



INFORMATION BRIEF

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Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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**Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC**



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Education for Employment in North Macedonia (E4E@MK) is a 10-year project, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) as part of their Employment and Economic Development portfolio. The project is implemented by HELVETAS North Macedonia, jointly with the Macedonian Civic Education Center (MCEC) and the Economic Chamber of North Macedonia (ECNM).

Overall goal: More unemployed and underemployed, especially youth, benefit from decent employment due to improved VSD

Outcome 1: More secondary students complete quality VET jointly offered by VET schools and companies

Outcome 2: More unemployed, underemployed and employed people make use of market demanded employability measures and upskilling / reskilling

Timeframe: 10 years
Phase II duration:
March 2022 - February 2026

Key approaches:

- Open to all economic sectors and geographic regions
- Going regional
- Private sector involvement/engagement
- Upskilling and Reskilling for better employment
- Employment measures (Operational Plan)
- Employability measures
- Quality Assurance
- Communications & Public Outreach



- **Project Time-frame: Approximately 10 years**
- **Project Phase 1: 2018 – 2022**
- **Phase 1 Project Budget : 6.4 million CHF**
- **Overall Goal: Gainful employment, especially of youth, through improved VSD system**

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS UNTIL DATE

Improved framework as basis for quality VET / VSD provision



- 6 policies and laws conducive to market-oriented and inclusive VET developed or improved (Law on VET, Law on Primary Education, Work-Based Learning Concept etc);
- 10 processes for professional implementation of VET amended / adopted (Summer Practice Guidelines, Standards and related Programme for Mentors in Companies, Programme for Health and Safety at the Workplace);
- The Finance Expert Group has designed 6 schemes for additional and better allocation of resources in formal VET; the group consists of 17 representatives from the private sector and key VET institutions, managed by the Ministry of Education and Science;
- Adult Education Center supported in piloting validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes in 2 profiles.

Market-driven employment measures lead to fast employment



- 2398 people employed and 4591 people trained, out of whom 75% youth, 50% women, and 16% vulnerable groups (Roma and people with disabilities);
- Skills forecasting reports conducted by the Economic Chamber of North Macedonia (12 and 36 month forecast) support the design of the Operational Plan of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and related active labour market measures;
- The Opportunity Fund, as a market-oriented and inclusive employment measure piloted by E4E@MK, incorporated in the Operational Plan 2020 alongside its pay-per-performance mechanism;
- Voucher System, as a financing mechanism that ensures qualitative, inclusive and affordable non-formal VSD provision, incorporated in the Operational Plan 2020;
- With E4E@MK support, Youth Guarantee Scheme provided access to active labour market measures to 719 youth that are not in education, employment, or training, out of which 469 used the opportunities and 397 obtained gainful employment. In 2020, the Youth Guarantee Scheme was incorporated in the Operational Plan.

Public- private partnership as basis for quality VET / VSD



- 70 employers of different sizes involved in improving non-formal VSD and formal VET and 81 market-demanded VSD offers supported;
- 108 students, 10 VET schools and 12 companies involved in piloting Summer Practice in VET through Public-Private Partnerships;
- Summer Practice Guidelines and Work Based Learning Manual developed;
- 47 Mentors in Companies trained as precondition to receive students for Summer Practice / Work-Based Learning in companies;
- 20 Trainers of Mentors trained;
- 7 VET teachers certified as Master Trainers for Situation Based Didactics. A training programme on this teaching methodology developed and training disseminated to 30 teachers. Over 15 situations piloted involving 15 VET schools, 30 teachers and over 300 students;
- New dual approach qualification established by the VET school ASUC Boro Petrushevski and the company Van Hool - "Fitter of Engines and Engine Vehicles";
- Guidelines for Establishing Qualifications developed;
- MoES supported in the processes related to the establishment of the Regional VET Centers.

Specific measures aimed at increasing the employability of marginalized groups



- Established cooperation between the Macedonian Diaspora in Switzerland and the Disabled Peoples' Organizations "Handimak" and "Polioplus", aimed to support people with disabilities on their path to employment;
- Capacity development of Macedonian training providers and key VSD institutions on digitalization in the non-formal VSD sector as a requirement imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, with support of Swiss Federation for Adult Learning ;
- Online training for 157 people with disabilities on COVID-19 measures at the workplace.

Advocacy and promotion of VSD / VET as a career path



- Around 20 researches and analyses on further development of VET / VSD sector supported;
- Implemented Social Dialog and Public Outreach Campaign for promotion of VET jointly with MoES - "Uci Pametno, Raboti Strucno";
- High-level officials' exchange with Swiss counterparts, consisted of the Macedonian Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, the Minister for Education and Science and the Minister for Labour and Social Policy, aimed at getting insights into Swiss best practices related to VET and VSD;
- Digital Fair for secondary vocational education carried out, outreaching VET to over 14.000 nine-graders;
- Various events, press conferences, videos and other promotional activities aimed to increase engagement of the private sector in VSD and VET supported.

Digitalisation push in VSD / VET as a result of COVID-19



- A cluster of digital registers and a digital platform for matching students / VET schools with companies is being developed by the Economic Chamber of Macedonia and the VET Center;
- Canvas, a digital learning platform, has been piloted by the EVN company and the VET school “Mihajlo Pupin” with a coverage of 350 users.

YEARLY PLAN OF OPERATION 2021

From joint vision to implementation



- Further strengthen the cooperation between the private and the public sector at local level through involvement of the Regional VET Centres, VET schools, local economic chambers, companies, and municipalities;
- Enhance the practical skills of VET students through Work-Based Learning in companies, Situation-based Didactics and improved training programmes in VET schools;
- Strengthen employment relevant VSD measures of the Operational Plan and the service capacity of the Employment Service Agency;
- Propose new financing schemes for VET, based on context analysis and international best practices;
- Support employment of marginalized groups through specialised Disabled Persons' Organizations and digitalisation of various VSD offers;
- Promote VSD and VET as a viable career option and prerequisite to obtain gainful employment;
- Strengthen key stakeholders' VSD / VET and digitalization capacities through Knowledge Management and Learning and international exchange

PROJECT PHASE 2

Indicators



- Number of persons with new or better employment (overall goal);
- Number of persons enrolled in new or better VSD;
- Number of companies or professional organisations contributing to relevant VSD;
- Measures for improving the regulatory and institutional framework including the VET system.

Two pillars supporting employment both in short-term and long-term



- Formal VET based on labour market needs along with increased commitment of the private sector in VET leads to students with high quality practical skills and thus increases their chances for faster and decent employment after finishing their secondary VET education;
- Quality and flexible Employment Measures based on the skill demand of employers enables an immediate integration of unemployed youth and groups left behind on the labour market. Unlike formal VET, which usually takes time, Employment Measures are perceived as an instrument for quickly addressing the labour needs of the employers.

Strategic priorities to reach the targets



- Improved framework conditions as basis for successful implementation of formal VET and Employment Measures;
- Increased private sector engagement through Work-Based Learning and dual VET as well as in the design, provision and use of market-demanded Employment Measures;
- Implementation of VET and Employment Measures at local level in order to reach scale and impact;
- Investment in up-to-date technical skills and significant improvements regarding social skills and behaviour in order to gain decent employment;
- Knowledge and skills regarding digitalization and new technologies adapted to the specific requirements of the economic sectors and occupations.