



## An Inclusive Education Policy Oriented to Profession is the Key to the Development of Albanian Economy (Historical Trends in Vocational School 2008-2018)

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### Abstract

Education is a key element in the social and economic life of society. The strength of quality education results in two levels: the level of personal development of the citizen and the level of development of society. On a personal level, education enables people to acquire knowledge, skills and to form critical thinking approaches and make choices about improving the quality of their lives. At the societal level, education is a strategic sector on which the overall development of Albania depends. As education is of strategic importance to the development of society, the state treats it as an essential issue and seeks to control or at least influence it. In this case, the relationship between education and the state is characterized by a certain degree of inclusiveness, in particular, the decentralization of control over inclusive and vocational-oriented education as the key to success in the development of Albanian economy. Building an effective, professionally oriented education system requires: first, it is clear who is responsible for it. There is a need for a competent team of public administration staff who remains in office even after changing governments or ministers to enable continuity in the sustainable implementation of education policies; second, a clear or strategic plan is needed (for the required number of schools each city should have, what subjects should be offered in line with market demands at national, regional and local level; what curriculum, teaching materials and equipment technical requirements; which teachers and what training do they have in accordance with the admission criteria in the schools and the graduation criteria); third, it is important that students do not choose the vocational school system as a simple alternative to other schools for admission to the university (which may be considered a waste of money); fourth, ongoing coordination between the government and donors involved at the operational and practical levels; fifth, sustainable cooperation with private sector enterprises / companies and lastly, continuity over the years!

**Keywords:** Comprehensive Education, Vocational Education, Continuing Orientation, Private Sector, Labor Market

### 1. Introduction

School orientation\* is a series of processes designed to enable individuals to make informed choices and transitions for learning and work. In the context of inclusive lifelong learning, "orientation refers to a range of activities that enable citizens of all ages and at every stage of their lives to identify their capacities, competencies and interests, to make education, training and to manage the paths of individual life in education, work and other areas in which capacities and

\* In some EU documents, the term school orientation is used instead of career guidance. After 2004, the lifelong phrase incorporated the traditional expression career guidance. The term "lifelong career guidance" is used today in most EU guidance policy documents. Career orientation for lifelong learning is not a "new" activity; with the addition of the lifelong phrase pre-term "career guidance", the European Commission wants to emphasize career guidance services should be available to individuals throughout their lives. Lifelong career orientation was also closely linked to the conception of inclusive education. (Saša Niklanovića dhe Eralda Nikshiqi, *Edukimi për karrierën (Libër i mësuësit)*, kontraktuar nga Deutschellschaft für International Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Tiranë: "SHBLU", 2011, f. 8.) [Saša Niklanovića dhe Eralda Nikshiqi, *Career Education (Teacher's Book)*, contracted by Deutschellschaft für International Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Tirana: "SHBLU", 2011, p. 8.]

competencies are taught and used"<sup>1</sup>.

School orientation (career orientation) refers to orientation activities - as an integral part of the right to education, which provides the individual (pupil / student) with counseling, guidance and information on study programs and professions, creating the opportunity to choose education most suitable according to his tastes, aspirations and abilities.

Orientation is positive when it takes into account the skills, social conditions of students and respects their individuality. Aiming at the construction and realization by each student of a project for his future, the orientation allows him to choose the appropriate education for this project. This choice is a very important moment, because it is based on the relationship between the interests of the student. Being a voluntary decision of theirs, it allows the confirmation of the project of the users (pupils / students), but only when the chosen education is done in accordance with the skills.

Precisely to make an optimal choice "the school orientation service should intervene as a specialized service in the framework of comprehensive education policies oriented towards profession and adequate. He is the "scales" of pupils / students' abilities, the defender of equality within the orientation procedures, far from the influences of forces that undermine democratic principles in education"<sup>2</sup>. Hence the neutral, objective character.

According to UNICEF (2015), "inclusive education is a response to the needs of students and their lives. Therefore, inclusive education is not about teaching students to cope with the non-responsive education system. Inclusive, career-oriented education, depending on the labor market, is the means by which teaching methods, curricula, staff support and pedagogy are adapted to learning for all pupils, including those students who do not have traditional systems have been able to cover them"<sup>3</sup>.

Education for all has always been an integral part of the Sustainable Development Agenda, but has gained more attention in the **Sustainable Development Agenda 2030**, where the fourth goal refers to: "Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, and promoting of lifelong learning opportunities for all"<sup>4</sup>.

In many developed countries of the West, inclusive vocational education has naturally taken its place in the school system, as a result of the ever-increasing demands of society, in terms of complex development, but also as a result of progressive development. of the education system in increasing the rate of consideration of the requests of users (clients) of educational services. In these countries the process of learning in school is seen as the most important process of formation of individualities, given that their formation would be left half if the educational aspect was slightly affected. Therefore, comprehensive education towards the profession, depending on the labor market, is not seen only as an organizational school orientation for the realization of learning objectives, but primarily as a pedagogical-educational necessity.

Research in this area by University of Amsterdam researchers Marjolein Zee and Helma M. Koomen has noted that, "for the creation of a democratic, profession-oriented school system, it is very important to understand the links between orientation and evaluation." of students"<sup>5</sup>.

Other scholars in the field of orientation such as the Americans Robert M. Klassen, Virginia M. Tze, Shea M. Betts and Kelly A. Gordon, have insisted that "inclusive education towards the profession is of a polyhedral nature: in educational terms it is expressed in the fact that through the necessary and continuous pedagogical assistance, the

<sup>1</sup> United National International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), *Arsimi Gjithëpërfshirës: Vizioni, Teoria, dhe Konceptet (më tej: Arsimi Gjithëpërfshirës ...)*, Tiranë, 2015, f. 7. Material i publikuar në web site: <http://www.inclusive-education.org/basic-page/unicef-trainer-trainers-modules-inclusive-education> (I aksesueshëm në shkurt 2016). [United National International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), *Inclusive Education: Vision, Theory, and Concepts (hereinafter: Inclusive Education ...)*, Tirana, 2015, p. 7. Material published on the web site: <http://www.inclusive-education.org/basic-page/unicef-trainer-trainers-modules-inclusive-education> (Accessible in February 2016).]

<sup>2</sup> Edmond Lulja, *Mendime për Reformën në Arsim*, Tiranë: "Filara", 2009, f. 110.

[Edmond Lulja, *Thoughts on Education Reform*, Tirana: "Filara", 2009, p. 110.]

<sup>3</sup> UNICEF, *Arsimi Gjithëpërfshirës ...*, f. 8.

[UNICEF, *Inclusive Education ...*, p. 8.]

<sup>4</sup> *Kombet e Bashkuara* (2015). *Të transformojmë botën tonë: Agjenda për Zhvillimin e Qëndrueshëm 2030, përkthim zyrtar*, Tiranë, 2015, f. 16-17. Material i publikuar në web site: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld/publication> (I aksesueshëm në dhjetor 2015).

[United Nations (2015). *Transforming our world: The Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030, official translation*, Tirana, 2015, pp. 16-17. Material published on the web site: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld/publication> (Accessible in December 2015).]

<sup>5</sup> Marjolein Zee and Helma M. Koomen, "Teacher Self-Efficacy and Its Effects on Classroom Processes, Student Academic Adjustment, and Teacher Well-Being: A Synthesis of 40 Years of Research", in: *Review Educational Research*, Vol. 8 (4) / 2016, Published by Founded American Educational Research Association, Eashington DC, pp. 981-1015.

student manages to choose his own career in accordance with the skills and interests, taking into account the social environment from which he comes; in the psycho-social aspect is expressed in the involvement of school psychologists in the service of orientation, giving a psychological perspective of a student's cognitive abilities, emotional development and the degree of his socialism as well as giving strategic recommendations to facilitate his growth individual; finally, professionally it concerns the professional counseling of young people to help them consciously choose the type of education for their future professional career<sup>6</sup>.

In the countries of Southeast Europe, the problem of inclusive education towards the profession has long been considered a secondary problem, because in most of these countries education reform has not found its full position within the new political and economic system. . However, even in these countries the need for school orientation services is increasingly understood, as an important element of democratization of education and transition to a market economy.

The Albanian school entered the path of change immediately after the overthrow of the totalitarian system, undergoing in the first decades an in-depth review of reform and content. The changes would serve primarily for the normalization of the Albanian education system through the creation of necessary conditions for the normal development of the learning process and the optimization of results for each student, class, school, each level of education and the system as a whole<sup>7</sup>; for changes in school curricula, especially in social subjects, to free them from Marxist-Leninist indoctrination; to build an authentic model of school autonomy, as an effective approach that mobilizes the participation of teachers, school leaders, the community and education specialists to improve the quality of teaching and learning; for the redesign of curricula and institutions of higher education (HEIs) according to the Bologna process<sup>8</sup>; to create the necessary conditions to guarantee academic freedom, as one of the fundamental issues of universities, not only in Albania, but everywhere in the world; for the opening of private institutions at all levels of education; etc., which coincide with the drafting of the legal framework according to international standards, which laid the foundations for the development and consolidation of a democratic and European education. The government's annual decisions to establish and organize education were also part of this process. The signing of a series of conventions that the Albanian state would ratify in this period had a positive impact.

Part of these changes would be the teachers, who before the 90s were seen as conductors of the ideological line of the ruling party and were completely detached and isolated from contemporary developments in the field of pedagogy, psychology and teaching curricula at the level world.

But in addition to the general phenomena, in the life experience of our country appeared many special features related to massification. These features were ultimately conditioned by concrete historical circumstances, by tradition, and by many other political and social factors.

The unequal level of education, inherited and the large discrepancy between the orientation of young people in education and vocational training at the local level and the structure of local economies - defined the wider range of problems for Albania and, consequently, brought problems in the education system and development. which were characterized by: "a large number of legal and sub-legal regulations, without vision and often unenforceable, unimplemented or unchecked; lack of a clear labor market-oriented development strategy or policy; from a distorted and unharmonized development between the public and the private system, especially in HEIs (expressed in their large number, the distribution of study programs and that of student<sup>9</sup>; misorientation of students through the current system of

6 Robert M. Klassen, Virginia M. Tze, Shea M. Betts and Kelly A. Gordon, "Teacher Efficacy Research 1998-2009: Signs of Progress or Unfulfilled Promise?", in: *Educational Psychology Review*, No. 23 (1) / 2011, Published by Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Neë York, 2011, pp. 21-43.

7 *Revista Pedagogjike*, Nr. 1-2/2000, botim i Institutit të Studimeve Pedagogjike (ISP), Tiranë, 2000, f. 62-63.

[*Pedagogical Magazine*, No. 1-2 / 2000, Publication of the Institute of Pedagogical Studies (ISP), Tirana, 2000, pp. 62-63.]

\* The aim of the Bologna Process is to create, by 2010, the European Higher Education Area, in which students have the opportunity to choose between a large and transparent number of courses high quality as well as benefit from efficient recognition procedures. Bologna Declaration of June 1999 set in motion a series of reforms needed to make higher education in Europe more compatible, comparable, more competitive and more attractive to Europeans, as well as to students and scholars from other continents. The three priorities of the Bologna Process are: the inclusion of the three-cycle system (i.e. diploma / master / doctorate), quality assurance, as well as the recognition of qualifications and periods of study. The Ministerial Meeting in London, in 2007, approved the establishment of a Register of European Quality Assurance Agencies. (Taken from: *Bolonja në 7 hapa - Përmbledhje e dokumenteve kryesor të procesit të Bolonjës, Fondacioni "Shoqëria e Hapur për Shqipërinë" SOROS, Tiranë: "Mësonjëtorja", 2044, f. 12-17*) [Taken from: *Bologna in 7 steps - Summary of the Main Documents of the Bologna Process, Foundation "Open Society for Albania" SOROS, Tirana: "Mësonjëtorja", 2044, pp. 12-17.*]

<sup>9</sup> Until 2014, the Albanian system of higher education was presented: A total of 59 Higher Education Institutions, 15 public and 44 private. Among them, 19 enjoy the status of university (12 public and 7 private), 5 the status of college (all private), 26 high schools (all

the State Matura\*\* , where the compatibility between students and the studies he conducted was low "; and others.

For the conditions of Albania, increasing the quality of higher education was considered a necessity. Seen as an ongoing process, the Minister of Education and Science (MES) due to violations found by HEI-s during inspections, proposed on 04.08.2014 the revocation of licenses for 18 private HEI-s and one public and suspension of 13 other private HEI-s. The Council of Ministers, with a decision of August 6, 2014, instructed the revocation of licenses of some private HEI-s<sup>8</sup>.

