



CultiVETing

Cultivating Entrepreneurship in the
Agrifood Sector through VET

Market study on future trends, on forecast
needs and professional profiles, on skills
anticipation related to the agri-food sector in
Albania and Kosovo



PROJECT INFORMATION

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Acronyms

Acronym	Full name
AI	Administrative Instruction
AKIS	Agriculture, Knowledge and Innovation System
AQF	Albanian Qualifications Framework
ATTC	Agriculture Technology Transfer Center
AUT	Agricultural University of Tirana
AVETAE	Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education
EARK	Agency of the Republic of Kosovo
EARK	Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
INSTAT	Institute of Statistics
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
KAS	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
LMIS	Labour Market Information System
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MED	Municipal Education Directorates
MES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MESTI	Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation
MoSWY	Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth
NAES	National Agency for Employment and Skills
NAVETQ	National Agency for VET and Qualification
NESS	National Employment and Skills Strategy
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NQA	National Qualifications Authority
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VETI	Vocational Education and Training Institutions
VTC	Vocational Training Centres
WB	Western Balkans.
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme



Introduction

This report is prepared under the “CultiVETing: Cultivating Entrepreneurship in the Agrifood Sector through VET”, under the Erasmus+ program, searching to identify the problems, gaps and necessities in three levels of analysis: VET students, VET professors, and businesses in two project countries Albania and Kosovo. The education strategy and SDG objectives try to underline the quality of the education system and its link to the market requirements. According to UNDP Report 2022, a lack of connection exists between schools and businesses, mainly in developing countries and it is crucial to learn from the experience of the developed countries like Germany or Austria. VET specialists need to be oriented toward the market necessities. On the other hand, international actors have been searching for many years to involve rural youth in the agricultural sector. The education of young people is of great importance, given the significant differences that exist between them in terms of their needs, aspirations, attitudes, habits and values. The advancement of the personal, socio-economic and spiritual aspects of rural youth is contingent upon the early recognition of their needs, aspirations, attitudes, habits and values of life, and the provision of appropriate guidance.

VET systems in Europe rely on a well-developed network of VET stakeholders which is missing in developing countries in general and Western Balkan Countries in Particular. In EU countries these networks are governed with the involvement of social partners, such as employers and trade unions, and in different bodies, for example chambers, committees and councils¹.

Vocational education and training (VET) constitutes a pivotal component of the educational systems in Albania and Kosovo. The principal objective of this market research is to address the emerging job market needs resulting from the introduction of new and forthcoming Albanian and Kosovar public policies on VET education. The enhancement of the sector will have a direct impact on the administration of the territory, agricultural policy and negotiation, as well as innovation in rural areas. It is imperative that the public sector invests in higher education with a view to

¹ <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/vocational-education-and-training/about-vocational-education-and-training>



modernising VET education in general and paying closer attention to rural areas. It would be beneficial for the university, NGOs and VET operators to collaborate on a regular basis, organizing training sessions on a permanent basis.

Methodology

The methodology of the job market is organized on several stages. Taking into consideration that the future of the VET education, is going to improve the level of knowledge especially to the individuals working on the fields related to agriculture, environment, territory administration, policy making and rural evaluation.

The methodology applied consisted in three main steps:

- 1) rapid diagnostics of the market situation of the VET sector in Albania and Kosovo is undertaken to identify the current situation of the sector and as well the main skills and competences needed for this purpose.
- 2) in order to identify the importance of the needs and requirements of the young people and to identify their skill, a questionnaire is applied and,
- 3) Interviews are organized with teachers and businesses to identify further skills/competencies.

The first step of the market review was desk research which identified the awareness level of the Albanian and Kosovar actors on above mentioned concepts. Then an inventory list of the potential stakeholders involved in VET is produced with the purpose of classification and sampling. Then the AUT experts identified the VET schools in Albania and Kosovo intending to have the student's opinions on the gaps, necessities, and future progress of the sector.

To validate the questionnaire results and to complete the information collected by the questionnaire we organized two focus groups. The first focus group was made with selected VET students from AUT and the second focus group was composed of VET professors. The whole process was facilitated by the AUT project team.



The third phase was dedicated to stakeholder mapping uses key concepts such as: the agriculture sector, smart education, food security, planification and management.

In depth, interviews were then realized with a stratified sample selected for each of the types of stakeholder identified. Interviews with entrepreneurs and teachers in the fields of Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine and Food in Albania and Kosovo have generated some interesting answers. The interview contained a total of fifteen questions that were formulated in such a way as to provide a clear overview of the entrepreneurial activity and the various difficulties in these specific sectors. It is generally noticed that there are no fundamental differences between entrepreneurs in Albania and those in Kosovo.

So the interviews helped us to identify the competences and skills required mostly in VET job activities.

Sampling procedure

For the purpose of this study, 226 questionnaires have been completed in Albania and Kosovo, which was more than the objective initially, set up in the Kick off meeting. The interviews took place in June-July 2024.

Vocational school students in Albania belong to secondary vocational schools and two-year programs at the University. Whereas in Kosovo, the students enrolled in the study are only part of secondary vocational schools. The age group of the interviewees varies between 14 and 22 years in Albania, while in Kosovo the age group of students varies between 14-18 years. Regarding the first question, it turns out that 51.9% of the respondents are students from Albania and 48.1% from Kosovo.

Graphic 1. Country of origin

Country of Residence:
206 responses





Source: Questionnaire

The data were collected using the snowball sampling procedure. Snowball sampling is employed when samples exhibiting the desired characteristics are not readily accessible (Naderifar et al., 2017). This method aligns with our objective of recruiting participants from the target groups: students, VET teachers, and entrepreneurs. Snowball sampling, also known as referral sampling, is a nonprobability sampling technique. This technique is also referred to as exponential non-discriminative snowball sampling (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). The initial subject selected for the sample group serves as a source of multiple referrals. Each subsequent referral is investigated until a sufficient number of primary data samples have been collected. One of the advantages of this sampling technique is the ability to recruit hidden populations, to collect primary data in a cost-effective manner, and to complete the survey in a relatively short period of time (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). However, this sampling technique is not without its limitations. For instance, it may result in an oversampling of a specific network of peers. Additionally, respondents may be reluctant to provide names of peers, which could give rise to ethical concerns. Furthermore, there is no assurance regarding the representativeness of the samples obtained.



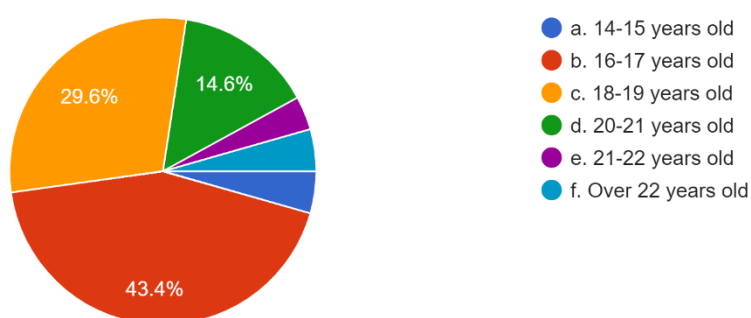
Sample description

As the graphic shows the age of the respondents turns out to be the majority of the 16-17 age group, about 43.4%, the 18-19 age group is about 29.6% while 14.6% belong to the 20-21 age group.

Graphic 2: Age of the respondents

Age:

226 responses



Source: Questionnaire

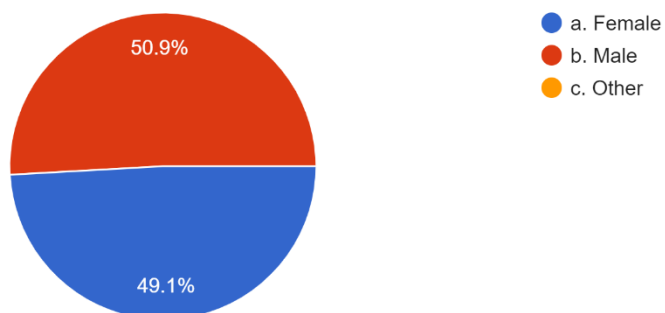
In conclusion, all considerations must be conducted with a gender lens. The issue can be described as twofold. Initially, the failure to consider gender may result in the exclusion of half of the population and the labor force. Such an outcome would consequently impact productivity and economic growth. Secondly, the absence of gender considerations may perpetuate existing gender bias and impede further development.



Graphic 3. Gender participation

Gender:

226 responses



Source: Questionnaire

The gender of the respondents turns out to be in an almost equal ratio, 50.9% men and 49.1% women.



Part 1. Employment market in Albania and Kosovo

In the contemporary business environment, which is characterised by continuous change, it is imperative for organisations to maintain a vigilant watch on market size, share analysis, growth patterns and projections. This is crucial for those seeking to maintain a competitive advantage and remain at the forefront of their respective fields. An understanding of these critical variables enables businesses to make informed decisions, identify potential avenues for growth, and assess the market landscape for potential risks. As we progress from 2024 to 2030, the importance of market size and share studies, growth patterns, and predictions becomes increasingly evident as sectors navigate dynamic transformations and new technologies.

Secondary vocational education is designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge required for a range of professions and crafts, preparing them for employment upon completion of their studies. The position of youth in the labor market is one of vulnerability, a phenomenon observed not only in Albania and Kosovo but also in other regions of the world. Albania and Kosovo are confronted with a multitude of challenges pertaining to the employment of young people, particularly in rural areas. These challenges are intertwined with economic growth, high-level migration, and poverty.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) states that Albania is among the countries most vulnerable to the exodus of young people and the workforce due to the pandemic's negative consequences. This is brought on by their lack of perspective, unemployment, corruption, and, in the event that they do find work, their poor pay. Youth (15-24 years old) unemployment rate is 25.6 %. Compared to the previous year, youth unemployment rate increased by 0.7 percentage points (INSTAT 2024). Meanwhile in Kosovo young people face significant challenges in transitioning from school to work due to the education system's quality, relevance, and inclusiveness issues. Additionally, there is a mismatch between their expectations



and the actual demands of the job market.² In Kosovo for the young people (15-24 years old), the unemployment rate was higher by 1.6% than in the same period of the previous year.

