



# PROJECT FACTSHEET

Albania November 2012

## “FROM SCHOOL TO WORK” – VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR ALBANIA’S YOUTH



*Students in thermo-hydraulics at the “Beqir Cela” school in Dürres exchanging with their instructor (2012).*

The AlbVET project supports efforts by the Albanian government to reform the Albanian vocational education and training system and to make vocational training more responsive to the needs of the labour market. Theoretical understanding is enriched by promoting practice-oriented learning. Among other things, public and private actors are encouraged to offer traineeships and to participate in vocational training projects for young people.

### **Collapse and reform of the vocational education and training system in Albania**

The Albanian government has been working for over 10 years to modernize the country’s Vocational Education and Training (VET) system and bring it into line with European standards. Following the regime change in the 1990s, the courses and programmes offered by Albania’s vocational training system were no longer able to provide the skills and qualifications needed on the newly restructured labour market.

### **Good results in the past as a model for the future**

The SDC supports efforts to reform vocational training opportunities in Albania with various vocational and continuing education projects. In past years these comprised modernized occupational training courses in 21 occupational categories, which were offered in various regions. The results achieved were excellent. In addition, Switzerland played an active part in efforts to renovate schools and modernize the curricula, as well as in providing teacher training for vocational schools.

The main emphasis today is on support for the formal reform of vocational education and training, individual coaching programmes for disadvantaged groups, and “Partnerships for Learning” between the private sector, local authorities, and private skills training providers. Within the framework of these Partnerships, it is possible, among other things, to create traineeships for young job seekers.

### **The Albanian vocational education and training system (VET) and the AlbVET project in detail**

In 2009 the Albanian government set the foundations for a more practice-oriented vocational training system. VET education was given a modular structure based on a formula of 2 + 1 + 1: Two years of theoretical and practical training are followed by a one-year traineeship. The training modules can be completed in two or three years. Students who complete a fourth year are eligible to enter university. Switzerland has been supporting Albania in these efforts with the AlbVET project.

“Practice-oriented learning is a new chance, for which we are grateful to AlbVET,” says Agim Jakupi, Director of the Karl Gega School in Tirana, one of ten partner schools. “Our vocational trainees get satisfaction out of the practical courses (...) and from the prospect of working for a company in their third year. We are all very excited to see them growing into qualified pro-

professionals in their chosen occupations thanks to this new method”.

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### **Success stories for vocational training schools and trainees**

So far, Switzerland has been able to reach 40 percent of the occupational training sector in Albania with its projects. One indication of the good reputation that the schools supported by Switzerland enjoy among the population is their high enrolment figures. Today, some 20 percent of the of the country's 1000 vocational trainees enrol each year in practice-oriented vocational schools, and some 70 percent of the graduates from those schools are able to find jobs when they finish. This is a very high figure compared to the overall national average of 20 percent for young people who find jobs after completing vocational training. In addition, 35 out of 88 participants with special needs (ethnic minorities and others) were able to find jobs after completing an 18-month individual coaching programme.

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### **What's next?**

In the current project phase, the adaptation of vocational training to demand on the labour market and stronger private sector involvement in practical training steps are the central focus. In the coming years, the Albanian government will therefore be undertaking a fundamental reform of vocational and continuing education in the field of information technology. In addition, with SDC support, a substantial increase in the number of traineeship openings is planned, and opportunities for 400 individual coaching programmes are to be created. At the same time, the SDC continues to support the nationwide reform and cooperation between all stakeholders by means of targeted public relations work.

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### **The project in brief**

#### **Corporate Domain**

SDC – Swiss Cooperation with Eastern Europe

#### **Theme**

Employment and income  
Youth employment

#### **Country/region**

Albania

#### **Partners**

*Implementation partners:*

Swisscontact

10 vocational schools and three vocational training centres

4 Albanian partner NGOs

Regional and local business organizations

*Institutional partners:*

Ministry of Education and Sciences, Albania

Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Albania

National Agency for Vocational Education, Training and Qualification (NVETAQ)

National Employment Service (NES)

#### **Starting point / background information**

The VET system has the potential to move the Albanian economy forward and help individuals enter the labour market, reducing poverty and fostering Albania's integration into the European Union.

The existing system urgently needs reform, however, and new ways must be found to enhance cooperation with the private sector. Successful cooperation between the actors at all levels is a crucial element in improving the quality of the system.

#### **Project goals**

The Albanian vocational education and training system is to be adapted to the needs of the labour market and brought into line with European standards. The aim of the AlbVET project is to support the national reform process in selected key areas.

#### **Target groups**

The target group for the project is young men and women between the ages of 16 and 25. In addition, teachers at thermo-hydraulics and IT schools, coaches, and 400 individuals with special needs will be among the beneficiaries of the project.

#### **Costs**

CHF 3,200,370

#### **Duration**

Phase 3 01.07.2009 – 30.06.2014