Within a few months, despite the objections of the representatives of these institutions, the above-mentioned HEI-s ceased to function throughout the country. The closure of these universities does not only affect the HEI-s whose licenses have been revoked, but also affects the students and the families of the students who, due to a drastic reform, have to reject several years of investment. The way the decision was made presented the situation realistically as a pyramid in the education system and what caused it was a further loss for the students (in this case, the clients), who had made an unhealthy and unstudied investment. The beneficiaries in this case were other private HEI-s, which had an influx of enrollments from student transfers. Directly or indirectly we are dealing with the concentration of the demand for studies in private HEI-s in a smaller number of private universities that offer this service in Albania currently. These structures, at present, can already be considered an Oligopoly Market, which does not have the necessary capacity to withstand the influx of students and the influx of "parents" who are forced to seek a degree and not a profession.

Times have changed and any parallelism with educational developments in the time span of 30 years after the overthrow of the totalitarian regime is "worthless". Today comparisons must be made with concrete reality. This reality is multifaceted, technological, cultural, traditional and above all it is the reality of our development needs, the reality of the labor market. It is and should be the latter, the reason why the education system must be reviewed in a revolutionary way. The needs of this market should go almost in parallel with the reformulation of the curricula of our education system, but it should also go almost in parallel with the reformulation of our education system itself. But to achieve this, it

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private), 8 academies (2 public and 6 private), 1 institute (public and 6 private) Number of programs offered by public HEIs and more by private HEIs. Divided according to the level of study are: about 650 Bachelor programs, about 250 Professional Masters, about 350 Scientific Masters, and about 100 third cycle programs Doctorate and long-term specializations ". (Taken from: Komisioni për Arsimin e Lartë dhe Kërkimin Shkencor (KALKSH), Raporti përfundimtar për reformimin e arsimit të lartë dhe kërkimit shkencor (hereinafter: Raporti përfundimtar ...), botim i Komisionit për Arsimin e Lartë dhe Kërkimin Shkencor i krijuar nga Kryeministri Edi Rama dhe i drejtuar nga Dr. Arjan Gjonça, Tiranë, Korrik 2014, f. 12.) [Committee on Higher Education and Scientific Research (KALKSH), Final Report on the Reform of Higher Education and Scientific Research (hereinafter: Final Report ...), Publication of the Committee on Higher Education and Scientific Research Established by Prime Minister Edi Rama and led by Dr. Arjan Gjonça, Tirana, July 2014, p. 12.]

\*\* The State Matura is a system recently established in connection with the final exams of students (17, 18 or 19 years old) at the end of high school. This is applied in some countries, in 2005 it was created in Albania as a project which categorizes students according to values. All graduates who have passed the three / four years of high school, are subject to State Matura exams, which are divided into: compulsory exams and elective exams. Compulsory exams include: Albanian language and literature, Mathematics, Foreign language. Elective exams are chosen by the graduate / candidate according to the list approved by the KPA, provided that their number is two and the amount of credits is at least 8. Exams for all high schools can be selected from the subject list: Language Foreign, Advanced Literature, Advanced Mathematics, Nuclear Chemistry, Advanced Chemistry, Nuclear Physics Advanced Physics, Nuclear Biology, Advanced Biology, Nuclear History, Advanced History, Nuclear Geography, Advanced Geography, Nuclear Economics, Economics Advanced, Core Technology, Advanced Technology, Citizenship, Psychology, Philosophy, Sociology. However, for the exams only for art schools can be selected: Music History, Art History, Ballet History. The graduate can not choose at the same time the core and advanced level of a subject, excluding the subjects Albanian Language and Literature, Mathematics and Foreign Language. All exams are written. Compulsory exams take place on different days. They contain 25 questions (13 with rotation and 12 with reasoning) and last 2 hours and 30 minutes, while the elective exams take place in one day, contain 20 questions (10 with rotation and 10 with reasoning) and last 3 hours. The graduate is called a passer when he manages to get 20% of the points. Every graduate who successfully passes the elective and compulsory exams is provided with a diploma. (Taken from: Fletore Zyrtare e Republikës së Shqipërisë , Nr. 151, 20 gusht 2015, Tiranë: "Shtypshkronja e Qendrës së Publikimeve Zyrtare", 2015, f. 11070-11073. Udhëzimi i Ministrisë së Arsimit dhe Sportit Nr. 1, datë 12.01.2015 "Për zhvillimin e provimeve të Maturës Shtetërore 2015, Sesiioni i dytë", Material i botuar në faqen Web site: www.qpz.gov.al) [Official Journal of the Republic of Albania, No. 151, 20 August 2015, Tirana: "Printing House of the Center for Official Publications", 2015, pp. 11070-11073. Instruction of the Ministry of Education and Sports No. 1, dated 12.01.2015 "On the development of the State Matura exams 2015, the second session", Material published on the website: www.qpz.gov.al]

8 Fletore Zyrtare e Republikës së Shqipërisë, Nr. 123, 7 gusht 2014, Tiranë: "Shtypshkronja e Qendrës së Publikimeve Zyrtare", 2014, f. 5687-5688. Vendimi i Këshillit të Ministrave Nr. 539, datë 6.8.2014 "Për heqjen e licencës disa institucioneve private të arsimit të lartë".

[Official Journal of the Republic of Albania, No. 123, 7 August 2014, Tirana: "Printing House of the Center for Official Publications", 2014, pp. 5687-5688. Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 539, dated 6.8.2014 "On revoking the license of some private institutions of higher education".]

becomes necessary to study the needs for human resources of the country, in accordance with development strategies and the study of flexible forms of inclusive education system oriented towards the profession, in order to meet the needs of the labor market. Of course, this requires the opinion of everyone who has the ability, but also the desire to contribute to such an important issue for the country. The system of inclusive education oriented towards the profession is the one that most obviously shocks and tempts us in these debates. More specifically, we want to say that the development of a whole system for young people learning for Albania is more than urgent

The analytical study of post-communist educational developments allows us to confirm the fact that the challenges of educational and state policies are twofold. First, policies must make it possible for all young people to engage in vocational or higher education, while ensuring that they acquire the competencies required by the labor market. Second, policies must serve the people employed, ensuring that they have opportunities for further development throughout their careers.

In this context, education in general and vocational education (VET) in particular, are subject to profound political, economic and social transformations. The AP system, as part of flexible inclusive education schemes, carries with it a considerable weight of the changes that have taken place and are expected to take place.

Vocational education, despite not being a complete link in our education system, should not be seen as a means to achieve a valid qualification for employment, but as an added value of inclusive, career-oriented education, whose mission is development full of the personality of the individual and his successful integration in a constantly evolving society, through the exchange of values, the transmission of cultural heritage, the growth of self-confidence, etc.

Of particular importance is the knowledge of the past, present and future of vocational education, its most important problems in these time spaces, illustrated with various statistics and documents - these are the subject of this scientific paper.

## 2. A Brief Historical Overview of Vocational Education in Albania

In the second half of the century. XIX and at the beginning of the century. XX we have a strong development of productive forces, science, technique and technology. At this time, in order to speed up the production processes, many jobs were created and workers with professional knowledge and especially with limited skills and practical skills were required for the operations to be carried out in the respective workplaces.

According to researchers Pajtim Bejtja and Alqi Mustafaj, "the practice of division of labor coincided with the need for a significant increase in production and highlighted the importance of preparing specialized workers with narrow but accurate, and especially safe, qualifications. Every worker had to be able to perform only one work operation, but with a very high accuracy, with maximum safety and in a record time. He should also be able to constantly check the quality of his work, in order to avoid defects and scarcity and limit the need for technical control. In addition, the transfer of workers to other countries should be done without losing much time to retrain or increase their qualifications"<sup>9</sup>.

In the documents of the time these above-mentioned objectives are treated as a problem of special importance, especially "with the way of learning and mastering the subjects, organizing work lessons for knowledge of the technique as well as creating clear concepts for education of work - which were considered the basis of polytechnic education"<sup>10</sup>.

The distinguishing feature of this system was the connection of natural and social subjects with practice; increasing handicraft hours in school curricula; setting up workshops, household cabinets - all with the aim of *strengthening work education and gaining job skills*.

In the western world the effect of the spirit that arose for polytechnic education in the last decade of the century. XIX, were felt in the preparation of the *movement for the systematization of vocational training and polytechnic education* or otherwise known in pedagogical currents as the "*work school*" *movement*<sup>11</sup>. Thus begins a practice, which would deepen more and more, whenever it is the case for reforms in polytechnic education - closely related to the orientations that define the main lines for the systematization of vocational training, depending on the demand for evaluation of work lessons (practices working) and the introduction of some technical subjects (related to general culture subjects), which are supplemented with knowledge of the conditions of hygiene and safety at work. All these constituted the directions of

<sup>9</sup> P. Bejtja and A. Mustafaj, "Sistemi modular ...", f. 52.

[P. Bejtja and A. Mustafaj, "Modular system ...", p. 52.]

<sup>10</sup> Jani Sota, "Pedagogical Viewpoints and Educational Activities of George Michael Kerschensteiner", in: *Social Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (47), 2019, Albania Institute of Sociology, Tirana, 2019, f. 88.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 82.



the pedagogical current of the working school conditioned, first of all, as a reaction and opposition to the traditional (intellectual) school of learning.

A decade later, the administration of education and vocational training were involved in this movement. Private schools were the first to elaborate on the ideas of polytechnic education, and it is well known that after 1920 some of them went even further, "fragmenting teaching processes into" elementary units "(the system of modules), giving them a diploma or certificate of ability to each student who successfully completed part or all of the program involved in one or more modules. "Many private enterprises began to implement modular training systems, being aware of the importance of the technical training of their staff, as a factor for the humanization of work and, consequently, for the increase of productivity"<sup>12</sup>.

In many countries, the implementation of the vocational training and technical education system in the 1920s and 1930s was accompanied by efforts to adapt learning based on nationally defined competencies, but to a limited extent. The reason is that preconditions are needed, which were not always met, such as the proximity of an industrial, agricultural or service center, as the case may be, as well as the willingness of administrators and teachers to implement open (flexible), flexible structures and Supplements for education, training and pedagogical and professional orientation"<sup>13</sup>.

Following the developments of our school in the years 1920-1939, in the general picture of new tendencies for the theories of new pedagogy and models of modern technical schools, we can single out some elements of this school. It is understood that they were included in our pedagogical opinion, expressed in serious publications and in the pedagogical press of the time, with obvious professional values. They were involved in education platforms by prominent figures of Albanian culture. They were discussed at educational conventions, supported by senior education leaders, embodied in laws, curricula, and textbooks.

These tendencies of our school from its beginning to the end of the 30s, are related to internal and external factors, which explain that, "Albania has been more oriented from the west [...]"<sup>14</sup>. According to the well-known scholar Vedat Islami, "it is known that Albania's ties with the West were direct and indirect. Suffice it to mention that the early links with European and American culture are compounded by links through emigration from the 15th century onwards until nowadays. So are the connections created by the presence of some European and American countries, especially during and after the First World War. Meanwhile, generally those who dealt with the school with programs and textbooks, with its pedagogical orientation, were educated in developed western countries; Italy, France, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, USA, etc. They benefited in those schools not only from the solid and modern culture, but also from the models of those schools. It was natural that these models would be to their liking and easier to implement or adapt to the conditions of the Albanian school"<sup>15</sup>.

Without leaving the period, until the end of the First World War, in Albania there could be no talk of a uniform extension or physiognomy of education, especially when it comes to work schools. The Educational Congress of Lushnja that was held in 1920, gave a further impetus to educational developments in our country. The role of education in close connection with the organization and development of work for the production of material values took on great importance for the Albanian school, especially after strong democratic movements and later, with the gradual consolidation of the Albanian state under the rule of King Zog, especially in the 1930-s, when the educational situation in general began to change.

The development of domestic capital and, especially the power of foreign (mainly Italian) capital, made the economy prosper, the creation of the local handicraft industry in the city, especially that of mineral extraction. New previously unknown professions were soon introduced. As the domestic labor force was quite cheap, foreign companies were interested in qualifying it to use new technology, in order to increase work efficiency and profitability. The desire of Albanian youth to acquire new professions, as a means to increase their well-being, as well as the interests of foreign companies operating in Albania, served as the main impetus and premises for the opening of the first vocational schools.

Thus, in the early 1920s, in the structure of the education system in Albania, an important place was occupied by

<sup>12</sup> P. Bejtja and A. Mustafaj, "Sistemi modular ...", f. 52.

[P. Bejtja and A. Mustafaj, "Modular system ...", p. 52.]

<sup>13</sup> Po aty.

[Ibid.]

<sup>14</sup> Eqrem Çabej, *Shqiptarët midis Perëndimit dhe Lindjes*, Tiranë: "Çabej", 2006, f. 19.

[Eqrem Çabej, *Albanians Between West and East*, Tirana: "Çabej", 2006, p. 19.]

<sup>15</sup> Vedat Islami, *Përvijime të profilit evropian në traditën e shkollës shqiptare*, Tiranë: "ASD-Studio", 2009, f. 5-6.