Conversely, the labor market in rural areas is relatively understudied and confronts considerable obstacles in comparison to urban regions. Rural areas are typically distinguished by a workforce with lower skill levels, constrained opportunities, a pronounced reliance on subsistence agriculture, elevated poverty rates, and other characteristics.

Based on the estimates made by INSTAT (2023 a) Gross Domestic Product (GDP) share in agriculture in 2022 was 18.62% showing a decline compared to 2019 which was almost 20% of the total GDP. In Albania, employment in agriculture during 2022 was 33.9% in total (INSTAT 2023 b.), with a slight decline in 2023 with 32.3% (INSTAT 2024).

The Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) has released the results of the Labour Force Survey for Q3 2023. Unemployment rate in Kosovo and Albania is almost in the same levels respectively 10.6% and 10.7 %. In Albania, unemployment, decreased by 0.2 percentage points compared to 2022.

In Kosovo the percentage of employed males was 53.9% (3.1% higher than in the same period of the previous year). Whereas the percentage of employed females was 20.2% (1.1% higher than in the same period of the previous year). In Albania during 2023, the labour force is estimated to be 1,485,843 persons, where males account for 53.8 % of the labour force and females 46.2 % (INSTAT 2024).

The employment rate in Kosovo was 36.6% (1.9% higher than in the same period of the previous year). The employment rate in Albania for the population aged 15-64 years old is 67.2 %. The employment rate for women is 61.8 % and for men 72.9 %. The gender employment gap for this age-group is 11.1 percentage points (INSTAT 2024).

The economic sectors leading with employment in Kosovo continue to be: trade with 19.9%, construction with 12.6%, education with 10.0%, manufacturing with 9.1%, public administration

² Kosovo Annual Report 2023. UNICEF, 2023.

<https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/media/4596/file/English.pdf>



and defense with 8.2%, etc. Females were employed mainly in the education, trade and health care sectors, with 55.1% of them. Whereas, males were mainly employed in the sectors of trade, construction, manufacturing, public administration and defense, accommodation and service activities, with 62.4%.³

In Albania the service and agricultural sectors have the highest share of employed with respectively 46.7% and 32.3 % of the total employment.

The matter of fact remains that much less is known in terms of economic activity, employment, and rural non-farm activity in the rural areas of Albania. Consideration of youth employment insures inclusion of a vital part of the labor force who will become the most productive force of tomorrow. Inclusion of youth into the labor force and the labor market increases the utilization of the available labor force as well as increase economic productivity.

In both countries labour market research is not supported by the labour market information system which does not provide data that is updated and relevant to the labour market (i.e., employers) needs and requirements. On the other hand, there is a lack of a standardized methodology for labour market research and forecasting the labour market needs.

Survey with the VET students

The current discourse surrounding the requisite offerings for training places for young people at the outset of their engagement with the vocational education and training system is a topic of considerable importance. As it previously explained in the methodology, based on the 226 questionnaires the main results are as follows.

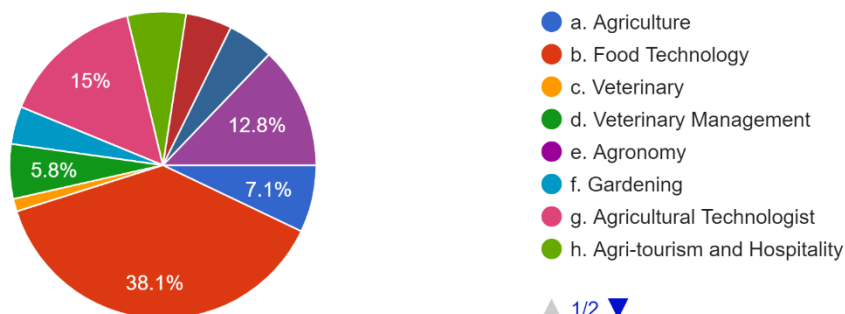
³ Labour Force Survey (LFS), Q3. Kosovo Agency of Statistics, 2023.



Graphic 4. The field of study?

Field of Study:

226 responses

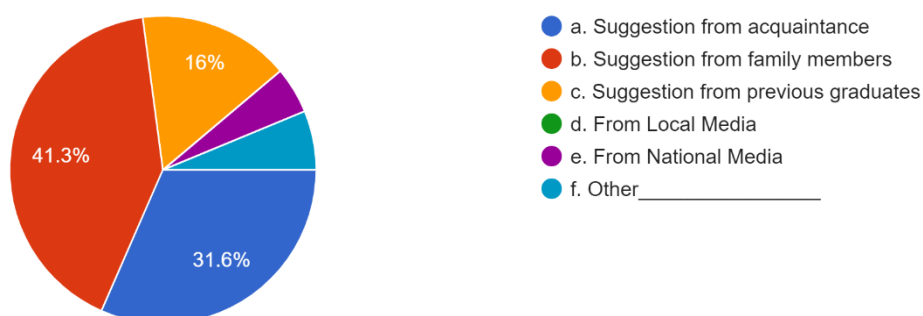


The field of study for each respondent differs. As can be seen from the graph, about 38.1% of the respondents belong to the branch of Food Technology, 15% of them are Agricultural Technologists, 12.8% of them belong to the Agronomy profile, 7.1% of the respondents belong to the Agriculture profile and 5.8% of them belong to the Veterinary Management profile. It is noticed a low interest in the choice of other fields of study such as Veterinary or Horticulture

Graphic 5. The information to choose a vocational school?

How did you get the information to choose a professional school?

225 responses



To the question of what were the sources of information for finding and choosing a professional school, the largest part of the respondents, about 41.3% of them, answered that they received this information from

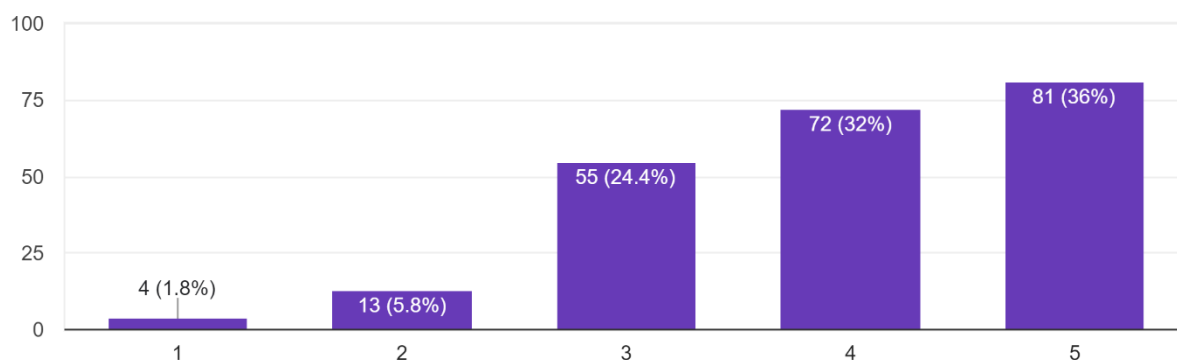


family members, who in this case were the main influence and the main basis of their children's orientation to choose a safe future. About 31.6% of the answers state that the information was received from acquaintances or relatives and friends, where again the role and influence of the social group in the choices of individuals is crucial and about 16% of the respondents considered it reasonable to base on the experiences of previous graduates in such fields of study. A low trend is observed to seek information in the local or national media or even in other sources of information. This confirms the fact that the family and the social circle are influential factors in the choices of young people.

Graphic 6: The rate professional knowledge gained at the study program?

How do you rate professional knowledge gained at your study program:

225 responses



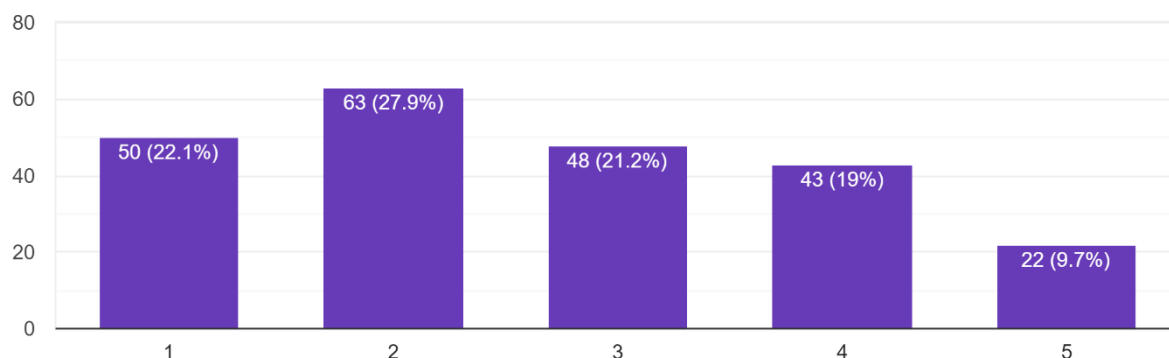
This question was intended to discover something more about the perception of young people about the knowledge gained in their programs or fields of study. Taking into account the fact that everyone's self-evaluation is subjective, in this graph we can see it is clear that a significant part of the respondents, about 36% of them or 81, estimate that the acquired knowledge is very good. About 32% of them evaluate it as good, 24.4% of them evaluate the acquired knowledge on average, 5.8% are not satisfied with the acquired knowledge and 1.8% consider the acquired knowledge to be very weak. The high number of respondents who answered very well and well shows that a good job is made in order to educate these young people in their respective fields of study.



