



**EU.EM.NET: European systematic approach for employers' engagement to
anticipate skills requirements**

and support quality assurance (QA) in VET

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EU.EM.NET Core Methodology Testing Report

WP4

Country: Macedonia

Partner: Centre for Economic and Social Development – CESOR

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Section 1: Organisation

1.1 Selection of the invited

The selection was made through a process of project stakeholders and beneficiary analysis. The process of selection aimed to include stakeholders' from various society sectors, i.e. public and private representatives, as well as international entities dealing with the issue of VET and skills.

For that purpose several meetings were conducted with the following organizations:

- VET Centre, sector for Tourism and Hospitality - public institution managing the VET modules in the curricula of the VET schools connecting the world of business, the employers and the VET programs
- Ministry of Education and Science
- Employment Service Agency
- Chamber for tourism
- Economic Chamber of Macedonia
- VET tourism and hospitality high school
- British Council
- Individual employers owners of hotels, restaurants and tourist agencies

1.2 Preparation

The preparation phase consisted in making individual meetings with the representatives from the above identified institutions. The aim of the meetings was to introduce the objectives of the EU EM NET project, to find synergies with their current and/or planned activities with the stakeholders and beneficiaries. Thus most convergence between the project aims was detected with the efforts deployed by the Ministry of Education and Science engaged in the harmonization of the NQF with EQF, facing challenges with the establishment of the Sector Councils.

1.3 Venue, logistics, duration

Venue: Economic Chamber of Macedonia

Type of the workshop: 3-hours

Start: June 18th 2015, 10:00 h

Finish: June 18th 2015, 14:00 h

1.3 Attendance statistics

	employers/employers representatives	VET providers/schools	policy makers Public Bodies	total
invited	30	1	5	36
responded	3	1	4	8
attended	1	1	4	6

Section 2: Content

2.1. Key question(s)

How to engage the employers into the process of formation of the skills of the students in accordance with the labor market demands?

2.2 Critique phase

In the critique phase the method of brainstorming was used and critique clustering. The session lasted 80 minutes.

Critic Clusters:

1. Challenges on the employers and employers representatives side

- Employers do not see benefits of being included/engaged in the process of formation of the skills of the students
- Do not trust the education system
- Do not have themselves awareness and sufficient level of education
- Do not have long term vision related to the human resources
- The support organizations especially in the Tourism and Hospitality sector, i.e. chambers, employers, professional associations are too diversified thus it leads into lack of efficient representation
- There are no mentors, no feedback, no sustainability for the practical training

2. Challenges on the public sector side

- The policy makers and trainings curricula lack long term vision
- There is not any strategy nor support for promotion of the T and H sector
- There is no proper entry policy in the VET high schools according to the labor market needs
- The communication between the public institutions and the employers is missing or if there it finalizes with not constructive epilogues, i.e. disrespect of the voice of the employers
- There is lack of flexibility and responsively for the introduction of new skills into the education system
- There is not a mentor link between the education system and the labor market

2.3 Phantasy phase

In the Phantasy phase the method of brainstorming was used and fascinating ideas clustering. The session lasted 60 minutes

1. For the employers and their associations

- Centralize the representation of the tourism and hospitality employers though a process of dialogue and mutual agreement that will take into consideration especially the small and medium employers
- The employers should have direct access to the database (a shorten version taking into account the personal data principles) of the available unemployed workforce

- The employers must shape up their service more appropriately in line with the clients demands, taking especially into account the principle of openness, professionalism and creativity
- Develop skills for recognizing the needs of the clients through creativity and openness

2. For the public sector stakeholders

- Design and promote Tourism and Hospitality carrier paths
- Train, form well qualified mentors – Twinning project for mentors
- Differentiate teachers profiles to those that teach programs leading to skills development (practical classes) and employ only those that have strictly defined experience and to those that teach theoretical classes for whom the experience would not be critical condition
- Open up the curricula for creativity, by introducing contents and exercises that will boost creativity among the students, letting the education process as flow between the teachers and students, to eliminate the authoritarian approach and create synergy
- Stimulate self learning
- In order to face the shortcomings and disinterest of the employers and their associations to formalize the role of the Tourism and Hospitality VET schools as **central communication unit** – cell linking both the employers (input to the programs) on one side and the public institutions, i.e. primarily the Bureau for Education Development and the VET Centre, as well as the Ministry of Education and Science
- Develop skills to recognize the needs of the employers though creativity and openness

2.4 Realisation phase

The realization phase lasted 40 minutes. The participants' number allowed to work as plenum group. In the interest of the time the participants have selected two major points as most interesting to develop demands out of the fascinating ideas and draw short project proposals:

Differentiate teachers' profiles to those that teach programs leading to skills development (practical classes) and employ only those that have strictly defined experience and to those that teach theoretical classes for whom the experience would not be critical condition

Activity plan

3. Make analysis of the current criteria relevant for the teachers in the VET schools
4. Make comparative analysis with EU countries (optional)
5. Coordinate consultation process among identified stakeholders
6. Draft recommendation for essential adaptation
7. Draft Proposal for changes in the bylaw acts
8. Manage adoption process

In order to face the shortcomings and disinterest of the employers and their associations to formalize the role of the Tourism and Hospitality VET schools as communication unit for skills upgrade – cell linking both the employers (input to the programs) on one side and the public institutions, i.e. primarily the Bureau for Education Development and the VET Centre, as well as the Ministry of Education and Science

Aim to increase the confidence in the formal education system, to facilitate the process of Sector Councils creation and to assure constant flow of information and communication between the private sector and the creators of the programs by shifting the communication from the employers' organizations to the VET schools, whereas T&H schools would be pilot.

Action plan (not exhaustive):

1. Assessment of the needs for coordination of the process and establishment of **communication unit for skills upgrade** within the VET school
2. Assessment of current capacities for coordination of the process
3. Assessment of needs for training and or new staff for the functioning of the unit ...

Section 3: Feedback

3.1 Feedback report/analysis

Almost without exclusion, the participants in the workshop find it extremely useful, there are no negative comments, but, absolutely positively, were however shared some recommendations. What the participants evaluate most is the direct contact, and their recommendation is such an event to be turned into tradition.

3.2 Partner's (organiser's) experience

We started the organization of the event three months later, in order to receive better result, and in order everything to be well organized. First, we prepared the materials necessary for workshop, then we carefully checked our employer network, and decided who had to be chosen to be invited, as we insisted many times at some places, giving our invitation several times. As we have already mentioned above, basically, the connection was done by our teachers at the places, here the practice has been performed. After that we arranged venue for realization of the event, and we thought about the catering, which, besides its presence at the event itself, should be our school's visit card. We have to say, we were very eager and precise in that effort of ours. The scenario was though in details, weeks before the event itself.

At the event, we invited not only the team under the project, but our teachers in specialized subjects, who to be among the participants, helping them to be calm, to feel themselves welcomed, and to give the best. The result was one kind, cozy and very useful event.

3.3 Any other information

Section 4: Recommendations

4.1 Recommendations towards the Core Methodology/ Future Skills Workshop

4.2 Recommendations for action in the field of future skills needs

Section 5: Summary

Section 6: Annexes

List of participants (copy/scan is enough)

Invitation

Photographs