[Vedat Islami, *Outlines of the European Profile in the Tradition of the Albanian School*, Tirana: "ASD-Studio", 2009, pp. 5-6.]

private vocational technical schools. In the vocational technical schools, the central place is occupied by the *Albanian Private Technical School* in Tirana, founded in 1921 by the Americans Harry T. Fulz and Charles Holingsed, which started to bear the fruits of its activity at the end of the school year 1925-1926, when it its first graduates. Based on the pedagogical theory of Harry Fultz's work, a multi-branch vocational school was created with a program initially suigeneris, in line with the socio-economic development of Albania. Then, in the school year 1926-1927, the curriculum was implemented with three grades: eight-year courses in mathematics, natural sciences, electrical, construction-architecture; six-year agriculture and pedagogy; five years for ironwork, motorist, tractor driver, driver, typographer, etc.

The *Albanian-American Institute of Kavaja* was also famous in this period, where the principles of American labor pedagogy were applied. This school started on August 8, 1925<sup>16\*</sup>. In fact, the teaching process started regularly a year later (female branch<sup>17</sup>). Its founder was Telford T. Erickson, the first American philanthropist to help Albanians in education<sup>17</sup>. According to the curriculum, the school was "lower secondary with deeply practical direction, to produce citizens of an advanced society". At first it started as a 4-year school over the fourth or fifth grade of elementary school. To give students the best opportunity to practice in the life of the Albanian community, according to the lessons of American labor pedagogy, the school (of boys) was organized in the shape of an Albanian village named "Progress". The school had its own complex of 12 buildings (dormitories, dairies, dairies, stables and barns)<sup>18</sup>. The school year<sup>18</sup> was not organized according to the classical form September-June, but according to the seasons of the year, which were in accordance with the planting, growing and harvesting of agricultural products and the breeding of livestock, which was the main direction for which this school was created.

It should be noted that the most original and interesting phenomenon of the pedagogical work of American schools in Tirana and Kavaja, was the flexibility of the curriculum, which was crowned with personal programs. These programs paved the way and enabled students who, each according to ability and will, were placed on equal terms to achieve the highest level of skills, both in theory and practice. Thus, a part of the students who excelled in theory, were able to pursue higher studies at Universities abroad, while others became distinguished masters in their voluntarily chosen profession.

The personal example of the leaders and teaching staff as well as the deserved moral and financial evaluation, an original phenomenon in the field of pedagogy, made the Technical School and that of Kavaja to create a good physiognomy related to work education. "The pedagogical work of American teachers had no Americanizing purpose, - says historian Iljaz Gogaj, - and religions practiced in Albania"<sup>19</sup>.

The work was highly praised, with the meaningful expression: "Work is the pillar of the flag"<sup>20</sup>. This was a great success in terms of applying the principles of work pedagogy according to the American model, despite the profiling of these schools, because the work offered to students in the first school year, was carried out "not by order, but by approach "not as an obligation, but as a duty; not as a heavy burden, but as an affordable, profitable activity; and not as anguish or annoyance, but as pleasure"<sup>21</sup>. The work of the students' hands, in the teaching practices, "aimed to provide

\* August 8, 1925. The first five female teachers of the Institute arrived for the first time in the port of Durrës, accompanied. According to its founder Telford T. Erickson, this date will be taken as the official founding day of the school. (Taken from: Iljaz Gogaj, *Shkolla amerikane në Shqipëri, (më tej: Shkolla amerikane ...)*, Tiranë: "Drita", 1995, f. 126.) [Taken from: Iljaz Gogaj, *American School in Albania, (hereinafter: American School ...)*, Tirana: "Drita", 1995, p. 126]

<sup>17</sup> I. Gogaj, *Shkolla amerikane ...*, f. 147.

[Iljaz Gogaj, *American School ...*, p. 147.]

<sup>18</sup> *Gazeta e Re, Nr. 188, Tiranë, 16.6.1930, f. 3.*

[*New Newspaper, No. 188, Tirana, 16.6.1930, p. 3.*]

\* The school year was divided according to the seasons of the year: winter season (December 15, January and February); spring season (March, April, May); summer season (June, July, August) and, autumn season (September, October, November). According to the principle "The farmer works in summer and rests in winter", the students of the school took a month off in winter (December 15-January 15), ten days in spring and one week in autumn. (Taken from: Afrimi, Nr. 19, Tiranë, 22.11.1928, f. 3.) [Taken from: Afrimi, No. 19, Tirana, 22.11.1928, p. 3.]

<sup>19</sup> Po aty, f. 166.

<sup>20</sup> Harry Trevly Fultz, *Shqipëria dhe Shkolla Teknike - Periudha 1921-1933 (më tej: Shqipëria dhe Shkolla Teknike ...)*, Vëllim i posaçëm, Romë, 1970, f. 16.

[Harry Trevly Fultz, *Albania and the Technical School - Period 1921-1933 (hereinafter: Albania and the Technical School ...)*, Special Volume, Roma, 1970, p. 16.]

<sup>21</sup> Grup autorësh, *Historia e arsimit dhe mendimit pedagogjik shqiptar (më tej: Historia e arsimit ...)*, Instituti i Studimeve Pedagogjike, Tiranë: "Nënë Tereza", 2003, f. 494.

[Group of authors, *History of Education and Albanian Pedagogical Thought (hereinafter: History of Education ...)*, Institute of Pedagogical Studies, Tirana: "Mother Teresa", 2003, p. 494.]

the necessary output for the local market, from which the schools covered their expenses, keeping themselves<sup>22</sup>. Importantly, teaching practices, more than in the laboratory, were successfully developed even in complex agricultural and livestock farms<sup>\*\*</sup> raised with their own funds by the schools themselves, as well as in their workshops and workshops<sup>\*\*\*</sup>.

Another school, where the principles of labor pedagogy were applied, was also the *Vocational Agricultural School of Lushnja*, the first theoretical and practical agricultural school in the area of Myzeqe. Funded by the Albanian state, it opened in 1921<sup>23</sup>. The first director of the Agricultural School was the valuable agronomist and collaborator of the newspaper "Shkumbini", Mr. Ismail Haxhi Hyseni<sup>24</sup>. In the first year of school, "60 students from all over Albania were enrolled, who will be held with the breakup of the state". Based on the documents of the time, it turns out that the school had a life full of vicissitudes, open and closed several times. Thus, it was closed in 1924 due to difficult political events<sup>25</sup> and reopened in 1928, as a result of numerous efforts made by the leaders of the prefecture of Berat, the sub-prefecture of Lushnja and the initiative of school teachers<sup>26</sup>. In the school year 1928-1929, the school staff "consisted of 6 people: the school principal, two agronomists, an agenda clerk, a farm caretaker and a warehouse clerk. The school was working again" with a three-year program and it developed classical subjects and knowledge of the nature of agriculture<sup>27</sup>. For teaching practice, in 1930, the school had 30 ha of arable land for cereals and cotton; 4 ha of horticulture and vegetables, with about 2000 vine roots; 4 ha for a 1-2 year old nursery, with 60,000 roots, about 2000 vine roots, olives, etc.; and 8 ha for meadows<sup>28</sup>.

But from the beginning of the period and beyond, the Albanian state, starting from the goal of economic development of the country and meeting the needs for staff, conceived as a priority vocational education with intellectual direction. The less expansion of secondary education, in relation to other links of the education system, in the first years seems to have been conditioned first of all by the limited opportunities of the existing school categories such as: Elbasan Normal, Korça High School, Franceskan Gymnasium and Saverian College in Shkodra - to cover the needs of the country, which were larger and more polygonal<sup>29</sup>. The policies pursued reduced the opening of intellectually oriented working high schools within the country to some extent limited the sending of school-age groups for study abroad, a phenomenon that also affects other educational institutions.

On November 8, 1924, at the initiative of the Italian government, near the building of an Italian military hospital, in the Cold Water of Vlora, was opened the Technical School with commercial direction<sup>30</sup>. This school also had its own

<sup>22</sup> Po aty. [Ibid.]

<sup>\*\*</sup> The students of the Technical School, during the school year, developed the practical agricultural and livestock activity on the farm of Lapraka with 25 ha, and in Yzberisht, with 10 ha of land, which were given free of charge by the Albanian government, but at the request of Fulc. With the introduction of advanced methods of time, with the use of advanced tools of time as well as with the quality work of teachers, very high results were achieved for the teaching of students in practice and high yields in agricultural products, livestock, poultry and apiculture. . In the territory of Lapraka farm, a nursery for fruit and non-fruit trees was established, which managed to produce 300,000 seedlings per year and 75,000 silk dolls. In 1938, the Kavaja school had 33 Jersey, Gnersey and Crossbred cows and bulls, of which 23 were dairy. Of these, schoolchildren received averages of up to 10 liters. In animal husbandry, the school was distinguished for the large number of small cattle, which went to 575 head of river breed sheep, 14 horses and saddles, 12 head of semi-white English breed pigs, 200 head of livestock chickens of Zhod Island Red. "Apart from these schools, there were also 22 beehives". (Take from: Gazeta e Re, Nr. 51, Tiranë, 3.1.1929, f. 3. See also: Laboremus, Nr. 4, Tiranë, dhjetor 1929, f. 9; H. T Fultz, Shqipëria dhe Shkolla Teknike ..., f. 118-124.) [Gazeta e Re, No. 51, Tirana, 3.1.1929, p. 3. See also: Laboremus, No. 4, Tirana, December 1929, p. 9; H. T Fultz, Albania and the Technical School ..., p. 118-124.]

<sup>23</sup> Gjoni Çuko, 80 vjetori i të parës shkollë profesionale bujqësore Lushnje 1921-2001 (më tej: 80 vjetori i të parës shkollë profesionale bujqësore ...), Lushnje: "Geal", shtator 2001, f. 3.

[Gjoni Çuko, 80th Anniversary of the First Agricultural Vocational School Lushnje 1921-2001 (hereinafter: 80th Anniversary of the First Agricultural Vocational School ...), Lushnje: "Geal", September 2001, p. 3.]

<sup>24</sup> Shkumbini, 3 qershor 1921; Shih edhe: Gj. Çuko, 80 vjetori i të parës shkollë profesionale bujqësore ..., f. 5.

[Shkumbini, June 3, 1921; See also: Gj. Çuko, 80th Anniversary of the First Agricultural Vocational School ..., p. 5.]

<sup>25</sup> Arkivi Qendror Shtetëror i Republikës së Shqipërisë (më tej: AQSH), Fondi i Ministrisë së Bujqësisë e Pyjeve (1917-1944) - No. 272, Viti (V) 1924, Dosja (D) 17, f. 123.

[Central State Archive of the Republic of Albania (hereinafter: CSARA), Fund of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (1917-1944) - (F) No. 272, Year (Y). 1924, Dossier (D). 17, pp. 123.]

<sup>26</sup> Po aty, fl. 71. [Ibid., pp. 7.]

<sup>27</sup> Po aty. [Ibid.]

<sup>28</sup> Po aty. [Ibid.]

<sup>29</sup> Po aty, fl. 401. [Ibid., pp. 401.]

<sup>30</sup> AQSH, Fondi i Ministrisë së Arsimit (1911-1944) - Nr. 195, V. 1939, D. 269, fl. 14. Scuole italiane in Albania, prima dopo l'Aprile 1939.



dormitory, taking more of the physiognomy and characteristics of the five-year Technical Institutes of Italy, but with the only difference being the use of the Albanian language in some cases and in teaching. It should be noted that in all courses (accounting, physical science, drawing, calligraphy, shorthand, typography), the curriculum was developed mainly in Italian. After 1933, the 5-year school became an 8-year school with two cycles. The first 4-year cycle, which was known as the "Business Woman" and the second cycle, the "Commercial Institute"<sup>31</sup>. The civic school program aimed to equip students with a general elementary culture, as well as with basic knowledge in the field of accounting and the student received a release certificate. The second cycle completed the program with professional subjects, which occupied 60% of the curriculum and at the end of the studies the student was provided with the relevant diploma issued by the school directorate after completing the studies<sup>32</sup>.

There are two other commercial branches of this period: one near the *Lyceum of Korça* (until 1930) and the other near the *Saverian College of Shkodra* (until 1933)<sup>33</sup>. In October 1928, the Industrial and Art School was opened in Shkodra, which functioned until April 23, 1933, the date on which this school was closed due to the implementation of the decisions of the Ministry of Education in the framework of "Ivanaj Reform"<sup>34</sup>.

On June 28, 1929, an agreement was signed between the Italian and Albanian governments for the opening of several vocational schools according to the Italian model in Albania, with Italian personnel and equipment<sup>34</sup>. Thus in the school years 1929-1932, functioned the Royal Italian Technical-Industrial Institute in Shkodra, 4-year Industrial School in Korça, 4-year Vocational School in Gjirokastra, Industrial School in Berat and Technical-Vocational School in Tirana<sup>35</sup>.