Graphic 7: The rate of the professional development practices in the study program

How do you rate professional development practices in your study program:

226 responses



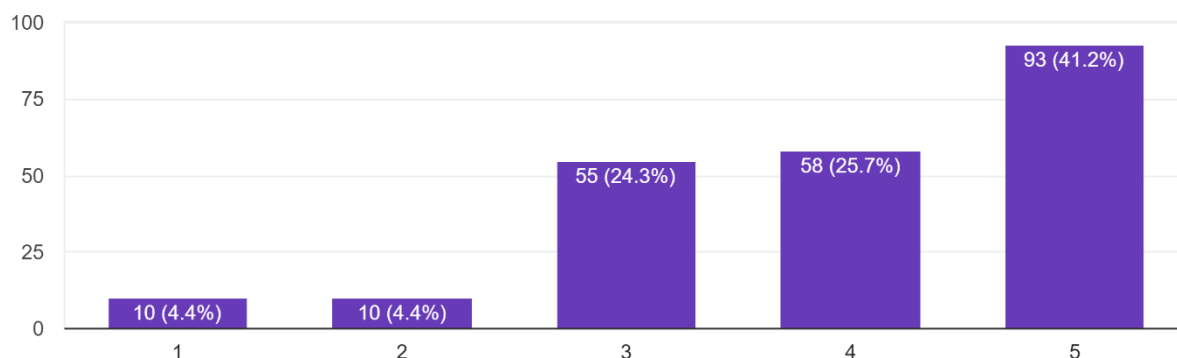
This question is related to the assessment that students of vocational schools make of the development of practices developed in their study programs. As can be seen from the graph, there is an obvious problem in the development of practices since most of them. Respectively, 22.1% answered that they do not develop internships at all. In comparison, 27.9% of them answered that they develop very few professional internships, followed by 21.2% of respondents who consider the internships developed at an average level and 19% of the respondents consider them at a good level. Only 9.7% of the respondents say that the practices developed in their field of study are at a very good level. Analyzing the answers given, the lack of development of practices in these fields of study can be related to a number of factors such as: lack of logistics, lack of material base, additional cost for the development of practices, etc.



Graphic 8: The rate of the level of teaching at the school in coordination with the labour market needs

How do you rate level of teaching at your school in coordination with the labour market needs:

226 responses

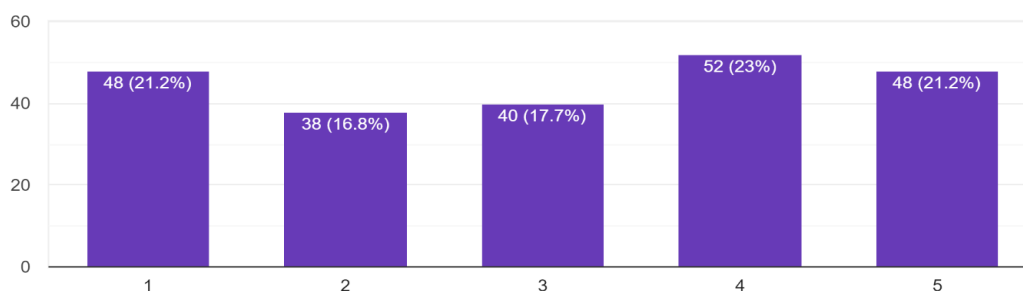


To the question of how you evaluate the level of teaching in your schools in accordance with the needs of the labor market, the largest part of the respondents, i.e. about 41.2% of them consider it very good, 25.7% consider it well, 24.3% consider the level of education average, 4.4% consider it weak and 4.4% are completely dissatisfied with the level of education in accordance with what the labor market requires. This gives a clear picture of the general trend, so educators and teachers have tried their best to transmit to students, knowledge in accordance with what the labor market requires according to the relevant fields of study.

Graphic 9: The interest in starting the own business in the agri-food sector

Are you interested in starting your own business in the agri-food sector:

226 responses





To the question if you are interested in starting your own business in the agri-food sector, the respondents answered in a slightly conflicting way because the number of those who are not at all interested and those who are very interested is the same, so about 21.2% or 48 of them answered that they have no interest and 21.2% of them or 48 answered that they are very interested in starting their own business in this sector. 23% of them are interested, 17.7% of them are moderately interested and 16.8% of them are a little interested. These answers show that a part of the respondents made this choice of the field of study based on in a momentary decision without thinking about the future. The part convinced to start their own business after completing their studies are those who have chosen this field of study precisely with the final goal of starting or establish their own business in this sector. There may be those who are still undecided as they do not know if they will be able to secure the financial resources necessary to establish a business.

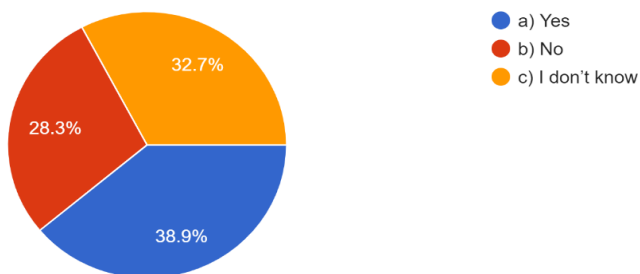
On the other hand to the question if you are aware of any activity or business program that takes place near your area, about 38.9% of the respondents answered that they are aware of these activities, 28.3% of them answered that they are not aware and 32.7 % of them do not know. From these answers we can deduce that and if these activities take place, maybe their advertising through the media or brochures can be greater so that the distribution of information to the interested parties would be uniform. Participating in these types of activities can encourage young people to get more involved and want to start their own businesses in this field.



Graphic 10. The aware of entrepreneurial activities or programmes in your areas.

Are you aware of any entrepreneurial activities or programmes in your areas?

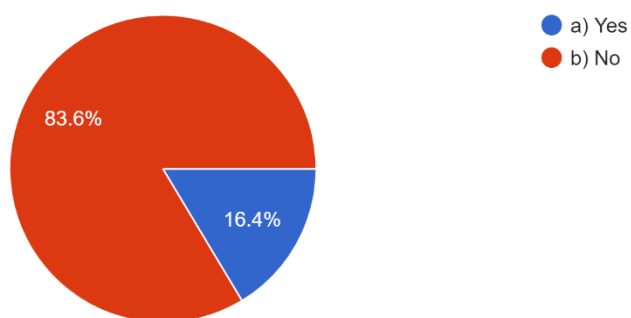
226 responses



Graphic 11. The participation level.

If yes (Question 11), have you participated in any?

226 responses



Again in continuation of the previous question, this question is related to the participation of young people in any of the business activities developed in their areas. It is noticed a lack of interest for a number of factors to participate. About 83.6% of the respondents affirm that even if they are aware ,they have not participated in any of them, while only 16.4% of them have participated. When asked

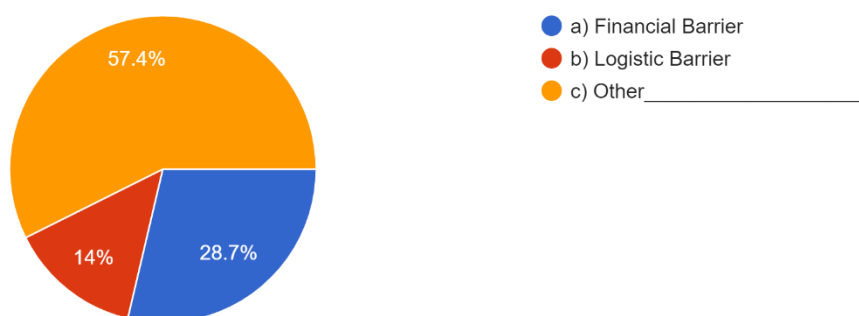


about the reasons why they could not participate, 57.4% of them did not specify concrete reasons, 28, 7% of them answered that the reasons were of a financial nature, i.e. the financial cost of participation, and 14% of them answered that the reason for non-participation is related to logistical barriers.

Graphic 12. The reasons for not intending the education

If yes but you were not able to attend, what was the reason?

129 responses



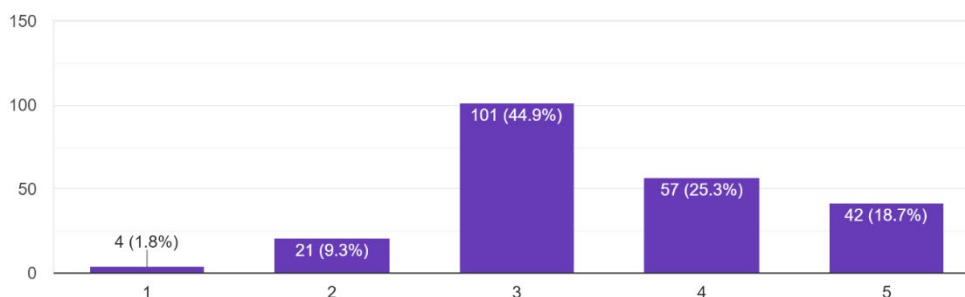
The next question is related to the perception of confidence to identify business opportunities or to individual abilities to understand better. The highest part of the answers, so about 44.9% are ranked at an average level, continuing with 25.3% who are confident in identifying business opportunities, 18.7% of them are very confident, while 9.3% of them do not believe in their ability to identify new business opportunities. This is also related to the level of individual perception of the acquired knowledge, but even the lack of experience in this field makes some of them distrustful. A small part of 1.8% consider their ability to identify a business opportunity to be very weak.



Graphic 13. The rate of confidence in identifying business opportunities

How would you rate your confidence in identifying business opportunities?

225 responses



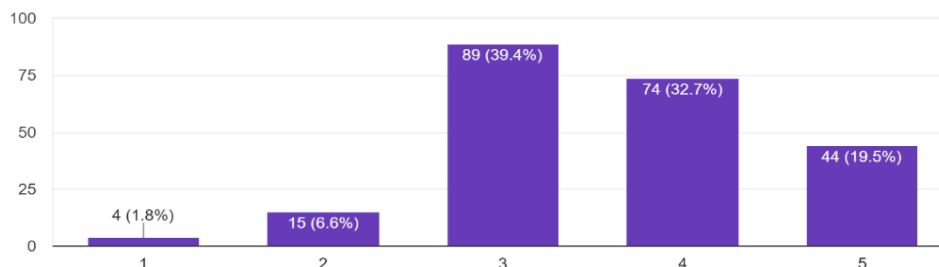
How would you rate your ability to communicate your business ideas/goals?

To this question, the majority of respondents, specifically 39.4% of them, answered that they rate their ability to communicate an idea or business goal as average. 32.7% of them consider it good, 19.5% of them consider these personal skills very good, while 6.6% consider them weak and 1.8% consider them very weak. These answers are also related to other psychological and social factors such as the degree of self-confidence and self-esteem of each one, but it can be related and with the low level of practical knowledge, which makes some of them distrustful. Maybe training or workshops developed in this aspect would help many young people to increase their skills.



