

Concept Paper

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Organisational Name	Municipal Working Group on Vocational Education and Training (MWGVET) <hr/> Pejë
Project title	PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE PROGRAMS/PRACTICAL WORK PROGRAMS FOR VOCATIONAL SCHOOL STUDENTS
Project Aim	This project aims to increase and strengthen the capacities, skills and competences of vocational school students through vocational training or professional practice at the different companies in the municipality of Peja.
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Introduction

The Municipal Working Group for Vocational Education and Training (MWGVET) in Peja was established in April 2017 with the initiative and support of the Institute for Training and Economic Development (ITED) within the Youth and Employment project, which is financially supported by Solidar Suisse (Swiss Labor Assistance). The Initiative for the Municipal Working Group on Vocational Education and Training (MWGVET) is a mechanism of public-private dialogue facilitating organized and regular communication between key actors in the development of the workforce in Peja: businesses, the education / training sector and governance local.

The purpose and work that will be done by MWGVET is to identify and prioritize the needs for locally skilled workforce qualifications and to design concrete plans for addressing them.

ITED is responsible for setting up a working group (WG) with representatives of the education system, the private sector and other stakeholders. Also, MWGVET's action is to act as a local advisory body composed of key stakeholders to coordinate and advise relevant institutions for vocation, education and training at local and central level in relation to curricula development, technology and change in the market as the general market needs - directly related to the overall objective as well as the results foreseen under the Solidar Suisse project.

Overall Goal	Improving access to employment for young graduates of vocational schools and enhancing cooperation between the private sector and the education system in the municipality of Peja.
Outcomes	
Outcome 1:	Students of vocational schools have additional skills for the labor market through the acquisition of skills through new vocational training.
Outcome 2:	Education and Vocational Training in the Field of Tourism, Information and Computer Technology (ICT), Metal Processing and Wood Processing with a special focus on CNC machine work, has a greater focus on developing relevant skills in the labor market.

MWGVET Peja is composed of 20 members and 13 of them come from the private sector and 7 members from the public sector. MWGVET is composed of representatives of local businesses, local education and local government holders, and while all members are equal, its main feature is that it will be led by the private sector.

MWGVET members are elected at an annual meeting in which all stakeholders of the respective municipality will participate. The Chairman is elected from the ranks of private business representatives.

MWGVET acts as an independent and advisory body for the respective municipal institutions and has the role to: a) conduct research and analysis on policy development for MWGVET; b) make recommendations and advise on the development of policies in line with EU policies; c) Ensure policy integration for all Vocational and Adult Education and Adult Education (VETAE) activities at the local level; d) Ensures co-ordination of activities with all VETAE providers at the local level; e) make recommendations to all the VETAE holders in the Peja region.

Problem analysis

The school system in Kosovo is undergoing a period of rapid change in order to meet the challenges and needs of a modern market economy. One of the priorities for change is to ensure that when students complete their education they have acquired the knowledge and skills needed to play an important role in the labor market. In particular, those students who complete vocational high school must have the knowledge and skills they need to develop. To achieve this, as part of its strategy, the Government of Kosovo through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has come to the conclusion that there is a need for greater cooperation between schools and businesses of all kinds. Only in this way will students have more employment opportunities and have access to a more skilled workforce.

Practical skills acquired in companies will help students develop their theoretical skills, motivate them during their lesson, give them more information about the world of labor and so on. The very high number of young people in Kosovo is a huge asset for the country's economic development but only if they are able to enter the labor market with those types of skills that are necessary and desirable by employers.

Project idea / Initiative

Based on the various reports and based on regular meetings of the MWGVET Peja, as well as based on the experience of members of this council, especially business representatives, the main success for youth employment is that besides the theoretical knowledge, students should also develop practical skills for certain profiles.

Also, based on the *situation analysis for the development of the workforce in Peja* - developed by ITED and SOLIDAR, but also based on regular meetings with all companies in Peja, it is concluded that there are many open vacancies in certain profiles but while vocational school students have good theoretical knowledge, they do not have the skills and the appropriate practical skills for requirements of the positions.

Thus, through professional practice or work practice, students/practitioners at the same time acquire the right skills and competences as well as face different situations occurring at the workplace and learn to take and delegate responsibility.

Project proposal: PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE PROGRAMS/PRACTICAL WORK PROGRAMS FOR VOCATIONAL SCHOOL STUDENTS

Professional Practice is a form of learning through practical involvement with the world of labor. Here we use the term that implies opportunities offered to students of secondary vocational schools in Kosovo to spend short periods of time working in real businesses (and other organizations) to help them connect theoretical knowledge with practical teaching to develop some of the practical skills that students need to get into the job. There is a wide scope to develop this kind of work experience in Kosovo but, in doing so, there should be an expansion in the number of businesses (and other organizations) willing to offer such opportunities.

Professional Practice or on-the-job training will need to be highly professional in specific areas and contain practical guidance to help students acquire the skills needed to meet the demands of the labor market, to create a culture for the work environment, to inform students about the various differences, create creative and effective communication strategies for the common work that addresses the problems and main issues in the workplace based on market demands.

Objectives

The main objective of this project is to build and strengthen the capacities, skills and competences of vocational school students through vocational training or professional practice in various companies in the municipality of Peja.

For the realization of this project these are some of the activities to be undertaken in order to achieve the objectives.

Activities:

1. Researching and identifying the needs for vocational training
2. Preparation of training plan/Professional Practice
3. Identification of companies for Professional Practice in the Municipality of Peja
4. Creating partnerships with companies in Peja for student admission to company training
5. Preparing Memorandum of Understanding with Business
6. Work contract / practical work
7. Evaluation form
8. List of evidence during the period of practical work
9. Evaluation of the committee for Practical Knowledge Assessment

Benefits

Benefits from this project are comprehensive, ranging from young people, vocational schools, teachers, and especially enterprises from across the region of Peja.

The main purpose of the project is to inform businesses about the importance of Vocational Practice for students, to assist vocational schools and business organizations to co-operate in order to increase the number of opportunities for realization of professional practice for young students.

Through professional practice, all involved parties will have mutual benefits, especially businesses and students.

After the vocational training or the professional practice that students will undergo in different companies for specific profiles, students will be trained with the practical learning side as well as will be provided with additional knowledge, skills and competencies for the use of new technologies used in the labor market. However, companies will benefit from the knowledge and skills of students who will be in that company for a while and then have the opportunity to hire them.

Through this project, in the medium term, it is expected that companies from the Peja region will no longer have the problem of engaging young workers, on the contrary, the Peja region will have young people with the skills and competences needed for certain professional profiles.

Implementing Partners

MWGVET Peja is an inclusive body and includes a large number of members from different institutions from the Peja region, however, we think that the following should be the main partners in the implementation of this project:

- Ministry of Education, Science and Technology,
- Municipal Directorate for Education (MED), Municipality of Peja,
- Professional/Vocational Schools
- Businesses from Peja region,
- Other donors.