In the school year 1938-1938 Albania had 11 lower vocational schools with 2,056 students and 109 teaching staff, as well as 2 vocational secondary schools with 204 students and 16 teachers<sup>36</sup>.

After the Italian occupation and during the Second World War, in Albania there were mainly vocational schools with Italian influence, which, like other schools, functioned with great difficulty and did not evolve to the proper degree<sup>37</sup>.

It is important that the sensitivity of our school to new pedagogical ideas of work and developments of western schools, the tendency to embrace and adapt them to our conditions, reflect important phenomena of its development and Albanian pedagogical thought.

The end of the Anti-Fascist War in Albania was accompanied by revolutionary measures in the social field, brought

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[CSARA, *Fund of the Ministry of Education (1911-1944)* - No. 195, Y. 1939, D. 269, fl. 14. *Italian School in Albania, Prima Dopo l'Aprile 1939.*]

<sup>31</sup> Po aty. *Shih edhe: A. të ndryshëm, Historia e arsimit ...*, f. 498. [Ibid. See also: A. *Miscellaneous, History of Education ...*, p. 498.]

<sup>32</sup> Po aty. [Ibid.]

<sup>33</sup> AQSH, F. 195, V. 1935, D. 50, fl. 9-49. *Raporti final i shkollave t'Inspektorit s'Arsimit të Shkodrës për vjetin shkollor 1934-1935.*

[AQSH, F. 195, Y. 1935, D. 50, pp. 9-49. *Final Report of the Schools of the Education Inspectorate of Shkodra or the School Year 1934-1935.*]

\* "Ivanaj Reform" is associated with the name of Mirash Ivanaj (1891-1953), who in 1933 was appointed by King Zog to head the Minister of National Education. After the approval of the amendments of article 206 and 207 of the Statute of the Albanian State by the parliament, on 10 and 11 April 1933, the "Ivanaj Reform" was implemented with the closure of all secular and religious private schools, such as: private non-religious schools 21, Muslim clerical schools 14, Catholic clerical schools 17, Orthodox clerical schools 4, foreign schools for Albanians 19, private schools of the Greek minority 32, private schools of the Serbian minority 2, private schools of the Vlach minority 3. A total of 112 schools. The reform was synthesized in the Organic Education Decree which was decreed by King Zog, on September 26, 1934. It had 448 articles, divided into seven parts and within which part into chapters, titles, provisions and articles. (Taken from: AQSH, *Fondi i Parlamentit (1930-1944)* - Nr. 146, V. 1933, D. 10, fl. 156. Dok. dt. 11.4.1933. See also: *Fletore Zyrtare, Nr. 21, Tiranë, 1933, f. 22; Fletore Zyrtare, Nr. 543, dt. 8.9.1934, Tiranë, 1934, f. 67-72. Dekret-Ligja Organike e Arsimit; [Taken from: AQSH, *Parliament Fund (1930-1944)* - No. 146, Y. 1933, D. 10, pp. 156. Doc. dt. 11.4.1933. See also: *Official Journal, No. 21, Tirana, 1933, p. 22; Official Journal, No. 543, dt. 8.9.1934, Tirana, 1934, pp. 67-72. Decree-Organic Law of Education.*]; *Jani Sota, "Construction, Nationalization and Modernization of The Education System in Albania in The Years 1920-1939", in: Center for Albanological Studies, 100 Years of Independence: Speeches of the International Scientific Conference (Tirana, 26-27 November 2012), Vol. 1, Published by Institute of History, Tirana: "Albanological publications", 2014, pp. 538]**

<sup>34</sup> AQSH, F. 195, V. 1929, D. 29, fl. 5.

[CSARA, F. 195, Y. 1929, D. 29, pp. 5.]

<sup>35</sup> Po aty, f. 6-9.

[Ibid., pp. 401.]

<sup>36</sup> Po aty, V. 1939, D. 17, f. 12-15.

[Ibid., Y. 1939, D. 17, pp. 12-15.]

<sup>37</sup> *Jani Sota and Edi Puka, "The Role of Italy in the peony and Subsidy of Italian Schools in Albania before and after April, 1939", to: Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences (MJSS), Vol. 2, No. 3, September 2011, Publisher: MCSER - Mediterranean Center of Social and Educational Research, Rome, Italy, 2011, pp. 209-216.*

great changes after 1945 and the establishment of the new regime. These changes were accompanied by profound reforms, including in the field of education, of which vocational schools were a part.

Although some forms of organization were retained that could attract and activate the views of the educational forces on the issue of school reform, the monistic practice that was installed with the new regime, despite cutting off any other thinking, vocational education (AP) was diversified, from 6-12 month courses to 4-year high schools. Their pedagogical direction, as for all other schools, was the Ministry of Education, while the economic departments were in charge of taking care of them, according to the profiles.

The structure, content, organization and functioning of the PA in Albania until 1961, as in all the countries of the eastern bloc otherwise known as "People's Democracy", in the first years after the war, carried out educational reforms and were gradually transformed on the basis of the Soviet reform model, paving the way for democratic and socialist change and displaying the same tendencies. and crossed the Soviet model. The principles of Soviet pedagogy began to be applied in schools (after 1948), curricula developed either on the basis of the Soviet school and Soviet texts translated or adapted. A good part of the specialists who taught in these schools were qualified in their native countries, mainly in the Soviet Union.

Efforts to organizationally strengthen existing schools and open new ones increased. The *Polytechnic "7 Nëntori"* was soon joined by the *Agricultural Technical School*, the *Financial, Medical, Physical Education, Artistic High School*, etc., all with a term of 3-4 years. In addition, lower vocational schools were opened\*. Although lower vocational education was not considered and was not equivalent to secondary education, both the deadlines and the level of knowledge provided were seen as a possible way of accelerated staff training. Such schools were opened in 1946-1947. At the beginning of 1948, a lower vocational school for geometers and designers was opened in Tirana with 83 students and a 2-year industrial school with three branches of Mechanical, General Technical and Mining, with 400 students<sup>38</sup>. In the same year, another school was opened in the city of Kuçova with 53 students for the oil sector and several nursing schools in Shkodër, Durrës and Korçë with 60 students each<sup>39</sup>. In 1950 there were 8 schools with 1,045 students and 34 teachers.

In terms of vocational education, the second half of the 50s is characterized by efforts to consolidate it. By decision of the Council of Ministers, from May 1956, the Agricultural Technical School and the Agricultural School were reorganized. The Agricultural Technical School is transferred to Kavaja. Also at the Polytechnic "7 November", in 1957 opened the Technological Branch, which would meet the needs of the textile industry<sup>40</sup>. "Besides vocational high schools, - emphasizes historian Enriketa Kambo, - in search of "new" ways continued to use accelerated forms, lower vocational schools"<sup>41</sup>. Thus, the consolidation process in vocational high schools continued. The basis remained the 35 profiles that generally responded to the demands of the economy of that time.

Despite the measures taken from year to year in these less popular schools, the differences between the number of enrollees "as planned" and the number of students who completed them continued to deepen. In the school year 1952-1953, this phenomenon was more evident in some of them, for example, in pedagogical schools about 857 students and in technical schools 441 students did not attend it<sup>42</sup>. One year later the new student plan could be realized only to the

\* Lower vocational school can not last less than 6 months and more than 2 years. In 1950-1951, the 2-year lower vocational school started operating, preparing construction technicians, normists, chief accountants and construction planning technicians, etc. They are headed by the Directorate of Labor Reserves and directly control their progress. All students are treated with state scholarships. (Tanke from: AQSH, Fondi i Këshillit të Ministrisë (1944-1986) - Nr. 890, V. 1950, D. 14, fl. 7-8. Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave Nr. 1055, dt. 15.12.1950.) [Tanks from: CSARA, Fund of the Council of the Ministry (1944-1986) - No. 890, Y. 1950, D. 14, pp. 7-8. Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 1055, dt. 15.12.1950.]

<sup>38</sup> Bashkimi, organ qendror i Frontit Demokratik të Shqipërisë, Tiranë, 27 shkurt 1948.[Union, Central body of the Democratic Front of Albania, Tirana, February 27, 1948.]

<sup>39</sup> Bashkimi, organ qendror i Frontit Demokratik të Shqipërisë, Tiranë, 10 tetor 1948.[Union, Central body of the Democratic Front of Albania, Tirana, October 10, 1948.]

<sup>40</sup> AQSH, Fondi i Ministrisë së Arsimit e Kulturës (1944-1986) - Nr. 195, V. 1957, D. 23, fl. 14. Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave, Nr. 239, dt. 14.6.1957.

[CSARA, Fund of the Ministry of Education and Culture (1944-1986) - No. 195, Y. 1957, D. 23, pp. 14. Decision of the Council of Ministers, No. 239, dt. 14.6.1957.]

<sup>41</sup> Enriketa Kambo, *Arsimi në Shqipëri 1945-1960, botim i Institutit të Historisë në Akademinë e Shkencave të Shqipërisë, Tiranë: "Mësonjëtorja", 2005, f. 9.*

[Enriketa Kambo, *Education in Albania 1945-1960, Publication of the Institute of History at the Academy of Sciences of Albania, Tirana: "Mësonjëtorja", 2005, p. 9.]*

<sup>42</sup> AQSH, F. 195, V. 1953, D. 3, fl. 3-24. Raport i Ministrisë së Arsimit i vitit 1952-1953, datë 14.7.1953.

extent of 79.8%<sup>43</sup>. From the analysis of the documents of the period, the presence of this phenomenon is easily noticed. Thus, in the school year 1955-1956 there were 15 lower vocational schools with 2,100 students and 14 technical high schools with 4,352 students<sup>44</sup>, whereas in 1960-1961, technical high schools taught about 30% of the total number of students in secondary schools (6,690 students)<sup>45</sup>.

Despite the fact that vocational schools were problematic, from the point of view of enlargement they recognized developments. In 1960-1961, there were 34 vocational high schools nationwide with 14,105 students and 511 teachers<sup>46</sup>. Despite the changes, they had many problems related to the planned number of students that these schools had to complete as well as the level of teaching staff.

1-year schools continued to operate in Vlorë, Memaliaj and the city of Stalin; 2-year schools in Tirana, Vlorë, Korçë and Selenica, etc. In the same school year, the total number reached 31 schools with 4,003 students and 163 teachers<sup>47</sup>.

The breakdown of relations with the Soviet Union and its other allied countries as well as the rapprochement with China hardly affected the features of Vocational Education. But economic factors, such as the total collectivization of agriculture (until 1967) and the establishment of relatively large industrial works with the help of China, naturally brought about the demand for increasing the professional level of existing workers and specialists and preparing new contingents. Therefore in the following years (1961-1969), in the AP with and without dismissal there was a significant increase in the number of students. Thus in 1968-1969, there were 296 vocational high schools with 27,188 students and 731 teachers, as well as 27 lower vocational schools (with dismissal) with 4,850 students and 181 teachers<sup>48</sup>.

As a result of the policies pursued, the number of students in vocational schools of all levels increased but in relation to the gymnasiums they were few, which means that vocational education was not developed at the necessary pace to properly meet the needs of economy, lagging behind especially in rural areas.

With the approval of the Law "On the reorganization of the education system in the People's Republic of Albania", no. 3697, dated 11.6.1963, in the framework of the so-called "further revolutionization of the school", all educational teaching work was based on three components: teaching-productive work-physical and military education. The essence of the changes would be to improve the existing education system on the ring of the principle of linking learning with work in production and especially with the better establishment of school activity in function of the party-state requirements for the socialist development of economy and culture .

With the implementation in practice of the reform for the organization of the school, education underwent changes in structure, content and method, in order to realize "the most complete Marxist-Leninist formation of students and teachers in all educational activity both inside and outside learning process"<sup>49</sup>.

Considering the process necessary and possible, various decisions were insisted on by both party and state structures, on the need to further increase the interest for "vocational high schools (4-year) to prepare workers at the same time qualified and secondary technicians in various specialties, of wide profile in schools with dismissal and narrow

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[CSARA, F. 195, Y. 1953, D. 3, pp. 3-24. Report of the Ministry of Education of 1952-1953, dated 14.7.1953.]

<sup>43</sup> Po aty, V. 1954, D. 5, fl. 51-64. Raport i Ministrisë së Arsimit i vitit 1953-1954, datë 14.8.1953.

[Ibid., Y. 1954, D. 5, pp. 51-64. Report of the Ministry of Education of 1953-1954, dated 14.8.1953.]

<sup>44</sup> Drejtoria e Statistikave, Anuari Statistikor i R. P. SH. 1958, Tiranë: "Mihal Duri", 1958, f. 140-155. Kapitulli X: Arsimit dhe Kultura.