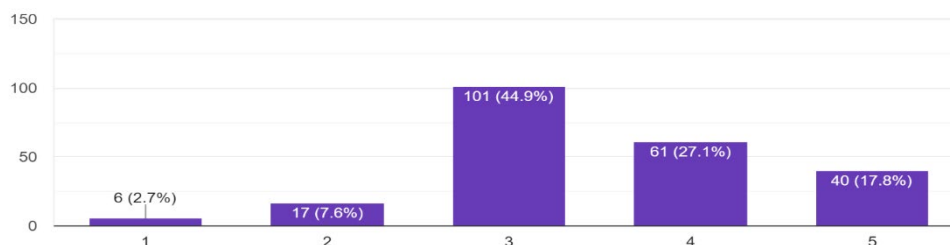
Graphic 14. The rate of ability to communicate

How would you rate your ability to communicate your business ideas/goals?
226 responses



Graphic 15. The rate of ability to calculate risks and make business decisions.

How would you rate your ability to calculate risks and make business decisions?
225 responses

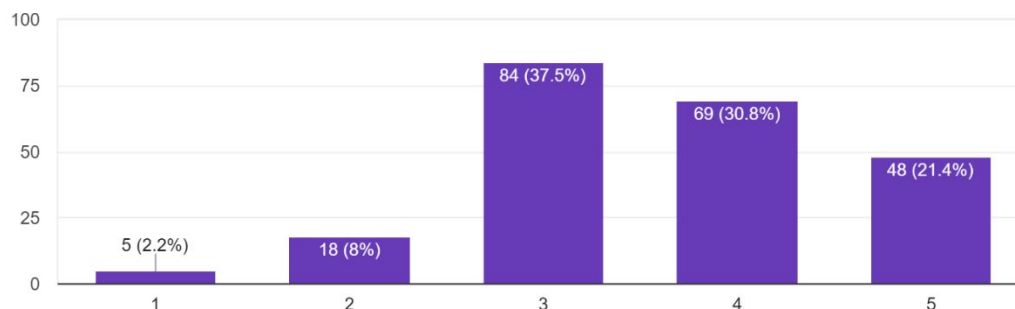


The majority of their responses, i.e. 44.9%, have shown an average belief in their individual abilities to calculate risks and make business decisions. Around 27.1% believe that their abilities are good, around 17.8% have answered that their abilities in this management are very good, about 7.6% of the respondents do not believe in their ability to calculate risks and make decisions, while 2.7% of them are skeptical. This trend of answers can also be related to the lack of experience in certain fields or the lack of financial or economic knowledge.



Graphic 16. The rate of ability to create a business plan/structure.

How would you rate your ability to create a business plan/structure?
224 responses



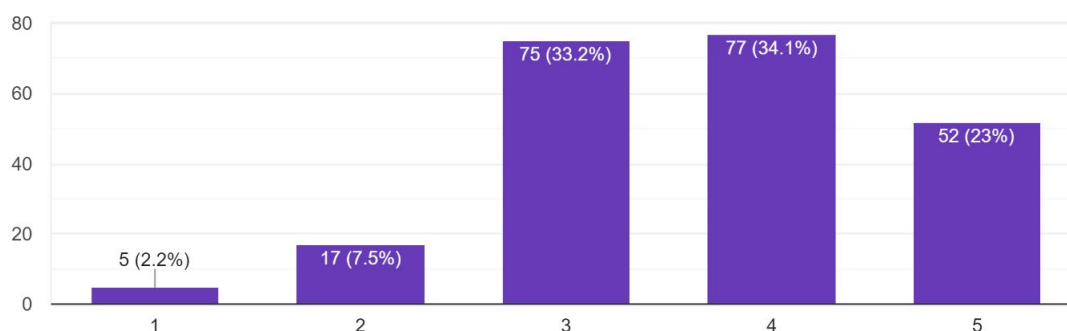
To the question of how you would rate your ability to create a business plan or structure, once again the majority of the respondents and specifically 37.5% of them answered that they rate these abilities at an average level, i.e. neither very good nor very weak, 30.8% of them believe that they have good skills in creating a business plan, 21.4% of them believe that they have very good skills, 8% of them answered that they do not have enough skills to to create a business project and only 2.2% of them do not believe that they have the ability to create a business plan. Again, this variation in the answers shows a degree of uncertainty in the level of knowledge possession in other fields related to the design of a business plan or more detailed analysis. It would be recommended that, regardless of the field of study, students develop curricula that guide them and guide them on how to formulate a business plan.



Graphic 17. The rate of ability to manage budgets.

How would you rate your ability to manage budgets?

226 responses



The question of how you evaluate your abilities to manage budgets is also a challenging question which has generated interesting results as can be seen from the graph. Almost in equal numbers and more specifically 34.1% of the respondents answered that they consider or do they rank their abilities to manage budgets as good, 33.2% of them rate these abilities as average, 23% of them are confident, rating these abilities as very good, 7.5% of them consider these skills weak and a small part of 2.2% of them do not believe that they have the right skills to manage budgets if they were given the opportunity. As can be seen from the answers, there is a belief in individual skills to manage financial resources available. It would be appropriate to develop training courses or curricula to enable students to manage financial funds or budgets

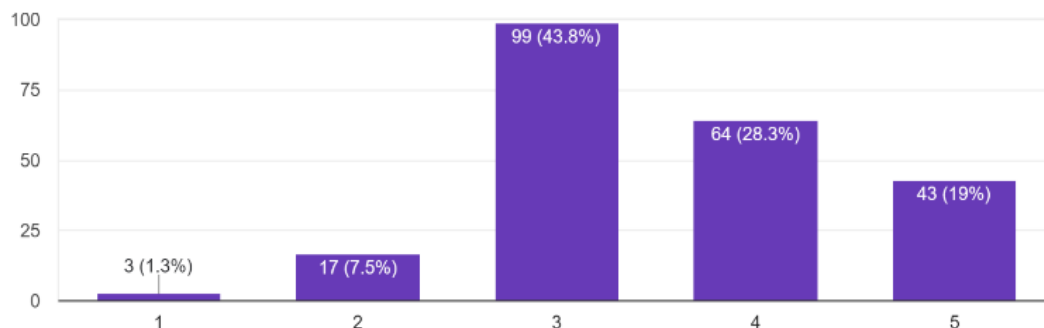
To the question of how you judge the level of your skills to interact in a business network, the largest part of the answers and exactly 43.8% of them qualify these skills as average. 28.3% of them consider them good. 19% of the respondents are confident that their abilities in this regard are very good, 7.5% of them are not very confident in their abilities to interact in a business network and a small part of 1.3% of they judge these abilities to be very weak. This is a question that is also related to the individual perception that everyone has in their abilities.



Graphic 17. The rate of ability to network

How would you rate your ability at networking?

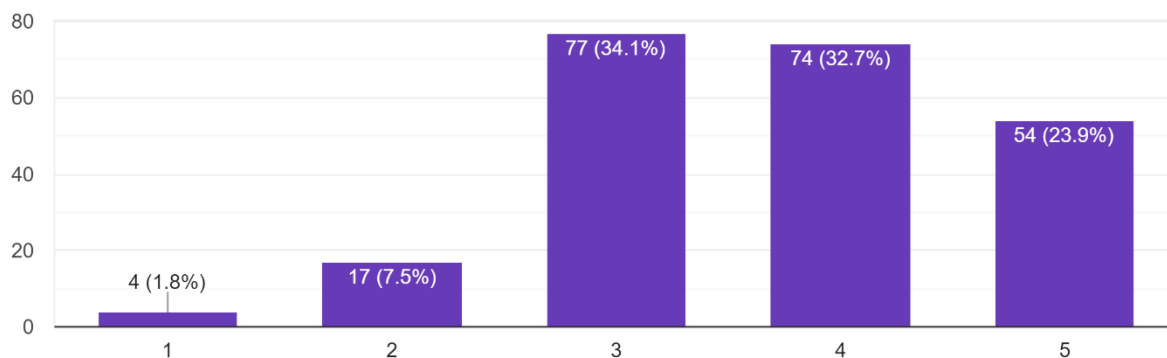
226 responses



Graphic 18. The rate of ability to market your product/service.

How would you rate your ability to market your product/service?

226 responses



This is an interesting question related to testing the perception to sell your product or services in the future assuming that everyone will own an individual business where you will need to have the right skills to market the product or service that you will offer in the market. Once again, there is a variation of answers where it can be seen from the graph that almost an equal number of answers,

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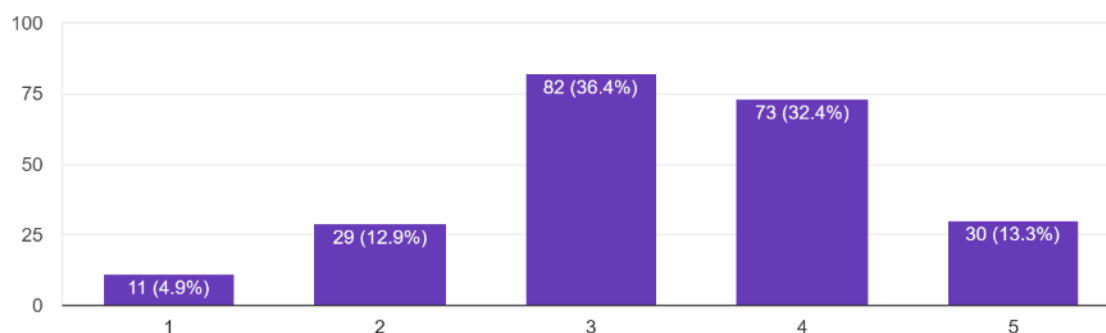


so 34.1% consider that they have average ability to market their product or service, 32.7% believe in themselves and their abilities good, 23.9% expressed that they have very good skills in promoting the product or service of their business, 7.5% are more skeptical about these skills and 1.8% of them, according to the answers, do not believe that they have the skills to market a product or service. It would be appropriate to add the subject of Marketing to the curriculum for the agricultural or agri-food sector because basic knowledge of the marketing of goods or services is needed, especially in sectors that have different specifics and challenges from other sectors .

Graphic 19. The familiarity with market research techniques.

How familiar are you with market research techniques?

