

SD4
EMPLOYMENT
CONSOLIDATION PHASE

EMPLOYMENT AND VET POLICY REFORM IN ALBANIA

METHODOLOGY OF VET SYSTEM REVIEW

TECHNICAL NOTE 5
JANUARY 2020



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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METHODOLOGY OF THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING SYSTEM REVIEW

For a well-informed skills development policy reform in Albania

Prepared with the contribution of UNDP experts group and the working group of MFE

Introduction

The issue of effective vocational skills training has been on the international agenda for many years. There are ongoing expert discussions focusing on the effectiveness of training design and delivery to generate a workforce that possesses the technical knowledge, the professional hands-on skills and the appropriate attitudes and personal characteristics to perform well in the work place.

In Albania, the National Employment and Skills Strategy 2019-2022 envisages a system that provides higher skills for youth and adults through a quality delivery. Accordingly, the Albanian Vocational Education and Training (VET) System has a key role to offer quality training to youth and adults, as well as to foster economic development and productive employment through a skilled labour force.

The system is expected to deliver especially to its direct beneficiaries, i.e. 19.000 students that are enrolled in upper secondary VET and some 15.000 thousand adults that attend short-term vocational training courses every year.

Why a VET System Review?

The pace of reforms in the skills development sector in recent years has been intense aiming at addressing the challenge of labour market relevance of the Albanian VET system. Labour market figures signal an improved situation on employment. Yet, the mismatch between skills required from the labour market and those delivered by the entire education system of

the country, including VET, is both of quantitative and qualitative nature and requires policy makers to take dedicated actions.

In this context, this VET review aims to:

- Give a comprehensive overview of the system and generate a common understanding among all stakeholders
- Evaluate the system outcomes, based on seven (7) internationally recognized quality indicators of successful VET systems, reinforced by a benchmarking exercise with 5 other countries
- Provide sound evidence for reflection on the pace of the VET reform and its priorities, achievements, challenges and bottlenecks;
- Assess opportunities and capacities for a systemic private sector engagement in the system
- Develop a road map with sequenced measures to enable a meaningful private sector engagement

The Methodological approach of the VET System Review

The methodological approach to this review represents a deliberate effort to combine a 'classical' VET review as a description of the system with an evaluation of the outcomes of the VET reform efforts, based on a methodological triangulation of desk-research, questionnaires, qualitative interviews, focus groups and thematic seminars, not only for the evaluation stage, but also for the projection stage.

In order to provide a structured in-depth analysis and to set up the framework for a meaningful benchmarking to other VET systems, seven quality indicators that entail key elements of effective Vocational Skills Development were defined, based on the experience of multilateral, international and EU organisations that have conducted large scale reviews (e.g. OECD, ILO, CEDEFOP).