[Directorate of Statistics, Statistical Bureau of R. P. of Albania 1958, Tirana: "Mihal Duri", 1958, pp. 140-155. Chapter X: Education and Culture.]

<sup>45</sup> Drejtoria e Statistikave, Anuari Statistikor i R. P. SH. 1960, Tiranë: "Mihal Duri", 1960, f. 286-300. Kapitulli XIII: Arsimit dhe kultura.

[Directorate of Statistics, Statistical Bureau of R. P. of Albania 1960, Tirana: "Mihal Duri", 1960, pp. 286-300. Chapter XIII: Education and culture.]

<sup>46</sup> Po aty. [Ibid.]

<sup>47</sup> Drejtoria e Statistikave, Anuari Statistikor i R. P. SH. 1961, Tiranë: "Mihal Duri", 1962, f. 259-263. Kapitulli XIII: Arsimit dhe kultura.

[Directorate of Statistics, Statistical Bureau of R. P. of Albania 1961, Tirana: "Mihal Duri", 1960, pp. 259-263. Chapter XIII: Education and culture.]

<sup>48</sup> Drejtoria e Statistikave, Vjetari Statistikor i R. P. of Albania 1969-1970, Tiranë: "Mihal Duri", 1970, f. 122-125. Kapitulli XI: Arsimit dhe kultura.

[Directorate of Statistics, Statistical Yearbook of R. P. of Albania 1969-1970, Tirana: "Mihal Duri", 1970, pp. 122-125. Chapter XI: Education and culture.]

<sup>49</sup> "Mbi ciklin e lëndëve të marksizëm-leninizmit në shkollën tetëvjeçare, të mesme dhe të lartë", në: Për revolucionarizimin e mëtejshëm të shkollës sonë (Dokumenta dhe materiale), Vëll. II, Tiranë: "Shtëpia Botuese e Librit Shkollor", 1969, f. 145. Material i përgatitur nga Nënkomisioni përkatës i Komisionit Qendror për Arsimin.

[ "On the Subject Cycle of Marxism-Leninism in the Eighth Grade, High School and High School", in: On the Further Revolutionization of Our School (Documents and Materials), Vol. II, Tirana: "School Book Publishing House", 1969, p. 145. Material prepared by the relevant Subcommittee of the Central Commission for Education.]

profile in those without dismissal, as well as contingents for high schools"<sup>50</sup>. The 2-year lower vocational schools were left out of the education system, depending on the respective departments - losing prestige vis-à-vis high schools and gradually began to close.

The process of expanding vocational education, although not the one required in recent years, came to an end with the definition of new criteria for the opening and operation of evening and correspondence schools<sup>51</sup>. Thus, persons who had completed 7/8-year education could enroll in evening high schools or continue their studies by correspondence<sup>52</sup>. According to the historian E. Kambo, "for years in the evening and correspondence schools many investments were made that reflected in their developments, although it must be said that they were few in relation to the regular day education"<sup>53</sup>.

From the beginning of the 70's, in the framework of the measures for the consolidation of vocational high schools and the increase of opportunities for the continuation of higher studies by their students, efforts were made to expand the network of agricultural high schools in the villages. In the year 1971-1972 nationwide there would be a total of 109 vocational high schools with 62,212 students (36,968 without dismissal) of which 24,424 were female, and 1,712 teachers (520 female)<sup>54</sup>.

In the context of strengthening the "ideological axis" and further deepening of the "technical-scientific revolution", changes were made that led to the strengthening of ideological and political tendencies and the emphasis on the theoretical character of the content and its connection with scientific and productive reality of the country. These changes were reflected especially in the new texts, compiled by Albanian authors, based on certain ideological, political, didactic and methodological criteria.

In the late 70's and especially in the 80's, the continuous decline of the economy and total isolation, among other factors, made the goals and efforts of this period to increase the quality of vocational education through scientific modernization fail. pedagogical content and learning process.

"The structure of vocational secondary education, represented by a unique type of 4-year schools, could not achieve the triple utopian goal of preparing: skilled workers in specific professional specialties; secondary technicians, as organizers and production managers and contingents for high schools. The growing weakening of schools' links with enterprises, the limited number of bases (workshops) of professional practices and the lack of equipment and raw materials, led to the reduction to minimum levels of students' practical activities. The subjects, in response to the demand for increasing the scientific level of the content, were loaded with excessive theoretical, academic and technical knowledge and of a high level, unaffordable by the mass of students. The elimination in the '80s of the practice of awarding "categories" to students graduating from the VA system, in accordance with the standards (categories) adopted in production, led to an increase in the subjectivity of the assessment and a decrease in the credibility of vocational schools. The lack of a special system for the pedagogical qualification of specialist teachers and teachers (instructors) of the professional practices of the AP system, the rather formal and ineffective qualification of their work, especially of instructors, made the teaching retain its generally traditional character with teacher in the center of low student activation and the efficiency of the learning process to be low"<sup>55</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> AQSH, *Fondi i Komitetit Qendror të PKSH/PPSH (1942-1988)* - Nr. 14, V. 1964, D. 194, fl. 1-13.

[CSARA, *Fund of the Central Committee of the SNP / ALP (1942-1988)* - No. 14, Y. 1964, D. 194, pp. 1-13.]

<sup>51</sup> *Gazeta Zyrtare*, Nr. 6 / 1964, Tiranë: "Mihal Duri", 1964, f. 367-382. *Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave* Nr. 307, datë 10.8.1964 "Mbi kriteret e hapjes së shkollave të mbrëmjes dhe me korrespondencë".

[*Official Gazette*, No. 6/1964, Tirana: "Mihal Duri", 1964, pp. 367-382. *Decision of the Council of Ministers* No. 307, dated 10.8.1964 "On the Criteria for Opening Evening and Correspondence Schools".]

<sup>52</sup> AQSH, F. 14, V. 1964, D. 194, fl. 1-13. [CSARA, F. 14, Y. 1964, D. 194, pp. 1-13.]

<sup>53</sup> Eriketa Kambo, *Shkolla Shqiptare në vitet 1960-1970, botim i Institutit të Historisë në Qendrën e Studimeve Albanologjike*, Tiranë: "Kristalina-KH", 2014, f. 2013.

[Eriketa Kambo, *Albanian School in the years 1960-1970, Publication of the Institute of History at the Center for Albanological Studies*, Tirana: "Kristalina-KH", 2014, p. 2013.]

<sup>54</sup> *Drejtorja e Statistikave, Vjetari Statistikor i RPSH 1971-1972*, Tiranë: "Mihal Duri", 1973, f. 148-167. *Kapitulli XII: Arsimi dhe kultura*. [Directorate of Statistics, *Statistical Yearbook of RP of Albania 1971-1972*, Tirana: "Mihal Duri", 1973, pp. 148-167. *Chapter XII: Education and culture*.]

<sup>55</sup> *Pajtim Bejta; Ruzhdi Reçi dhe Alqi Mustafaj, Vështrim mbi arsimin profesional në Shqipëri (më tej: Vështrim mbi arsimin ...), botuar nga Shoqëria Gjermane e Bashkëpunimit Teknik (GTZ) në bashkëpunim dhe me mbështetjen e Ministrisë së Arsimit dhe Sporteve të Shqipërisë*, Tiranë: "Hug Shang International", Janar 1997, f. 8-9.

Despite the limitations, the truth is that the vocational education system became more open by promoting to some extent the tendencies for technical qualification and cultural aspirations of the people. Vocational schools offered them a wider range of opportunities to take advantage of it, compared to previous periods. In the late 1980s, there were improvements in the expansion of vocational education. Thus, according to official data for 1989, from 263 secondary schools with 133,000 students (81,000 without dismissal) and 3,660 teachers in 1972, 454 schools with 140,000 students and 7,498 teachers were reached. Upon completion of 8 years of education, 203,000 new students were enrolled in secondary education, ie about 69% of them belonged to vocational education<sup>56</sup>.

After the 90s, in the conditions of a Albania of transition and despite the ambitions of the democratic state for a rapid development of the country in the way of a decentralized economy, the expansion of vocational education to the highest categories would continue to remain a by its priority.

### 3. Inclusive Vocational Education - A New Concept and Practice for Albanian Education

The years 1990-2018, although in terms of time represent a relatively long period, in terms of the importance of political, social, ideological and educational changes occupy an important place. They marked the beginning of a new period in the history of our country. The inherited level in the vocational education system, although not qualitative, was the basis for further educational development in Albania.

Any political force that would come to power after the fall of communism, among other problems, would have to solve those in the field of vocational education. This process was conditioned by many internal and external factors, among which the political orientation was important. In terms of time span, it coincides with the period of democratic reforms that represents one of the most interesting stages in the history of Albanian post-communist vocational education. It is the period when in Albania there is the possibility of free expression of thoughts, their diversity, the stage of illusions for the development not only of education, but of the whole country on the path of a free democracy. The establishment of democracy, among other things, brought about the overthrow of many old norms and mentalities, paving the way for a more emancipated thinking in dealing with the fundamental problems of the time. It is in this spirit that the public opinion discussed extensively, in addition to political and economic problems, art and culture as well as those of education and training, issues of form, but also of their content.

The subject of discussion was issues of theoretical and practical character, such as: what rhythms and tools would be used for mass education and how they would be provided; what position would the new vocational school have with the old school; what would be the place of national and world tradition and what would be the relations between them; ultimately where the new school would be oriented and what would be its content, etc. It is understood that in the first stage, for these problems, conceived from different perspectives, the same alternatives could not be offered. The largest discussions focused on two main problems: the problem of pace of development and the problem of the character content of the new vocational school.

Determining the right rhythms in the future socio-economic development of the country and of educational development in particular, was a very controversial issue that attracted the attention of the entire social and educational public of the time. From a broad perspective, the problem of vocational education development was discussed in terms of changes in content structure; in the study of experiences and models of the most advanced countries and their implementation in pilot schools; creating clearer images for his future in Albania, etc.

It is in this spirit that in vocational education the changes in the content structure began in experimental form in the school year 1993-1994. Thus, from a single level of vocational high school was passed to two levels: vocational and technical, with different deadlines and destinations. Appreciating the mission of these schools, the Albanian government called on foreign organizations for a contribution of all, inside and outside the country, in the implementation of projects that would be implemented in pilot schools currently reformed.

This practice of the central bodies was welcomed on the basis, from which more and more often they were concretized with the implementation of many projects for change. With the issuance and implementation of the **Law "On**

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[Pajtim Bejtja; Ruzhdi Reçi and Alqi Mustafaj, *Overview of Vocational Education in Albania (hereinafter: Overview of Education ...)*, Published by the German Society for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in collaboration with and with the support of the Ministry of Education and Sports of Albania, Tirana: "Hug Shang International", January 1997, pp. 8-9.]

<sup>56</sup> Komisioni i Planit të Shtetit, Vjetari Statistikor i R.P.S. të Shqipërisë 1990, botim i Drejtorisë së Statistikave, Tiranë: "Mihal Duri", 1990, f. 144-149. Kapitulli XIV: Arsimi dhe kultura. [State Planning Commission, *Statistical Yearbook of R.P.S. of Albania 1990, Publication of the Directorate of Statistics, Tirana: "Mihal Duri", 1990, pp. 144-149. Chapter XIV: Education and Culture.*]



the pre-university education system" of 1995<sup>57</sup>, the process entered a new and higher stage, being based on more organized changes in the structure and content of vocational education. Together with the *Normative Provisions for Public Schools* adopted in 1996, this created for the first time a school legislative package<sup>58</sup>, "that would guarantee new qualitative developments of educational activity, closely related to the active participation of parents in school life, the interest of local government and cooperation with the community both in the city and in the village"<sup>59</sup>.

According to this law, vocational schools of two levels were established on compulsory 8-year education. The first level included 3-year vocational schools, which prepared qualified workers with a strong practical orientation (1/3 general training, 1/3 theoretical vocational training and 1/3 practical vocational training). This was also reflected in the curricula of the pilot schools, which made it possible to leave more space for practical training (about 50%), benefiting from material and financial support from abroad<sup>60</sup>. The purpose of these schools was to prepare students mainly for employment. Realistically, to meet the requirements for admission to high school, students at this level completed a further period of schooling (regularly 2 years) in vocational school (such as at that time, in agricultural schools) or in school general high school or 5-year technical school. A not insignificant problem was that of the traditionalism of content organization, i.e., based on the subject, as well as the experimentation of modularization, which we talked about earlier in this paper, in two agricultural schools. The second level included 5-year schools, which trained technicians and other high school specialists to work and direct in various economic activities. The curriculum itself of these schools was covered by professional practices. It was a fact that the first two years offered students mainly general culture, while in the senior years the professional qualification was realized. In the fifth year they taught two electives: mathematics and professional theory. Upon successful completion of the final exams, students were considered graduates and were eligible to pursue higher studies in the respective branches or in other branches.