225 responses



Again in the logic of the previous question, the next question is how familiar you are with market research techniques, or in other words, how well you know market techniques. We notice that the answers in the largest number of them show that a good part of respondents believe that they are very up-to-date with market research techniques. So 36.4% of them believe that they are moderately familiar with these techniques, 32.4% of them answered that they are well aware of market research techniques, 13.3 % of them answered that they know these techniques very well, 12.9% of them believe that they are not so familiar with these techniques and 4.9% of them do not think that they are familiar with them. Even in this question there is room for analysis as knowledge of market research techniques are related to the possession of some additional knowledge that

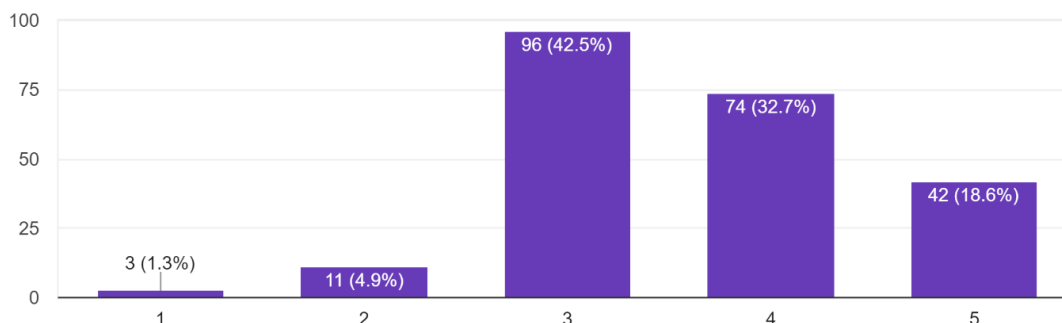


can be acquired through teaching but also through practices and work experience in profiles that include the need to know market research techniques as well as possible.

Graphic 20. The rate of ability of tasks prioritisation ?

How would you rate your ability to prioritise tasks?

226 responses



The next question is related to the perception of the ability to prioritize tasks. Again, we have a variation of answers, but the majority of respondents, specifically 42.5%, believe that their ability to prioritize tasks is at an average level, 32.7% of them answered that their skills are good, 18.6% of them believe that their abilities to prioritize tasks are very good, 4.9% of them are not convinced of their abilities to prioritize tasks and only 1.3% of them do not believe that they have the right skills in this direction. If we analyze the question, other factors such as years of experience in the labor market and the difficulties presented or challenges that help in better understanding of different situations.

How would you rate your ability to accept feedback and implement changes?

The penultimate question is a question related to testing the individual viewpoint to accept recommendations and implement changes if necessary. It is a somewhat complex question which has generated answers that vary significantly. The biggest part of respondents both in Albania and Kosovo and specifically 52.7% of them or 119 answered that they consider their ability to accept recommendations and implement changes at an average level, 26.1% of them qualify them as good, 8.4% of them believe that they have very good skills in accepting recommendations and implementing them, 9.3% of them in the other

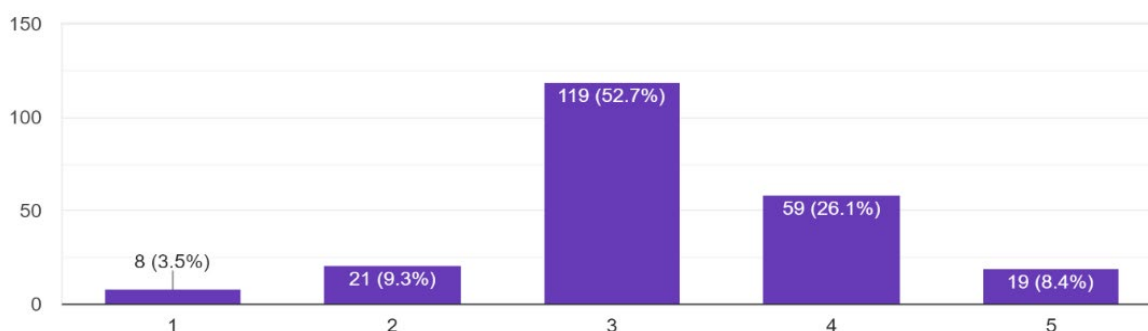


spectrum do not believe that they have good skills in this direction and a small part of 3.5 % of respondents answered that they do not have good skills in accepting recommendations or suggestions and their practical implementation. Again, there may be room for discussion, but this is a question related to the possession of certain skills that are acquired and strengthened in a second moment when the experience gained is greater and significant to make the change.

Graphic 21. The rate of ability to accept the feedback

How would you rate your ability to accept feedback and implement changes?

226 responses



Graphic 22. Are you or have you been employed during your studies?

Are you or have you been employed during your studies?

226 responses



The next question for the male and female students of vocational schools in Albania and Kosovo was if you are or have been employed during your studies. We can see from the answers that 51,3% are not currently employed or have not been employed in the past which means that they are fully dedicated to their studies and have given maximum priority to school. 24.3% of them answered

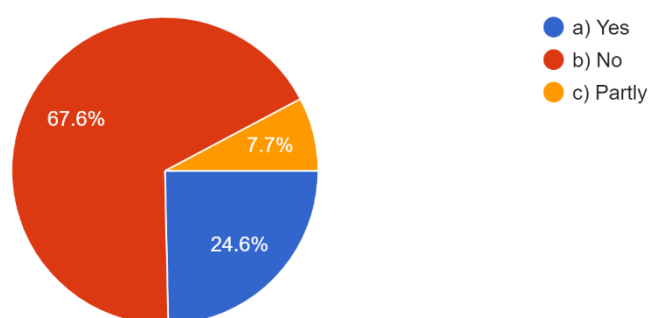


that they are employed and studying at the same time, 12.4% of them have been employed for some time partial and 11.9% of them have been employed in the past but are not currently employed.

Graphic 23. If you are employed or have been employed, is your employment related to you field of study?

If you are employed or have been employed, is your employment related to your field of study?

142 responses

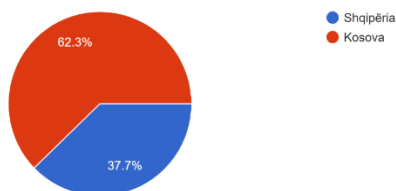


The last question, which is related to the previous question, tries to understand if the employment or work where the young people are working currently is related to their field of study. As can be seen from the answers, 67.6% of them are employed in a job which is not related to their current field of study, which means that they work for a number of other reasons which may be economic. 24.6% of them are employed in job profiles related to their field so that they want to walk on this path and in the future have their own business in fields related to the professional education they are receiving and 7.7% of them answered that they are employed in jobs that partially are related to their fields of study, but even here there is a potential of people who in the future want to have similar businesses or professions or which match the knowledge acquired in their professional schools.



Part 2. Analysis of questionnaire data of VET teachers

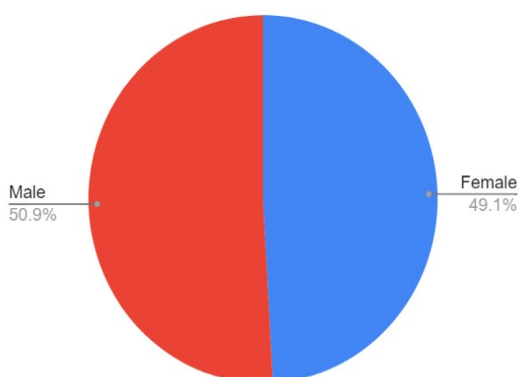
Country of Residence:
53 responses



Regarding the questionnaires addressed to the VET teachers of professional schools in Albania and Kosovo, 62.3% of them are from Kosovo and 37.7% from Kosovo, respectively 20 from Albania and 33 from Kosovo. The VET teachers are teachers of secondary vocational schools, but also of two-year schools at the University.

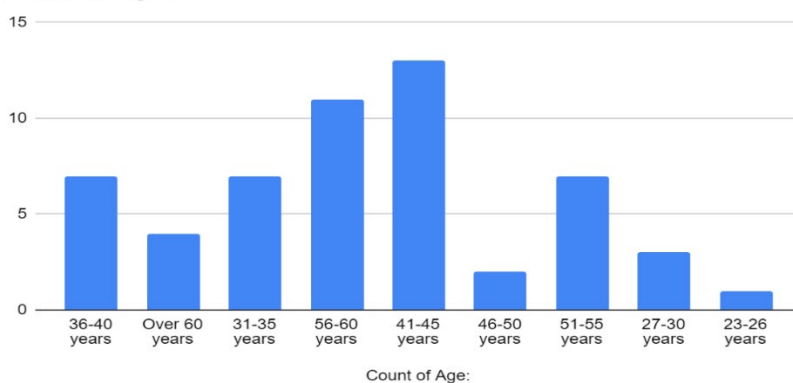
The gender of the surveyed VET teachers is divided in almost in equal proportions between women and men, respectively 50.9% males and 49.1% females.

Count of Gender:





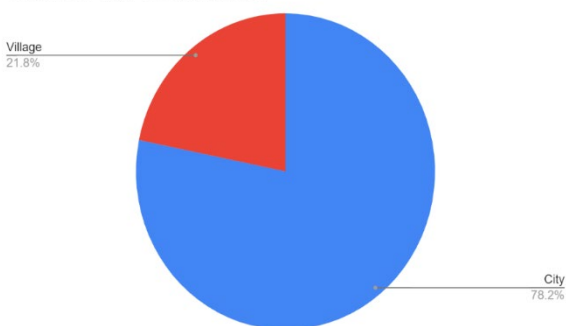
Count of Age:



The age of the surveyed VET teachers is diverse, in the majority the age group of 41-45 years dominates, who are even more ready to answer the questionnaires due to the sufficient experience but also the level of acceptance of technology through the highest use of equipment. The second category is the age group of 56-60 years, with a weight of 11%, and which also corresponds to an active age group of VET teachers with satisfactory experience in teaching. The third category is the age group of 51-55 years who also has considerable experience in teaching and is connected moderately with the latest technology and equipment. The fourth category is the age group of 31-35 years, which corresponds to the category of VET teachers on the with sufficient experience, and who are more connected with technology and the use of equipment. Then comes the 36-40 years old category, which represents an age group of VET teachers with great experience in teaching, and who have strong connection with technology. The last category is the age group over 60 years old, which corresponds to the smallest part of VET teachers who are on the verge of leaving the education system, and finally the category of new VET teachers, who have just started in the system, who still do not have knowledge of good in relation to the system and may have been avoided in the questioner's answer due to the ignorance of part of the problem and the developments of recent years.

