



Reform of the Bulgarian Vocational Education and Training System

DUAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR BETTER CAREER PROSPECTS IN BULGARIA



Pupils at the Henry Ford vocational school in Sofia

Practical and labour-market oriented vocational education is at the core of the reform of the Bulgarian professional education system. The main goal of the reform is to have a better qualified workforce which meets the demands of the labour market. Through combining theoretical training in schools with practical in-company training, young people are provided with the necessary skills. Further, the reform of the professional education system also aims to reduce youth unemployment in Bulgaria.

OBJECTIVES OF THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM (VET)

Switzerland and Bulgaria have implemented a joint initiative on introducing principles of dual vocational education within the formal professional education system in Bulgaria. The dual approach in VET is considered an important ingredient to overcome some of the effects of the economic crisis from 2008, in particular youth unemployment. A growing number of market-oriented businesses and industries are pressing the state to reform the education system

to better respond to the needs and dynamics of contemporary markets, which require well educated, capable and trustworthy labour force.

PROJECT INTERVENTION STRATEGY

The project aimed to establish a sustainable Bulgarian system of professional education, in which vocational education is tightly linked to the demands of business. It was the vision of this project to create vocational schools which are generating competent, skilled and highly qualified workforce that is direly missing on the Bulgarian job market. Within this vision businesses were seen as responsible partners of the educational institutions, motivated to invest in their future workers and to cooperate with the State and local authorities. Dual Vocational Education and Training System (DVETS) is considered as one of the operational tools and entry points for the accomplishment of this vision. The main goal of the project was to create a replicable model and the respective capacity for implementing the DVETS in Bulgaria which was reached with the approval of the legal basis on DVETS in Bulgaria and the newly established system matching the needs of the demand (job market) and Supply (schools).

PROJECT RESULTS

During the first three years of the project implementation, 32 vocational schools in 19 Bulgarian cities joined the project.

170 companies became partners of the participating schools. 1600 students have chosen to start dual training in 12 professions in the field of machine building, electrical supply, gas supply and maintenance, milk production, tourism, furniture production, automotive mechatronics. New curricula and syllabus for different professions have been developed within the project and approved by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science. 112 teachers from vocational schools followed special trainings on

how to work with the new dual training curricula. 255 instructors from the partner companies have been trained to work with the dual education students.

SWISS EXPERTISE

The reform of the education system has been financed by both countries under Switzerland's contribution to the enlarged EU. In total Switzerland provided 3 CHF millions of funding for the introduction of the dual education system in Bulgaria. Switzerland offered support in areas where Bulgaria has claimed great need for catching up, and in which Switzerland can offer know-how and expertise. The Swiss VET model has a long tradition and offers better future prospects for everyone involved – young people, the state and the business community in Bulgaria.



Switzerland supports vocational education and training in Bulgaria. Theoretical learning in the classroom is combined with workplace training.

THE PROJECT IN BRIEF

OBJECTIVE

Introducing the Swiss knowledge and experience in the field of dual vocational education

COUNTRY

Bulgaria

PARTNERS

Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET) and Bulgarian-Swiss Chamber of Commerce (BSCC)

PURPOSE

The introduction of a sustainable Bulgarian system of dual professional education, in which vocational education is tightly linked to the demand of the job market.

ACTIVITIES

- Developing and introducing in schools and companies new dual-track curricula
- Training of teachers and instructors
- Replication of the model in other Bulgarian vocational schools

TARGET GROUP

Vocational schools and their partner companies

BUDGET

CHF 3'500'000
(of which the Swiss grant is CHF 3'000'000)

RESPONSIBLE FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Project Management Unit embedded within Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science

DURATION

2015–2019

SWISS ENLARGEMENT CONTRIBUTION

January 2020

www.swiss-contribution.admin.ch