"In the economic conditions of the country, the first level vocational schools remained for a long time as more necessary, because small enterprises in the city and small farms in the village required more workers than technicians. In the school year 1993-1994 with four branches: agriculture, construction, confectionery and oil and gas extraction, restructuring the previous 4-year schools of these specialties. In the same year, new specialties of automechanics, electromechanics, tailoring with a duration of 3 years were opened. Vocational schools of mechanical, electrical, technological profiles, mining have continued until 1995-1996 mainly with the old 4-year structure, due to lack of experience in designing new curricula and material-financial difficulties. In the school year 1996-1997, the first years of the four schools would function according to the new structures"<sup>61</sup>.

In the school year 1995-1996, as the first year of implementation of the new law, there were 50 vocational high schools in the country with a total of 12,758 students<sup>62</sup>. In the enrollments of this school year, girls accounted for 50.4% of the total number of students; 37.8% of enrolled students are from the village<sup>63</sup>. In students from the village, girls accounted for 45.3% of those enrolled<sup>64</sup>.

In addition to full-time vocational schools, in Albania there were also first-level vocational schools on a part-time basis (without dismissal), which lasted 4 years<sup>65</sup>. The main goal of these schools was to equip the general and

<sup>57</sup> Fletore Zyrtare e Republikës së Shqipërisë, Nr. 7, 15 korrik 1995, Tiranë: "Nënë Tereza", 1995, f. 619. Ligjit "Për sistemin arsimor parauniversitar". 67 nene. Propozuar nga Këshilli i Ministrave. Shfuqizohet. Ligji Nr. 4624, datë 24.12.1969 "Për sistemin e ri arsimor"; Ligji Nr. 7887, datë 8.12.1994 "Për detyrimin shkollor", si dhe aktet e tjera nënligjore që bien në kundërshtim me këtë ligj. Material i botuar në faqen web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al) [Official Journal of the Republic of Albania, No. 7, July 15, 1995, Tirana: "Mother Teresa", 1995, p. 619. Law "On the Pre-University Education System". 67 Article. Proposed by the Council of Ministers. Repealed. Law No. 4624, dated 24.12.1969 "On the New Education System"; Law No. 7887, dated 8.12.1994 "On Compulsory Schooling", as well as other bylaws that are in conflict with this law. Material published on the web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)]

<sup>58</sup> Jani Sota, *Pre-University Education in Post-Communist 1992-2013 - With a Foreword by Prof.PhD. Antonello Biagini, Berlin: "LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing", 2018, pp. 104.*

<sup>59</sup> Edmond Lulja, *Mendime për Reformën në Arsim, (hereinafter: Thoughts on Reform ...), Tirana: "Filara", 2009, p. 38.]*

<sup>60</sup> J. Sota, *Pre-University Education ...*, p. 39.

<sup>61</sup> E. Lulja, *Mendime për Reformën ...*, f. 19.

[E. Lulja, *Thoughts on Reform ...*, p. 19.]

<sup>62</sup> INSTAT, *Vjetari statistikor 1993-2001, botim i Institutit të Statistikave, Tiranë: Agjencia "R&T Advertising", 2003, f. 161-167. Arsimi. [INSTAT, Statistical Yearbook 1993-2001, Publication of the Institute of Statistics, Tirana: R&T Advertising Agency, 2003, pp. 161-167. Education]*

<sup>63</sup> Po aty, [ibid.]

<sup>64</sup> Po aty, [ibid.]

<sup>65</sup> P. Bejtja; R. Reçi dhe A. Mustafaj, *Vështrim mbi arsimin ...*, f. 12.

[P. Bejtja; R. Reçi and A. Mustafaj, *Overview on Education ...*, p. 12.]

professional culture of the student-workers of private and state enterprises. The students who continue their education in these schools were necessarily workers with professions that correspond to the speciality of the school<sup>66</sup>.

The state widely used the scholarship system to provide students with the most difficult or less preferred branches (specialties). You paid special attention to the training of secondary specialists in the areas where the needs were greatest. We are illustrating it with an example. The distribution of students in vocational schools, according to the specialties in the school year 1995-1996, is this: "15.2% attended the specialty Agriculture; 5% in Economics, 32% Mechanics, 15.2% Electrical, 9% in Construction, 11, 9% in Confectionery, 0.9% in Mining, and 3% in Oil"<sup>67</sup>. Lowering the criteria for enrolling in these specialties did not solve the acute problem of securing enough students. Furthermore, "some specialties such as drilling oil wells, solid minerals, petroleum geology, textiles were not preferred in recent years. This is due to the lack of jobs in these specialties"<sup>68</sup>.

*Despite the efforts of state bodies, the main link in secondary education in terms of scope and mass, remained general secondary education. In the 1995-1996 school year, about 80% of students attended general secondary education*<sup>69</sup>.

From the documentation circulating at high and reliable levels of the state it resulted that, in the treatment and policies of the Albanian government towards education in general and those of vocational schools in particular, for a period of 10 years Albania did not have a special strategy for education and vocational training (VET)<sup>70</sup>. During the visit of the team of the **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**, in the Parliament of Albania a proposal for the establishment of a **National Council of Vocational Education and Training** was discussed<sup>71</sup> tripartite. Due to the complexity of the law and the new June 2001 elections, the law was approved only in March 2002. In 2003, the **National Council of Vocational Education and Training** as well as the **Employment and Vocational Training Strategy** would be approved.

The VET law amended in 2007 was considered a very important step in expanding the destination of the vocational training system, including other categories of the population<sup>72</sup>. Moreover, in addition to the public network of vocational training, there was a relatively wide network of private vocational training which created the opportunity for qualifications in professions in high demand in the labor market.

By law, vocational education follows 9-year basic education. Starting from the school year 2009-2010, vocational education functioned with a new structure. The new structure of vocational education was based on the structure of vocational qualifications, recommended by the *Albanian Qualifications Framework*<sup>73</sup>. In this regard, "vocational education offers long-term vocational education (2, 3 and 4 years) and, starting from the school year 2009-2010, a new educational structure with three levels is implemented"<sup>74</sup>.

In the field of massification, vocational schools (public and private) had recognized some unsatisfactory indicators. The analysis of this process requires a complex and in-depth approach to surveying the most key moments. In the field of massification the indicators had marked a relative decline. From the analysis of the published figures obtained, it is clear that in 2011-2012, compared to 2004-2005, 11 schools were reduced and the number of students decreased by 80.4%.

66 Jani Sota, "Educational Phenomena in Albania in the Years of Communist Dictatorship and the Reformation Efforts After Nineties" Societies, in: *Journal of Educational and Social Research (JFSR)*, Vol. 2, No. 2, May 2012, Mediterranean Center of Social and Educational Research (MCSEER), Rome, 2012

67 E. Lulja, *Mendime për Reformën ...*, f. 20.

[E. Lulja, *Thoughts on Reform ...*, p. 20.]

68 Po aty. [Ibid.]

69 INSTAT, *Vjetari statistikor 1993-2001*, f. 161-167.

[INSTAT, *Statistical Yearbook 1993-2001*, p. 161-167.]

70 Francesco Panzica, *Tregu i Punës në Shqipëri dhe Vlerësimi i Sektorit AFP*, Tiranë: "ETF", 2000, f. 44.

[Francesco Panzica, *Albanian Labor Market and VET Sector Assessment*, Tirana: "ETF", 2000, p. 44.]

71 Florian Kulla and Robert Gjedia, "The Reality of Education of Children with Autism in Mainstream 9-Year Schools in Albania", in: *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, Vol 4 No 2 S2, August 2015, pp.52-55.

72 Ministra e Arsimit dhe Shkencës të RSH, *Raport për Delegacionin e Komisionit Europian*, Tiranë, qershor 2008, f. 1-28. *Mbështetja për Reformën në Arsimin dhe Formimin Profesional*. [Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Albania, *Report on the Delegation of the European Commission*, Tirana, June 2008, pp. 1-28. *Support for Vocational Education and Training Reform*.]

73 Fletore Zyrtare e Republikës së Shqipërisë Nr. 34, 2 prill 2010, Tiranë: "Shtypshkronja e Qendrës së Publikimeve Zyrtare", 2010, f. 1261. Ligji Nr. 10247/2010, datë 4.3.2010 "Për Kornizën Shqiptare të Kualifikimit". Neni 1. Material i botuar në faqen web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al) [Official Journal of the Republic of Albania, No. 34, April 2, 2010, Tirana: "Printing House of the Center for Official Publications", 2010, p. 1261. Law No. 10247/2010, dated 4.3.2010 "On the Albanian Qualification Framework". Article 1. Material published on the web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)]

74 Ministra e Arsimit dhe Shkencës (MASH), *Vjetari Statistikor për Arsimin 2010-2011 dhe seri kohore*, Tiranë, 2011, f. 6.

[Ministry of Education and Science (MEoS), *Statistical Yearbook for Education 2010-2011 and Time Series*, Tirana, 2011, p. 6.]

Regarding vocational education in the village, changes were made that really increased the number of vocational high schools from 4 to 6 with 84 students, of which 30 were women. In 2011-2012, nationwide, there were 67 vocational high schools with 6092 students.

**Table 1: Number of secondary schools by type and location**

School Year	Total	Public Vocational School		Private Vocational School	
		City	Countryside	City	Countryside
2004–2005	79	63	3	12	1
2005–2006	73	56	3	13	1
2006–2007	75	56	3	15	1
2007–2008	78	55	2	19	2
2008–2009	81	55	2	21	3
2009–2010	72	56	2	14	3
2011–2012	68	56	4	7	1

At the same time, with the measures taken, ensuring a sufficient number of students remained a worrying problem. In this period the responsibility for organizing and running this system was assigned to the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) which aimed to increase the number of students in less desired specialties with elements from lower vocational schools, although the low level of the knowledge they provided. Their number was decreasing, thus making it difficult to match the educational supply and demand for qualified work, consequently not promoting cooperation between universities and entrepreneurs operating in various fields of the Albanian economy.

**Table 2: Admitted young students in the first year of vocational education**

School year	Total	Public Vocational School				Private Vocational School			
		City		Countryside		City		Countryside	
		Total	Females	Total	Females	Total	Females	Total	Females
2004–2005	7573	7104	2381	499	173	469	174	28	19
2005–2006	7634	7061	2470	539	166	573	228	32	14
2006–2007	8156	7642	2342	452	154	514	208	29	16
2007–2008	7152	6652	1858	292	93	500	144	34	13
2008–2009*									
2009–2010	5644	5281	1294	289	61	363	77	55	6
2011–2012	6092	5713	1221	254	37	379	69	84	30

We are stopping in detail. Based on the data, as an increasing trend, there is an increase in the number of students from the school year 2004-2005 to 2008-2009. The increase in the number of students attending secondary education was a result of a number of factors, among which we mention: government policies and reforms for education, increasing the interest of the student and parent community in education beyond basic education, improving the school infrastructure, the improvement of curricula and textbooks as well as the increase of the educational qualification level of the pedagogical staff. For the year 2008-2009, the decrease in the number of students in vocational secondary education came as a result of the transition of basic education from the 8-year system to the 9-year system.

The main lines of the future pre-university education development of the country would be laid by **Law 69/2012 "On the Pre-University Education system in the Republic of Albania"**<sup>75</sup> (amended by Law No. 56/2015; by Law No. 48/2018, dated 23.7.2018 "On some additions and amendments to Law No. 69/2012" On the Pre-University Education

\* For the school year 2008-2009 in secondary education there are no new admissions due to the transition of the basic education system from 8-year to 9-year. (Tanken from: MASH, Vjetari Statistikor për Arsimin 2010-2011 dhe seri kohore, f. 22.) [For the school year 2008-2009 in secondary education there are no new admissions due to the transition of the basic education system from 8-year to 9-year. [Taken from: MEoS, Statistical Yearbook for Education 2010-2011 and Time Series, p. 22.]

<sup>75</sup> Fletore Zyrtare e Republikës së Shqipërisë Nr. 87, 26 korrik 2012, Tiranë: "Shtypshkronja e Qendrës së Publikimeve Zyrtare", 2012, f. 4402-4426. Ligji 69/2012 "Për sistemin Arsimor Parauniversitar në Republikën e Shqipërisë". 74 nene. Material i botuar në faqen web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)

[Official Journal of the Republic of Albania, No. 87, July 26, 2012, Tirana: "Printing House of the Center for Official Publications", 2012, p. 4402-4426. Law 69/2012 "On the Pre-University Education System in the Republic of Albania". 74 Article. Material published on the web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)]

System in the Republic of Albania"<sup>76</sup>). They served as the basis of the platform of "radical" change in the field. Implementation of the reform in 2012 begins the coordination of policies for employment, **education and vocational training (VET)**.