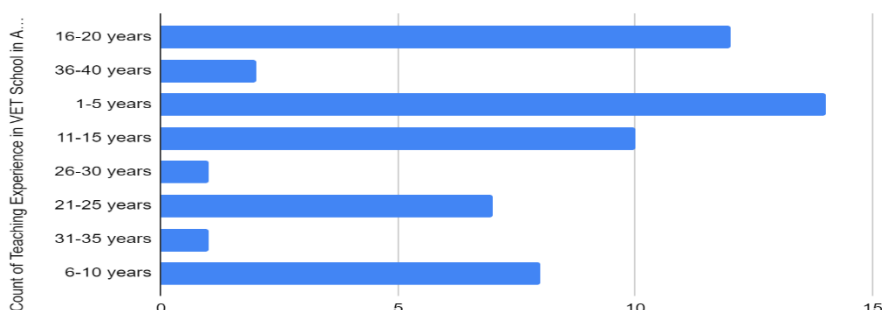


Count of Place of Residence:



Regarding the place of residence, the VET teachers questioned in Albania and Kosovo mostly belong to the cities, respectively 78.2%, and to a much smaller extent to the villages, respectively 21.8%. This is explained by the fact that there is a mass departure of families from the countryside to the city, which translates into a decrease in the number of students in vocational schools in villages, and an increase in the number of students in vocational schools in cities.

Count of Teaching Experience in VET School in Agri-Food Sector:

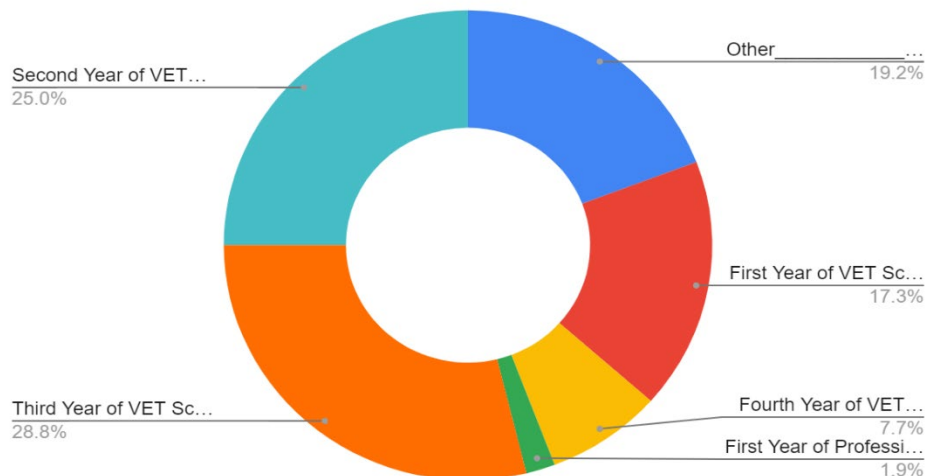


Professional school VET teachers in Albania and Kosovo were asked about their experience in teaching in the agriculture, veterinary and food sectors. They show that they mostly have 1-5 years of experience in teaching, respectively 24.1%, and this category results in a not very good knowledge of the professional education system, which is directly followed by the category that has 16- 20 years in teaching, with 22.2%, this category which for the study represents a very good knowledge of the professional education system. The third category is that of VET teachers with 11-15 years of experience, in the middle of 18.5%, which also represents a satisfactory knowledge



of the professional education system. The other two categories that follow, namely the category with 6-10 years of experience in teaching with 14.8% and the category with 21-25 years of experience with 13% also present VET teachers who have good and very good knowledge about the professional education system. So, in about 76% of the population of VET teachers surveyed, those who answered have good and very good experience in professional education, which means that they can give truer picture of the current professional education system.

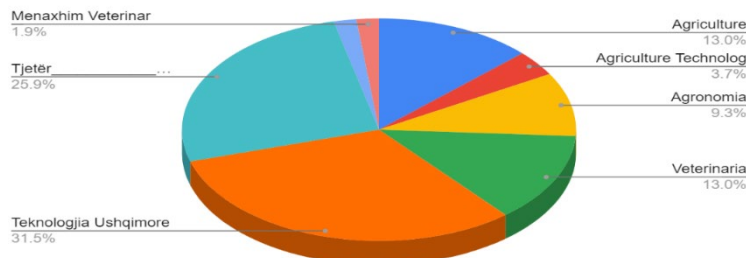
Count of Year of Study you teach actually:



Regarding the question in which year of study do VET teachers of vocational schools in Albania and Kosovo teach, it turns out that they mostly teach in the third year of secondary vocational schools, with 28.8%, followed by those who teach in the second year of vocational high school with 25%, followed by those who teach in the first year with 17.3%, and further to a lesser extent are those VET teachers who teach in two-year professional programs at the university.



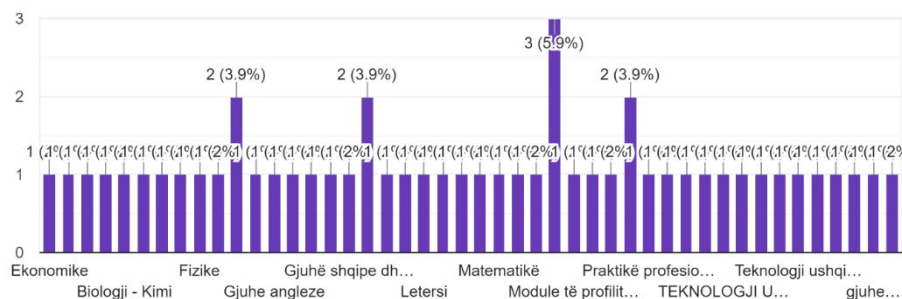
Count of Study Program you are teaching:



Regarding the question of which study program, the VET teachers asked in Albania and Kosovo teach, it turns out that most of them teach in the branch of food technology with 31.5%, then those who teach in the branch of agronomy, agriculture, veterinary, agricultural technologist, gardening etc. The population of selected VET teachers is diverse, they teach in different branches and in different years of study, which makes the results of the study representative.

What is your subject of teaching?

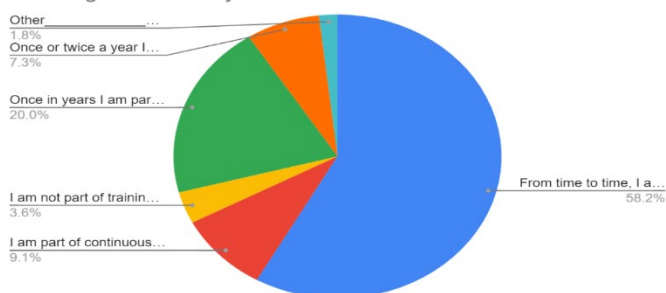
51 responses



Regarding the question of which subject the VET teachers in Albania and Kosovo teach, it turns out that they teach a variety of subjects, starting from mathematics, Albanian language, physics, foreign language, economic subjects, biology and chemistry, food technology etc.

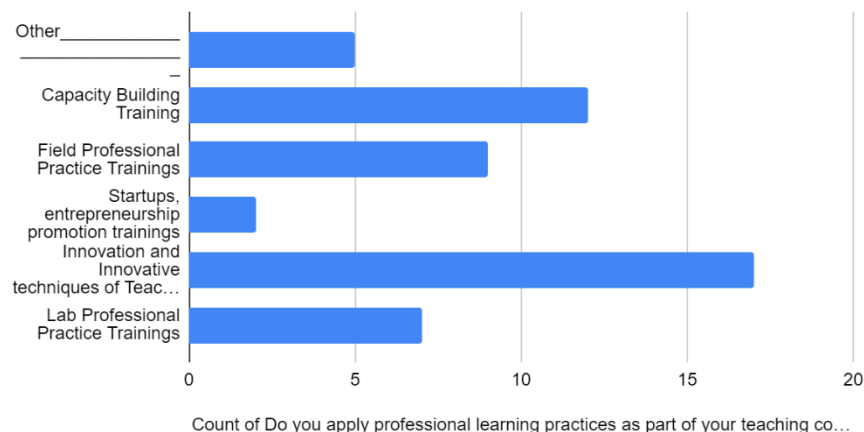


Count of Are you part of a training program for teaching and teaching methods in your VET School?



Regarding the question of whether they receive technical and professional training in relation to teaching and its techniques in the school where they teach, it turns out that most of them answered that they receive training only occasionally, to the extent of 58.2% of the respondents. The second most frequent answer is that they receive training once in a few years, respectively 20%, and only 9.1% answered that they receive continuous training throughout the school year. This indicates an unsatisfactory level of teacher training in vocational schools in Albania and Kosovo.

Count of Do you apply professional learning practices as part of your teaching course at your VET School:

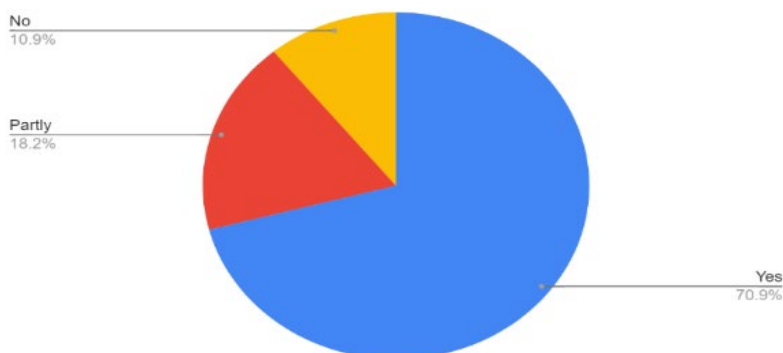


To the next question about what types of training VET teachers receive most often, they answered in a varied way, to the greatest extent with 33.3% training related to innovation and technology, then 21.6% training related to capacity building, then only 17.6% trainings related to professional practices, and the smallest category of them answered trainings related to the promotion of



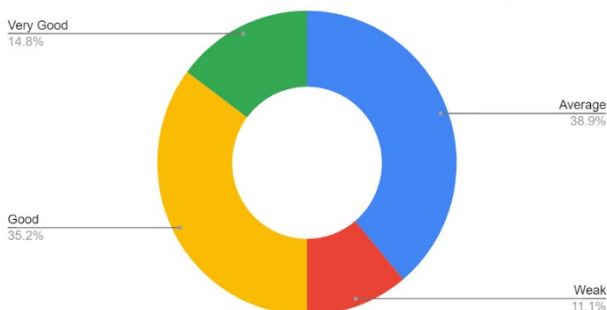
entrepreneurship. This indicates a very low level of involvement of VET teachers in Albania and Kosovo in relation to training for the promotion of entrepreneurship, startups.

