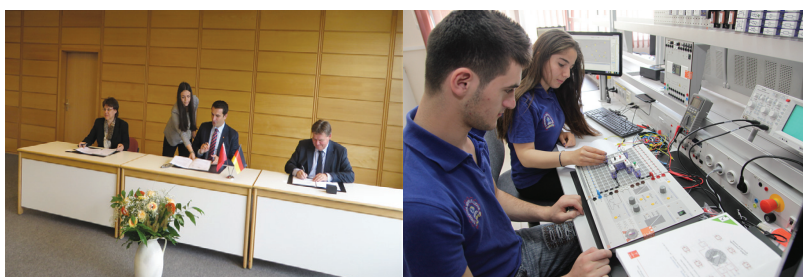
GIZ provides support to develop capacities in order to improve vocational qualifications from health and social care to information technology, adapting education to the needs of the labour market. Skilled youths and adults able to respond to the ever changing demands of the labour market are the target of the VET Programme.

Project name:	Vocational Education and Training Programme
Commissioned by:	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ)
Project region:	Albania
Lead executing agency:	Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MoSWY)
Duration	01.01.2010 – 31.12.2016

The benefits

Reform of the VET sector: At present, the VET system is still not capable to meet the economy's demands for a qualified work force, because of the overly theoretical education in vocational schools and almost inexistent relations between schools / training centres and the private sector.

- The Programme has developed the VET Boards model in vocational schools in northeast Albania. VET Boards are headed by a representative of the business sector and serve as an important link between VET institutions and companies. The "Board of VET-providing Institutions" is now embedded in the Albanian legislation on vocational education and training.
- In addition, the GIZ-supported VET Programme has elaborated a handbook and training manual for school board members, an instrument of use by all VET providers.
- The Multifunctional VET Centre of Kamza is being developed as a pilot in the framework of the GIZ-supported VET Programme and was recognized by the Albanian government as a model for the future development of the VET system. Based on the European Training Foundation's (ETF) feasibility study in 2013 on the possibility of disseminating the model at the national level, the EU - IPA 2013 project foresees the support of up to 4 MFCs in Albania.
- The Albanian government has engaged in the transfer of all VET-related competencies from the Ministry of Education and Sport to the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth. In this context, GIZ, in cooperation with ETF, has conducted a baseline study covering all public VET providers, which serves as basis for restructuring the providers' network. Furthermore, in cooperation with EU - IPA 2010 and Kulturkontakt Austria, GIZ is currently supporting the process of amending the legal framework in order to make the transfer of responsibilities a reality.



*L to r:
The Minister of Social Welfare and Youth and representatives of GIZ and HIBB are signing a cooperation agreement
Students are working in the new electronic laboratory of the MFC Kamza*

Labour Market Information System: The average age of the population in Albania is 35.3, according to data from the last census of 2011. Albania's young population stands among the important resources for sustainable economic and social development. Unfortunately, it is not exploited at its best, among others, because of lack of reliable data on skills and demands.

- Since 2012 the VET Programme has contributed to the setup of a labour market information system. The system will help companies in need for skilled workers, it will also help VET providers in adapting their offers to the market demands, and individuals (youths and parents) in making the right decision for future education. Tools include:
- A tracing system (student destination data) developed and successfully tested in five public and private education institutions.
- A Labour Market Information Periodic Review published for the first time by the MoSWY and INSTAT.

Encouraging international partnership and cooperation:

Having been granted the EU candidate status in 2014, the Albanian Government is committed to reach European standards in all relevant fields in the near future. In VET, the underlying model is the German dual system, combining theory in vocational schools with on-the-job training in companies. Cooperation with international partners makes the best way to learn about international standards and practices. The VET Programme has supported international cooperation at both school and policy level. The Hamburg Institute for Vocational Education and Training (HIBB) and the MoSWY signed a cooperation agreement in 2014, facilitated by the GIZ. HIBB will assist the Ministry in issues concerning management of the VET providers' network, empowerment of institutions responsible for the VET providers' administration and the involvement of the private sector in the VET system reformation process.

Facts and figures

- Seven VE schools have been supported in the context of the Programme, with MFC Kamza marking one of the most relevant achievements in terms of modelling quality-guided VET providers. Since 2012, the MFC Kamza has developed into the biggest vocational school in Albania with two generations of graduates in 2013 and 2014 totalling to 400. An improved reputation led to a growing number of students. In 2014/2015, 1,500 students from all over Albania attend courses in 5 vocational fields. Combining theory with on-the-job practical work, also thanks to the installation of a modern electronic laboratory estimated at EUR 230,000, the MFC Kamza is also capable of providing training to companies.
- The National Employment Service (NES) is reorganizing its labour offices, in efforts to improve the seriously damaged image of its services throughout the years. Some 120 staff members of labour offices and the NES at both national and regional levels have been trained by the VET Programme on the Labour Market Information System, tools, and active labour market programmes.
- More than 50 vocational teachers from six schools in north-east Albania and MFC Kamza were properly trained in their respective technical fields of expertise and in pedagogics.
- Over 100 students from the MFC Kamza benefited from internship agreements with private companies in the academic year 2013/2014, while cooperation with the private sector is expected to recognise a new height. Seven new curricula were developed in vocational schools in north-east Albania, while two curricula implemented in the MFC Kamza are under revision in order to be better suited to the labour market demands.
- Roughly 1100 students have attended renewed courses in vocational schools in north-east Albania, namely in Shkodra and Lezha, as well as in the remote areas of Kukes and Dibra. Girls graduated from VE schools grew to 20% as a result of an improved image of the VET system, establishment of new VE offers targeting girls and the introduction of a new subject called « career education » for the 9th grade (lower secondary education).

Published by	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH	On behalf of	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	
	Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany	Division	South-Eastern and Eastern Europe; South Caucasus	
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As at	October 2014			