*The general trend remains the rapid pace of expanding quality vocational education and training for young people and adults and the promotion of decent job opportunities through fruitful labor market policies.*

After drafting the legal framework that would ensure the implementation of these policies, as an important first step for the development and expansion of higher professional schools, central and local educational bodies acted quickly with organizational and administrative measures.

Important, as defined in the legislation in force, was the transfer of responsibilities from the Ministry of Education and Sports (MES), which had full responsibility for vocational education schools until 2013, to the **Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MSWY)**. The latter is the highest institution responsible for VET in the country, which drafts VET policies and operates at a strategic level. Since 2014, this ministry is also responsible for the administration of vocational schools. The Ministry of Education and Sports (MES) shares responsibilities with the MoSWY for vocational education, being responsible for general education subjects as part of vocational education, in terms of general subject curricula as well as teachers' professional standards. MAS also administers the State Matura<sup>77</sup>. Under the General Directorate of VET, Employment and Migration of the MoSWY is also the Directorate of VET.

During this period, the Council of Ministers decided to establish the **National Agency for Vocational Education, Training and Qualification (AKAFP)** as another institution under the MoSWY (once part of the MES), which is responsible for the development of qualifications and professions (list, standards and description) in close cooperation with employers; VET curriculum as well as quality assurance of vocational education and training. This agency worked intensively to train teachers / instructors, although the relevant legal framework for this function was lacking - aiming to provide a realistic picture of the skills needs in each sector, the professional profiles and qualifications needed to fill these gaps.

The implementation of public employment services in the labor market is carried out by the **National Employment Service (NES)** established by Decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM) "On the approval of the status of the National Employment Service" No. 42, dated 17.01.1998, amended by DCM no. 263, dated 25.05.2000, amended by DCM no. 17, dated 10.01.2003, and Order no. 247, dated 18.10.2006 "On the approval of the structure and organizational chart of the National Employment Service". The National Employment Service is an institution under the auspices of the MoSWY, a public service that aims to provide services and financial support for job search, by implementing and administering state programs and projects provided by law, developing the workforce through investment in skills professional, self-employment initiatives, flexibility, job mobility and competitive skills. NES has extended its services to all prefectures of Albania through employment offices.

The MoSWY directs and contributes to the development of vocational education in cooperation with other ministries based on a system of **vocational schools (VET-s)**, which provide vocational education programs, and vocational **training centers (VTC-s)** that provide vocational training through short-term courses. (3 months to a year).

The basic principles on which the development of vocational education and training would be based were

<sup>76</sup> *Ministria e Mirëqenies Sociale dhe Rinisë (MMSR), Strategjia Kombëtare për Punësim dhe Aftësi 2014-2020 (më tej: Strategjia Kombëtare për Punësim ...), projekt i financuar nga Bashkimi Evropian dhe i zbatuar nga ILO, në bashkëpunim me Ministrinë e Mirëqenies Sociale dhe Rinisë, Tiranë, 2014, f. 1-154. Material i publikuar në faqen web site: [http://financa.gov.al/ep-content/uploads/2018/06/Strategjia\\_Kombetare\\_per\\_Punesim\\_dhe\\_Aftesi\\_Plani\\_Veprimit.pdf](http://financa.gov.al/ep-content/uploads/2018/06/Strategjia_Kombetare_per_Punesim_dhe_Aftesi_Plani_Veprimit.pdf)*

*[Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MoSWY), National Strategy for Employment and Skills 2014-2020 (hereinafter: National Strategy for Employment ...), A project funded by the European Union and implemented by the ILO, in cooperation with the Ministry of Welfare Social and Youth, Tirana, 2014, pp. 1-154. Material published on the web site: [http://financa.gov.al/ep-content/uploads/2018/06/Strategjia\\_Kombetare\\_per\\_Punesim\\_dhe\\_Aftesi\\_Plani\\_Veprimit.pdf](http://financa.gov.al/ep-content/uploads/2018/06/Strategjia_Kombetare_per_Punesim_dhe_Aftesi_Plani_Veprimit.pdf)*

<sup>77</sup> *Fletore Zyrtare e Republikës së Shqipërisë, Nr. 12, 23 shkurt 2006, botimi Qendrés së Botimeve Zyrtare, Tiranë: "Shtypshkronja e Qendrës së Botimeve Zyrtare", 2006, f. 397-398. Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave Nr. 78, datë 8.2.2006 "Për krijimin e maturës shtetërore dhe pranimet në shkollat e larta publike - i ndryshuar (me Nr. 323, datë 30.5.2007; Nr. 262, datë 27.2.2008; Nr. 156, datë 11.2.2006)". Material i botuar në faqen eeb site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)*

*[Official Journal of the Republic of Albania, No. 12, February 23, 2006, Publication of the Center for Official Publications, 2006, Tirana: "Printing House of the Center for Official Publications", pp. 397-398. Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 78, dated 8.2.2006 "On the Establishment of the State Matura and Admissions in Public High Schools - Amended (with No. 323, dated 30.5.2007; No. 262, dated 27.2.2008; No. 156, dated 11.2.2006)". Material published on the web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)*

sanctioned first of all in the *National Strategy for Employment and Skills 2014-2020*<sup>78,79</sup> approved in 2014. The main objective of this strategy is "to identify and outline appropriate incentive policies for employment in the country and professional training of the workforce in order to create quality jobs and skills opportunities throughout the life cycle. The strategy focuses on "increasing opportunities for decent work through efficient labor market policies, providing quality education and vocational training for young people and adults, fostering inclusion and social cohesion, and strengthening the labor market." and the qualifications system<sup>80</sup>.

Consistent with the governing vision, this strategy views vocational *training and employment* as two limbs of the same body, aiming for education and vocational training services to be closely linked to those of employment. The aim is to enable jobseekers to be professionally trained and this knowledge to be employed<sup>81</sup>.

Implementation in practice, however, posed many problems, "due to the complexity of integrating all responsibilities into the MoSWY, previous low and prolonged VET performance, lack of institutional capacity, limited resources and redundancies. from the work of VET staff throughout the system"<sup>82</sup>.

Meanwhile, the preference pursued towards VET and the position of massification of general secondary education, seems to have been determined by the lack of a special analysis to orient to the needs of the labor market. The policies pursued deepened the gap between quantitative and qualitative developments. Based on later data, the trend of low rates of VET expansion continued. Until the middle of the second decade of this century, there were 52 public VET providers in Albania, of which 42 offered vocational education programs and 10 training centers offered short-term vocational training courses, spread in almost all regions. with a higher concentration in central Albania<sup>83</sup>. Although there was a need and opportunity for vocational education schools to offer short-term courses, at present only the Kamza Multi-Functional Center offered such courses due to its special legal status as a multi-functional pilot center<sup>84</sup>.

The vision of the MoSWY, as stated in the legal framework for vocational education and training, provided that all vocational schools have the opportunity to offer short-term courses. In order to include as many students in public vocational training centers and, in particular, girls, the responsible bodies in cooperation with other state structures set up 9 public vocational training centers in the main cities (such as Shkodra, Tirana (2), Durrës, Elbasan, Fieri, Vlora, Korça, Gjirokastrë), and 1 mobile center is committed for the northeast of Albania<sup>85</sup>.

The general phenomenon remained the creation of deficits in the number of students enrolled and those who completed 9-year schools. It was a fact that many students who completed 9-year education continued their studies in general secondary education (in gymnasiums). According to MoSWY statistics, in the school year 2014-2015, the number of enrolled in full-time vocational education was 17,339 students. In the same year, 44 professional directions continued to function, divided into a total of 110 profiles offered in the public system<sup>86</sup>. A total of 13 part-time vocational courses are offered in 17 vocational schools for 3,654 students (in the school year 2014-2015)<sup>87</sup>. But as would be stated in an information of that period, "the main objective for these categories of schools are working adults and are interested in obtaining a professional qualification. Theoretical courses are taken in the educational institution, while the internship takes place mainly in the workplace of the student"<sup>88</sup>. Better adaptation of vocational schools to the demands of economics would highlight the need for new measures to create a proper system for this age group of adults, a finding that is also based on previous studies. Thus from 2014, enrollment in the first year in part-time vocational education programs was closed given the poor quality and need of the labor market.

Regarding vocational training, during 2014, 13,102 trainees were certified after the successful completion of short-term training courses in public centers, 47% more compared to 2013<sup>89</sup>. It is a fact that "a year ago, these centers shifted

78 MoMSR, *National Employment and Skills Strategy 2014-2020*, Tirana, 2014, f. 9. Material published on the web site: <http://www.sociale.gov>.

79 Ibid.

80 MMSR, *Strategjia Kombëtare për Punësim ...*, f. 7. [MSoWY, *National Employment Strategy ...*, p. 7.]

81 Po aty. [Ibid.]

82 Po aty, f. 8-9. [Ibid., p. 8-9.]

83 National Employment Service (NES), *Statistics 1998-2014*, Tiran, 2015, pp. 13. Material published on the web site: <http://www.kerkojpune.gov.al/www.kerkojpune.gov.al/publikime-shkp/> (Accessed in January 2016). Shih edhe: A. Pepa, E. Dhëmbo, E. Shehaj dhe S. Dibra, *Aftësi për punë ...*, f. 26-27. [See also: A. Pepa, [E. Dhëmbo, E. Shehaj and S. Dibra, *Ability to Work ...*, pp. 26-27.]

84 Po aty. [Ibid.]

85 A. Pepa, E. Dhëmbo, E. Shehaj dhe S. Dibra, *Aftësi për punë ...*, f. 27. [E. Dhëmbo, E. Shehaj and S. Dibra, *Ability to Work ...*, p. 27.]

86 D. Nano, *Compendium of the National Vocational Skills Development*, ZHAP Puzzle, Tirana, 2015, p. 21.

87 [Ibid.]

88 GIZ and ETF, *Baseline Survey of Public ...*, p. 17.

89 NES, *Statistics 1998-2014*, p. 17.



their focus to short-term courses offered to the unemployed (62% certified), to whom these training courses are offered free of charge. Other marginalized categories benefited from the training courses free, such as Roma, Egyptians, orphans, trafficked women, individuals with disabilities, former prisoners, returned migrants), but the number remained limited (170 in total or 1.3% of trainees in 2014)<sup>90</sup>.

In addition to organizational measures, efforts were made to improve the existing legal framework of VET. However, the experience of the first years of its implementation highlighted the need to supplement and amend the provisions that left room for misunderstandings and omissions. Given that the current VET law<sup>91</sup> had not captured all the dynamics of VET development in Albania in recent years and the political orientations and instruments of the EU. Certain elements of vocational education and training were regulated through various laws, which actually created overlapping or clashing of competencies in some aspects and "empty spaces" in others<sup>92</sup>. With the announcement of the decree of the President of the Republic of Albania, Bujar Nishani to the Council of Ministers, in March 2017, **Law no. 15 "On Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Albania"**<sup>93</sup>, on the basis of which the most necessary changes were sanctioned.

The existing legal framework did not fit in with the new government program, which was supposed to completely orient education and vocational training towards the real needs of the market and the return of the state to funding and the main supporter of vocational training. On the basis of the new law, the basic principles of providing, governing, financing and managing education and vocational training (VET) were established; aspects of this system are regulated in accordance with the general education system and the labor market by defining the mission and main objectives of this system and the roles and responsibilities of public authorities and entities and other entities responsible for planning, implementation and monitoring aspects of VET.

According to Article 6, the VET system is composed and administered by public institutions operating at the *central and local level*, including *VET providers*. The main institutions responsible for the VET system in Albania are determined to be the **ministry responsible for VET**, the **National Employment and Skills Agency** and the **National VET and Qualifications Agency**, where respectively the **National Employment and Skills Agency** is responsible for all management aspects related to public VET providers, while the National Agency for VET and Qualifications, for the establishment of the national system of professional qualifications and continuous professional development of teachers<sup>94</sup>.

In addition, among the VET providers in Albania, are provided *vocational high schools, highly functional VET centers*, specialized VET institutions for special groups, companies, other licensed and / or accredited institutions or individuals. It is the **Board of Directors** of public VET providers, the collegial body which makes decisions on the overall strategic direction, general planning and use of human, financial, material and physical resources and which supports the activity of administration of public VET providers. in accordance with applicable law.

Finally, another important aspect that finds expression in this law is quality assurance, as an ongoing process that aims to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the VET system. This process includes: licensing, accreditation and inspection of VET providers, self-assessment, monitoring and reporting by VET providers, as well as evaluation at certain intervals of the entire VET system through the relevant VET institution .

*The new law of 2017 aims to integrate the provision of vocational education and vocational training in the rationalized network of VET providers in order to use resources efficiently and effectively in terms of VET service in the*

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90 [Ibid.]