Count of Do you apply professional learning practices as part of your teaching course at your vET School:



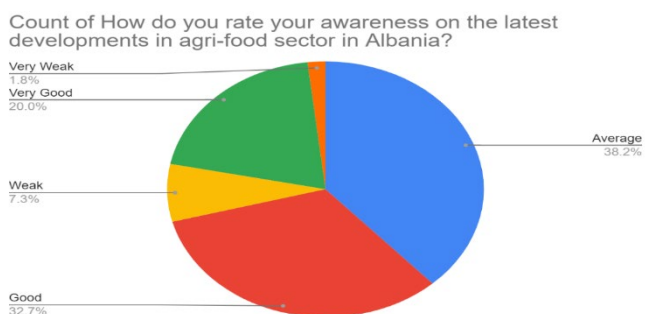
In relation to the question of whether they apply teaching practices in the framework of their teaching subject, the VET teachers asked in Albania and Kosovo have answered to the greatest extent positively, respectively in the amount of 70.9%, about 18.2% of them have answered that they partially apply practices educational, but this may also be related to the specifics of the subject they teach, and only about 10.9% answered negatively that they do not use it. So, to the greatest extent, VET teachers of professional schools apply teaching practices in the subjects they teach.

Count of How do you rate the learning methods applied on your teaching course to practically illustrate knowledge to your stu...





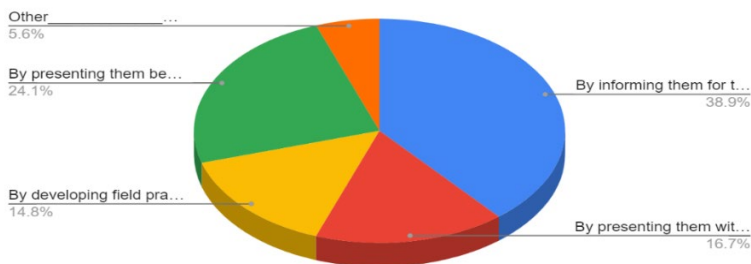
To the question of whether they consider the teaching tools sufficient for the practical illustration of knowledge, the VET teachers asked in Albania and Kosovo answered to the greatest extent on average, respectively 38.9%, then sufficiently and very well, and only 11.1% answered poorly, and no answer very weak. This question shows that VET teachers expect to have better teaching tools at their disposal even though they consider that they currently have average teaching tools to carry out their teaching.



To the question of how informed are the VET teachers in Albania and Kosovo regarding the latest developments regarding entrepreneurship in the fields of agriculture, veterinary medicine and food, they mostly answered moderately informed (38.2%), then well informed (32.7%), then very informed (18.5%), 14.8% a little informed and only 5.6% uninformed. The answers are varied, but in general the VET teachers demonstrate an unsatisfactory level regarding their information about the latest developments regarding entrepreneurship.

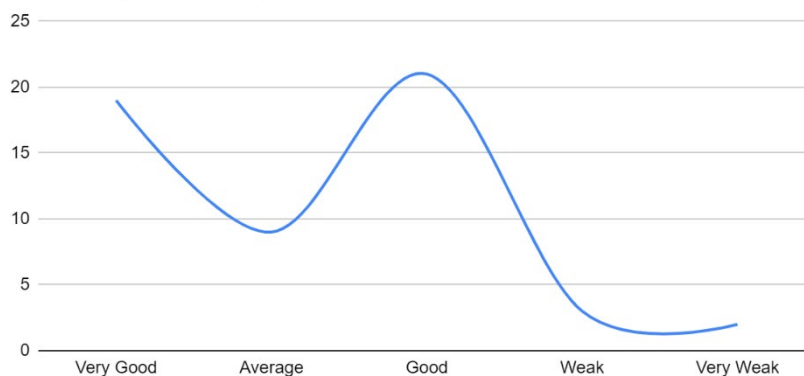


Count of How do you cultivate student interest on entrepreneurship in Agri-Food Sector?



To the question of how VET teachers cultivate in their students the interest to invest their energies in the fields of agriculture, veterinary medicine and food, they have answered to the extent of 37.7% by showing the importance of these sectors in the country, then by showing the best practices in more developed countries to the extent of 24.5%, then about 17% showing the latest developments of these sectors, developing practices in the field, etc.

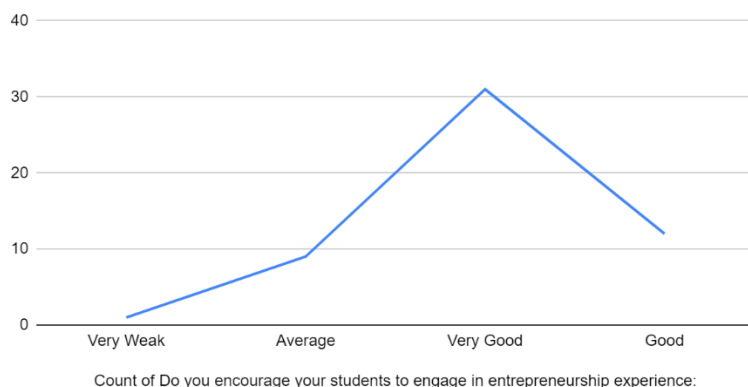
Count of Do you encourage your students to develop leadership skills in Agri-Food Sector:



Count of Do you encourage your students to develop leadership skills in Agri-Food Sector:

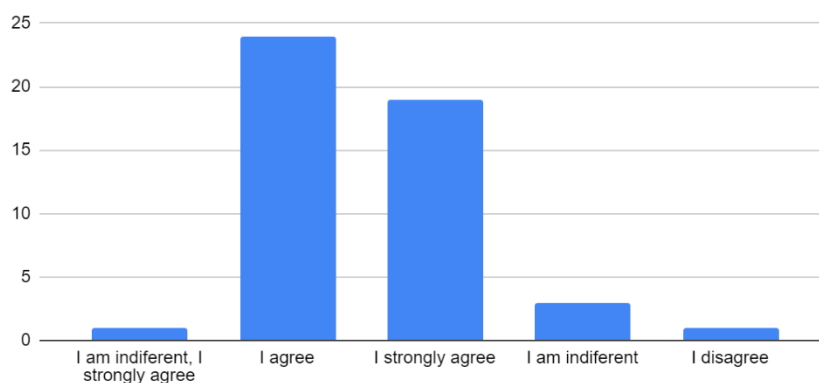


Count of Do you encourage your students to engage in entrepreneurship experience:



To the question of how much they encourage their students to engage in entrepreneurship in the field they study, the VET teachers answered very positively to the extent of 60.4% with the assessment "They encourage them a lot", then about 22.6% encourage them, 17% encourage them moderately and there is no teacher who declares that he does not encourage his students towards entrepreneurship.

Count of How do you rate the statements below related to entrepreneurship in Agri-Food Sector:



To the question of whether VET teachers help their students develop leadership skills in the fields of agriculture, veterinary medicine and food, VET teachers in Albania and Kosovo answered to the greatest extent that they feel it, with about 37.7%, then they help them a lot in the extent of 35.8% , they help 17% on average, about 5.7% answer that they help them a little, and about 3.8% of them answer that they do not help them in this aspect.



To the assertion that the institution where they work has as its main objective the development of student entrepreneurship, the VET teachers mostly answered in agreement and very much in agreement.

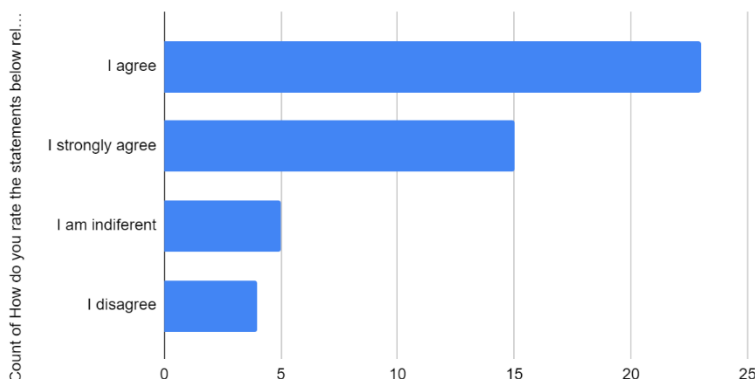
To the statement regarding the inclusion of knowledge related to entrepreneurship in a specific educational subject, the VET teachers mostly answered agree, very agree, and a few of them answered indifferent and not very agree.

To the statement regarding the illustration of knowledge related to entrepreneurship through teaching practices, the VET teachers mostly answered agree, very agree, and only a few of them answered indifferent.

To the statement regarding the mandatory involvement of students in entrepreneurship to fulfill the school's obligations, the VET teachers mostly answered very agree, agree, and only a few of them disagree.

To the statement regarding the involvement of the teaching staff in trainings related to the promotion of entrepreneurship, the VET teachers have responded very agree and agree, and very few of them are indifferent.

Count of How do you rate the statements below related to entrepreneurship in Agri-Food Sector:





Regarding the statement regarding the institution where they work if the main objective is to promote student entrepreneurship, the VET teachers answered very agree, agree, indifferent, and few of them disagree.

To the statement regarding the inclusion of knowledge about entrepreneurship in the current teaching curriculum, the VET teachers responded to the greatest extent agree, then very agree, indifferent, negative.

To the statement regarding the existence of the entrepreneurship financing policy from the institution where they work, the VET teachers responded indifferently to the greatest extent, agree, strongly agree, disagree and not agree at all. The answers are very diverse and all with high frequency, which shows that regarding this statement they do not agree and have different opinions.