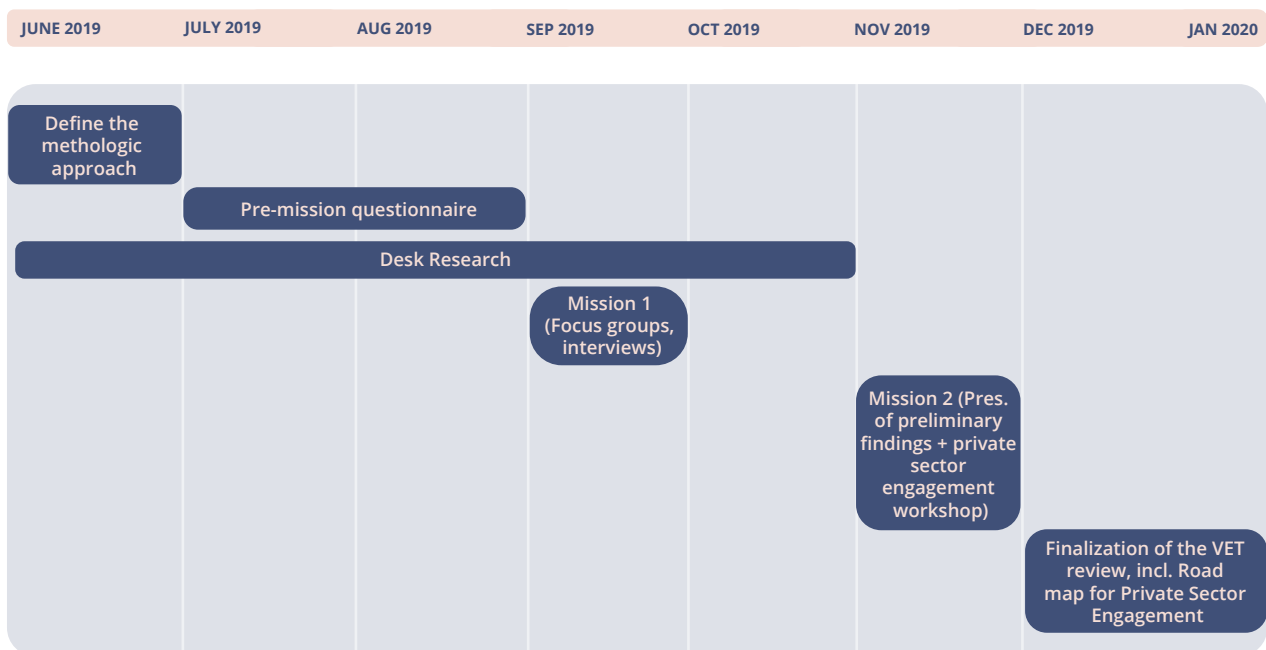


The Review Process

The review started with a thorough desk analysis of statistics, laws, policies and regulations, national and EU strategies, on-going and past cooperation projects of various donors, project documents, studies and subject-matter relevant publications.

Then, a pre-mission questionnaire was sent out to collect the opinion of key stakeholders on national and implementation

level on the reform progress, the achievements, bottlenecks and challenges faced. The findings from the pre-mission questionnaire were used to align and put focus in the consultations during the two onsite missions with representatives from the line ministry, the national agencies, business chambers and associations, VET providers and beneficiaries.



The result of the onsite consultations were a number of outstanding issues and challenges to be addressed but also a list of actions to be taken towards a quality VET system in Albania. A special focus was put on how to improve the collaboration of the governmental bodies & VET providers with the private sector. The findings of the onsite consultations were, therefore, presented and further discussed in a workshop "Towards Systemic Private Sector Engagement in VET" on 25th

November 2019 in Tirana. During this workshop, 43 stakeholder, decision makers and key actors in VET (among them 15 private sector representatives from Chambers, Business Associations, Trade Unions and private companies) came together to reflect on preliminary findings of the VET review and further elaborated ideas for a better cooperation between VET and the private sector.

The expected result

As a result of this process, UNDP will produce a full report which will be structured around four main pillars:

1

Key features of the Albanian VET system

Detailed accurate information on the status quo of the Albanian VET system, its place and role within the entire education system, the regulatory framework, governance.

2

Outcome Analysis

The outcome analysis summarizes the findings from the review & onsite consultations along with some recommendations based on good practice models and approaches successfully piloted in Albania and in the countries of comparison. The embedded benchmarking exercise has generated an inventory of approaches, good practices and lessons learnt from well-established VET systems (Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Netherlands), as well as from adapted models from emerging economies in the Western Balkans (Serbia) to support the Albanian stakeholders in taking key decisions regarding their own national VET model.

3

Road map for systemic private sector engagement

The consultants drafted a road map with recommended actions (short, medium and long-term) for the key actors to establish a closer cooperation with the private sector in VET planning and delivery.

4

Assessment

Assess opportunities and capacities for a systemic private sector engagement in the system.

What is the Ministry of Finance & Economy currently doing?

The Ministry of Finance and Economy and both executive agencies, NAES and NAVETQ are currently engaged in setting important milestones for the improvement of the VET system. MoFE is finalizing the core secondary legislation in VET, i.e. the by law on the organisation and functioning of VET providers, including the provisions for the organisation and functioning of the Development Unit and the bylaw on inspection rules and procedures.

The National Employment and Skills Agency (*NAES*) is taking over the responsibility for the management of the VET providers and preparing for the re-organisation and optimisation of the VET providers' network. The National Agency for Vocational Education, Training and Qualifications (*NAVETQ*) has commenced the work for the development of the accreditation model of VET providers and programmes.

Coming up next on the technical note series:

On the next technical note, UNDP will focus on the reform process of the Employment Promotion Programmes and its implementation schedule.

UNDP will continue to provide updates on the findings and recommendations of this review. Once finalized and endorsed by key stakeholders, information will be shared on the status quo of the VET system, on concrete results of the outcome evaluation, and milestones for the private sector engagement.

Stay tuned!

For more information on the support provided by UNDP to this process, please contact us: eno.ngjela@undp.org

About the UNDP/SD4E technical note series

The Skills Development for Employment Programme (*SD4E*) is supporting the Government of Albania in the national Vocational Education and Training and Employment Promotion System reform through a comprehensive approach of institutional capacity building on macro/policy level to enable the key actors (*MFE, NAES and NAVETQ*) to deliver coordinated and demand driven services. The SD4E programme will issue periodically technical notes on particular elements of the reform. These notes will give brief description of a specific development or procedure that are currently discussed, provide details on the newly adopted legal framework, or explain work methodologies introduced in the system.