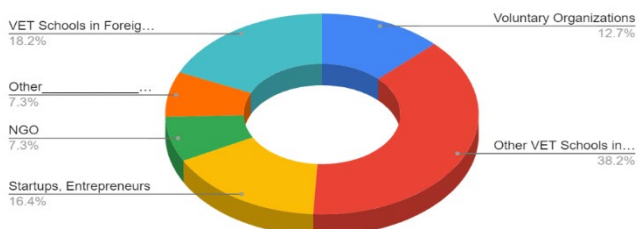
To the statement regarding the emphasis on promoting entrepreneurship in the meetings and meetings of the teaching staff, the VET teachers answered agree, very agree, indifferent, disagree, and somewhat disagree at all. Yes, and in relation to this statement, the high difference in VET teachers' answers is noticeable.

To the statement regarding the arrival of well-known entrepreneurs in the seminars and conferences organized to share experiences and good practices, the VET teachers answered agree, very agree, indifferent, disagree and not agree at all. Again, the high variety of answers is noticed, which shows that VET teachers also think differently about this question.

To the statement regarding the institution's staff encouragement to create connections with private enterprise, the VET teachers answered agree, strongly agree, indifferent, disagree and not agree at all. Again, the high variety of answers is noticed, which shows that VET teachers also think differently about this question.



Count of Institucioni ku jepni mësim a zhvillon marrëveshje bashkëpunimi për nxitjen e sipërmarrjes me partnerë si:



To the question of whether the institution where they teach develops a cooperation agreement to promote entrepreneurship, the VET teachers of vocational schools in Albania and Kosovo answered to the greatest extent that they have agreements with other vocational schools in the country (38.2%), they have agreements with schools other professionals abroad (18.2%), 16.4% of them have agreements with startups and entrepreneurial businesses, 12.7% agreements with voluntary organizations, etc.

To the open question of what improvements they think are necessary in the professional school where they work, the VET teachers in Albania and Kosovo have answered to the greatest extent that they need more laboratories to develop their experiments and teaching practices, they need continuous trainings related to their subjects and technology, they need investments in projects related to the establishment of startups, they require more teaching resources and exchanges with other schools of the same profile Inside and outside their country.



Part 3. Analysis of interviews with Entrepreneurs active in the Fields of Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine and Food in Albania and Kosovo

Interviews with entrepreneurs in the fields of Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine and Food in Albania and Kosovo have generated some interesting answers. The interview contained a total of fifteen questions that were formulated in such a way as to provide a clear overview of the entrepreneurial activity and the various difficulties in these specific sectors. It is generally noticed that there are no fundamental differences between entrepreneurs in Albania and those in Kosovo.

The first question aimed to understand the reasons why the decision was taken to start this business. The answers show that there were more or less the same reasons where we can mention economic reasons, personal reasons where we emphasize the need for independence and also the need to do make a difference.

The second question was about the most valuable advice that could be given to someone who wanted to start his own business. The majority of the interviewees agreed on the fact that one should be careful with the planning of expenses, the provision of financial funds, the image and marketing etc.

The third question is a somewhat pragmatic question which is related to the level of individual confidence and the degree of self-confidence. Most of them have been optimistic and have been positive about the future, hoping that their business will be successful.

The fourth question is a question that aims to understand the perception of the difficulty of being an entrepreneur in both Albania and Kosovo. The answers were more or less in tune, as entrepreneurs in Albania and Kosovo think that it is too difficult to be entrepreneur as you have to face a series of difficulties such as lack of funds, lack of financing, lack of support from the state, lack of market, etc.



The fifth question is related to the level of success of the business up to that moment, i.e. how has your business progressed during these years. Most of the answers show that the business owners are satisfied with the results so far, even though they prefer to move forward. slowly so as not to face financial problems in the near future.

The sixth question, which is related to the impact of technical or professional education on the launch and development of your business, most of the answers from entrepreneurs in Albania and Kosovo indicate that education has had some influence but has not been the main factor since experience is the factor crucial for a venture.

To the seventh question, which is related to encouraging or approaching students to work in these businesses, most of the interviewees are very ready to offer employment to young people who are interested in developing their careers in these profiles.

The eighth question was a question related to the most difficult period to be an entrepreneur. Most of the answers state that the most difficult period is the beginning period when everything is unknown and there is a high level of mistrust and fear of failure.

The ninth question about what attributes an entrepreneur should have in order to be successful in the labor market has resulted in different answers as different people have subjective opinions about the qualities that you must possess to be successful in business but they all answered that above all courage and leadership skills are mostly needed.

The tenth question is related to the experience gained and the lessons learned during the years of business entrepreneurship. The answers of entrepreneurs from Albania and Kosovo have been more or less similar as they have reached a common point that with work, dedication and patience they can manage to achieve everything and overcome every difficulty even in profiles that present certain specifics and as a result some additional risks that you have to face.

The eleventh question is one of the most important questions as it is related to the possibility of securing or finding sources of financing in order to start a business, and it is understood that both for entrepreneurs from Albania and for those from Kosovo, it has not been easy to secure financial resources and the main difficulty and obstacle for any type of entrepreneurship remains precisely the inability to secure the necessary sources of financing.



The twelfth question aims to research some indicators that determine success for a new entrepreneur in the market. Normally, this question has generated different and subjective answers, but we can agree on the fact that to be successful in a market as a new entrepreneur and especially in some areas that present other additional risks, you must maintain a stable image over time by using advertising to your advantage, you must try to maintain a stable level of sales but also of costs over time and you must have to be all the time updated to new marketing techniques in your business sector.

The thirteenth question is again a subjective question that varies according to the personal and psychological characteristics of each entrepreneur, both in Albania and in Kosovo. The question of what qualities a leader should possess to be considered successful, different entrepreneurs have been answered in different ways. but all the answers have a common denominator which means that for a leader in order to be successful above all he must be communicative as he will have to deal with many other actors in his business, flexible according to various economic, political, atmospheric, situations which change in a continuous way and forward-looking manner as it must be constantly focused towards the future.

The penultimate or fourteenth question is a perceptive question about the key to success or the key determining factor in the success of entrepreneurship and once again the logic of the answers received has converged on some features such as work, persistence, patience, good planning and control, work in a group etc.

The last question or the fifteenth question is also an important question because in an unstable political and economic situation as in Albania and Kosovo, it remains important to know if the state will support these types of enterprises and if more tax facilities are really needed , financial support, subsidy, credit with favorable conditions, etc.

At the end of this analysis of the fifteen questions posed to entrepreneurs active in the fields of Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine and Food in Albania and Kosovo, we can conclude that the situation of this nature of entrepreneurship both in Albania and Kosovo is satisfactory but still insufficient as difficulties are noted in financing, in the promotion of the product or service



offered, in reaching the final consumer or even in the level of protection from difficult situations and specific risks for this sector. These difficulties and obstacles can discourage young people who want to have their own entrepreneurship tomorrow in these sectors to take this step. Therefore, it is necessary that both state bodies and various non-governmental associations with a focus on agriculture, food or veterinary services, undertake initiatives and measures in maximum support of enterprises of this nature.

Conclusions

This Report gives useful brainstorming ideas for the future proposed curricula on the VET education in Albania and Kosovo. The report has to come up with some qualitative results and recommendations.

The capacity of regions to support learning and innovation processes is a key source of competitive advantages, a multiplier of economic activity, employment and development (OCDE,2017). Within the EU integration process and the access to funding of activities in rural areas, public actors are aware of this new concept linking innovation with rural areas. Although this is a quite new concept in Albania the need to be in line with other countries is a necessity.

Strengthening rural institutions and developing organizational capacity at local and national level are therefore central to the development and management of the new rural-urban spaces emerged from the new territorial reform. The need for cooperation among institutions is considered as important and high proficiency on rural institutions is required in order to cope with other activities in rural areas dealing also with innovation, environment and tourism.

The distribution of skills is rather close between profiles. This confirms that the set of profiles does refer to the same family of skills and competencies and those professionals should be able to move from one profile to the other all along their career.

The interviews show that still the public administration has an urgent need to improve the soft skills.



In general, the condition and quality of these schools are not at the right level, because these schools face many challenges, such as lack of proper cooperation with businesses, insufficient adaptation to the labour market, insufficient infrastructure and equipment, lack of laboratories and workshops, lack of practical teaching and learning and on-the-job training, lack of teaching materials and lack of career guidance and counselling services in the preliminary school cycle.

Currently, a significant number of qualifications offered in vocational schools are not based on labour market needs, the occupational standards are missing for many profiles, curriculum for general subjects is not updated and decisions to open certain profiles are made without any proper analysis of labour market needs. The new curricula approval and implementation commencement was pushed with the idea to initially finalize and approve the Core Curriculum for VET, intensify the process of drafting occupational standards and on that basis unify the approach and structure of curricula designed for professional profiles, as well as to ensure the interconnection with the labour market needs.

Teaching is mainly theoretical whereas opportunities for teachers' professional development in improving pedagogical skills and conducting practical teaching and learning are limited. Even the path of professional preparation of (pre-service) teachers for VET is not clear.

Another VET challenge remains in conducting practical teaching and learning (at school and in workplace). Workshops for many profiles are missing, even if they exist, they cannot be fully utilized due to outdated (or lack of) equipment, lack of raw material (consumables) needed for practical training and insufficient preparation of instructors for conducting practical teaching and learning. On the other hand, dual education piloting has not started yet. The challenges in delivering work-based learning are different, both on the part of schools and employers. Despite the willingness of employers to admit students for work-based learning, they generally do not have capacity to accommodate a large number of students.



Recommendations

The multidisciplinary of territory management raises the need to adapt the education programmes to the upcoming issues because of the Acquis , Albania EU integration, and the new territorial reform.

The access to EU funds and the possibility to absorb need more training on EU policies, project writing skills, innovation and soft skills.

Information on the impacts of policies is a primary resource for policy makers for this reasons impact analysis and quantitative methods are important skills to be included in the VET training programmes.

VET education needs not only to specify the skills of each profession, but as well the competencies. The curricula proposed must take in consideration this element since it is crucial for the VET curricula improvement. This element is absent in both countries.



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