91 Ligji Nr. 8872, datë 29.03.2002, "Për arsimin dhe formimin profesional në Republikën e Shqipërisë", ndryshuar me Ligjin Nr. 10011 datë 30.10.2008, Ligjin Nr. 10434, datë 23.06.2011, dhe Ligjin Nr. 63/2014, datë 26.06.2014. Material i publikuar në faqen web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al) [Law No. 8872, dated 29.03.2002, "On Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Albania", amended by Law No. 10011 dated 30.10.2008, Law No. 10434, dated 23.06.2011, and Law No. 63/2014, dated 26.06.2014. Material published on the web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)]

92 European Albania Alliance (EAA), Albanian Government, Program 2013-2017, Approved by Council of Ministers of Albania, Tirana, 2013, f. 24-25. Material published on the web site: [http://www.akti.gov.al/dokumenta/programi\\_qeverise\\_2013\\_2017.pdf](http://www.akti.gov.al/dokumenta/programi_qeverise_2013_2017.pdf) (Accessed in January 2016)

93 Fletore Zyrtare e Republikës së Shqipërisë Nr. 43, 9 mars 2017, Tiranë: "Shtypshkronja e Qendrës së Publikimeve Zyrtare", 2017, f. 2779. Ligji Nr. 15/2017, datë 16.2.2002 "Për Arsimin dhe Formimin Profesional në Republikën e Shqipërisë". Neni 1, pika 1. Material i publikuar në faqen web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al) [Official Journal of the Republic of Albania, No. 43, March 9, 2017, Tirana: "Printing House of the Center for Official Publications", 2017, p. 2779. Law No. 15/2017, dated 16.2.2002 "On Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Albania". Article 1, point 1. Material published on the web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)]

94 A. Pepa, E. Dhëmbo, E. Shehaj dhe S. Dibra, Aftësi për punë ..., f. 31. [A. Pepa, E. Dhëmbo, E. Shehaj and S. Dibra, Ability to Work ..., p. 31.]

national and regional labor market and for social needs.

Priority treatment, in relation to other school links, was conditioned by the reform of the VET system "for the preparation of professionals who can be accredited by the EU vocational school system by making them competitors in the labor market, through the creation of of "vocational schools of excellence"<sup>95</sup>. Among the arguments brought in support of this idea, in addition to its economic importance, the MoSWY provided for the "rationalization of the network of VET providers from 52 to about 13" schools of excellence", which will be institutions with a more autonomous status. large, offering a better variety of short-term vocational education programs and courses. In total there are 12 professional directions, 29 profiles and 20 short-term courses that prepare qualified employees for professional profiles in the sectors of information and communication technology, construction, tourism and textiles. "Due to the small number of students enrolled in each department and the limited human and infrastructural resources, only 20 of the 29 profiles have been selected, some of them most sought after by the relevant economic sectors"<sup>96</sup>. This project is still under discussion since 2014 by the responsible ministry<sup>97</sup> and requires caution in making decisions regarding important issues, in particular the administration of the VET system and vocational education structures.

The idea of "solving" the narrowing of the gap between the need in the labor market and supply by the Albanian government becomes more complete enough to take a look at the statistics of time for VET from 2016 to 2019. In the school year In 2016-2017, 25,119 students were enrolled in vocational schools, with a slight decrease from 2015-2016<sup>97</sup>. But from enrollment to graduation, the sales are huge. INSTAT reported that, for the 2014-2015 school year, only 4,702 students received their high school diploma<sup>98</sup>. But the vocational education expert claims that, "despite the problems faced by the sector, the data show that the unemployed with vocational education are in a lower percentage compared to other categories. The unemployed with vocational education are only 11% according to 2016 data, as this percentage is more than double the number of unemployed with general education"<sup>99</sup>.

**Table 3: Pupils and students enrolled in education**

ISCED Levels	School / Academic year	2012 -2013	2013 -2014	2014 -2015	2015 -2016	2016 -2017
1 - 8	<b>Total:</b>	<b>719.509</b>	<b>704.782</b>	<b>665.994</b>	<b>622.156</b>	<b>596.624</b>
	<b>In 9-Year Education</b>					
1	In elementary school	198.897	195.720	188.371	179.564	174.836
2	In the upper cycle of basic education	191.940	181.354	175.037	163.935	153.264
3	<b>In Secondary Education</b>	<b>154.425</b>	<b>151.937</b>	<b>140.042</b>	<b>130.380</b>	<b>127.114</b>
	In secondary school	130.137	124.619	112.775	104.952	101.995
	In professional	24.288	273.18	272.67	25.428	25.119
4	In post-secondary education not higher	1.686	1.952	2.017	1.521	1.803
6+7+8	<b>In Higher Education</b>	<b>172.561</b>	<b>173.819</b>	<b>16.0527</b>	<b>146.756</b>	<b>139.607</b>

95 Blendi Klosi, "Si të përshatim nevojat e biznesit dhe aftësitë e orientuara drejt punësimit të të rinjve", në: Frank Hantke (Ed.), *Rezultate dhe Rekomandime të Konferencës Kombëtare: "Profesionet më të kërkuara* ◀▶ *Ekonomia shqiptare ka nevojë për aftësi të mi*" (3 Nëntor 2015), përkthyer nga: Evi Konjari dhe Adelina Albrahimi, botuar nga Fondacioni "Friedrich Ebert" në Shqipëri, Tiranë, f. 15.

[Blendi Klosi, "How to Adapt Business Needs and Skills Oriented Towards Youth Employment", in: Frank Hantke (Ed.), *Results and Recommendations of the National Conference: "The most demanded professions* ◀▶ *The Albanian Economy Needs*" (November 3, 2015), translated by: Evi Konjari and Adelina Albrahimi, published by the "Friedrich Ebert" Foundation in Albania, Tirana, p. 15.]

96 A. Pepa, E. Dhëmbjo, E. Shehaj dhe S. Dibra, *Aftësi për punë ...*, f. 102.[A. Pepa, E. Dhëmbjo, E. Shehaj and S. Dibra, *Ability to work ...*, p. 102.]

\* *The design of "vocational schools of excellence" in Albania was the result of political directives of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MoSWY). It was conceived as a process of change with strong and direct impact on the labor market and, once again, as an important aspect of economic reforms and an echo of political and social change. As such, the "schools of excellence" project also aims at restructuring the entire existing VET system, but is still being discussed by specialists from the Ministry of Finance and Economy. [Authors note].*

97 INSTAT, *Vjetari statistikor 2017 (më tej: Vjetari statistikor 2017 ... botim i Institutit të Statistikave, Tiranë: "Media - Print sh.p.k.", 2017, f. 47. Arsimi. [INSTAT, Statistical Yearbook 2017, (hereinafter: Statistical Yearbook 2017 ...), Publication of the Institute of Statistics, Tirana: "Media - Print sh.p.k.", 2017, p. 47. Education.]*

98 Po aty.[Ibid.]

99 Blerina Hoxha, "Arsimi profesional, drama e tregut të punës", në: *Panoram Online, f. 1. Material i publikuar në faqen web site: http://www.panorama.com.al/arsimi-profesional-drama-e-tregut-te-punes/* (I aksesuar më 21 shtator 2017).Blerina Hoxha, "Vocational Education, Labor Market Drama", in: *Panoram Online, p. 1. Material published on the web site: http://www.panorama.com.al/arsimi-profesional-drama-e-tregut-te-punes/* (Accessed on September 21, 2017).

**Table 4: Graduated according to the educational levels of pre-university education**

ISCED Levels	School / Academic year	2012 -2013	2013 -2014	2014 -2015	2015 -2016	2016 -2017
	<b>Graduates in education:</b>					
2	<b>Middle school</b>	50.380	47.819	44.139	44.001	43.084
3	<b>High school:</b>	40.927	45.899	35.254	39.629	38.583
	Professional (Only)	28.44	4.322	3.136	4.702	5.369
4	After high school not higher	242	145	164	125	335

According to statistics from the Ministry of Finance, in 2019-2020, the number of students attending vocational education is 19,300, with a growth rate of 35%. A total of 85 study profiles in the public system are offered in 35 vocational education schools<sup>100</sup>.

Although there is no traceability system for integrating those graduating from vocational education with the labor market, indirect data show that this category has had more chances of being employed. In this context, senior Albanian state officials are aware that "a better cooperation between VET and business and continuous communication with other actors in the process would narrow the gap between the need in the labor market and supply"<sup>101</sup>. According to the Minister of Finance and Economy, Anila Denaj, "in order to close this gap, we need to listen to the business and have an agreement between both parties on where we will go in the next 5 years, as these projections do not yield results after a year. "but after 5 years and based on that let's look at the profiles of the current 85 profiles and change them, as well as maybe change the locations"<sup>102</sup>.

Appreciating the assistance of international actors, the responsible VET bodies increased the cooperation in the framework of the implementation of policy recommendations and the contribution to the strategic orientation of schools and vocational training centers in our country. Their financial support has necessarily been irreplaceable for the underfunded system of vocational education and training in the country. International actors continue to play an important role by introducing successful VET models, which adapt them to the Albanian context. However, we think that this approach is considered too optimistic for the Albanian reality where the private sector is hesitant towards VET and is dominated by small and medium enterprises (SMEs)..

During the transition period, higher education, which was represented by a number of high schools and the only University of Tirana, also underwent reform. Higher education reform was generally accompanied by the transfer of higher education to universities. In them, changes were made to the preparation profiles and increase of the study deadlines and, what is more important, substantial changes were made in the curricula, in order to adapt to the new requirements and to equate the Albanian university diplomas with those of other countries, mainly Western, European and American, from which experience was gained<sup>103</sup>.

Development in higher education is in line with the general laws of the new political system. The **Law "On Higher Education in the Republic of Albania" of 1994**, was the starting point of new developments in "university and non-university high schools as teaching institutions, where the scientific activity had an implementing character and the field of higher education - changed"<sup>104</sup>. In this definition, although not mentioned by name, it is understood that it refers to the so-called "post-secondary education". So, legally the way for the establishment and development of post-secondary vocational education was open, despite the fact that it did not exist. It should be noted that the four new laws: **Law no. 8461, dated 25.02.1999**<sup>105</sup>, **Law no. 9741, dated 21.5.2007**<sup>106</sup>, **Law no. 69, dated 21.6.2012 "On higher education in**

100 *Ministria e Financave dhe Ekonomisë (MFE), "Denaj: Shkollat profesionale të orientuara drejt kërkesave të tregut të punës"*, në: Newsroom, postuar më: 10.09.2019, f. 1. Material i publikuar në faqen web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)

[Ministry of Finance and Economy (MFE), "Denaj: Vocational Schools Oriented Towards Labor Market Demands", in: Newsroom, posted on: 10.09.2019, p. 1. Material published on the web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)]

101 Po aty.[Ibid.]

102 Po aty.[Ibid.]

103 P. Bejtja; R. Reçi dhe A. Mustafaj, *Vështrim mbi arsimin ...*, f. 13.[P. Bejtja; R. Reçi and A. Mustafaj, *Overview on Education ...*, p. 13.]

104 Po aty, f. 252. *Kreu I, neni 4.*[Ibid., f. 252. Chapter I, Article 4.]

105 *Fletorja Zyrtare e Republikës së Shqipërisë, Nr. 9, 16 mars 1999, Tiranë, 1999, f. 273-286. 46 nene. Shfuqizohet Ligji Nr. 7810, datë 6.4.1994 "Për arsimin e lartë në Republikën e Shqipërisë", me ndryshimet e tij, si dhe dispozitat e tjera ligjore dhe aktet nënligjore, që lidhen me arsimin e lartë e që janë në kundërshtim me këtë ligj. Material i botuar në faqen web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)*

**the Republic of Albania**<sup>107</sup> - defined those specific trends and phenomena that put the Albanian stamp on it.

In each of the four organic laws, and in the interventions, the legislature has motivated its acts in the framework of the deep reform of the higher education system, for more standards, quality, transparency, autonomy and scientific research results. To this period belongs the approval of the first **National Strategy for Higher Education (SKALA) 2008-2013**, approved by decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM), no. 538, dated 12.08.2004 which "was drafted by higher education actors and policy makers, in accordance with the main European and global trends in this field"<sup>108</sup>.

In a way, the entire legal framework mentioned above was used by higher education institutions (HEIs) and served the Albanian economy, as a powerful tool to justify for a long time in the eyes of public opinion and especially in front of intellectuals, that "decentralization and autonomy were worth it to HEIs".

Analytical study of educational developments throughout the transition period, but in particular from 2005 to 2014, allows us to provide the state of education, problematic situations and the development of the system to answer the question of what was their impact on the life of the individual of the whole society, to come further in the analysis of the consequences in the near and distant future. First of all they were important and complex, leading to the creation of a new education system. The general trends are "the pace of rapid exponential expansion of the entire higher education system in all its components, both public and private"<sup>109</sup>. This was significantly served by the "opening and reactivation of the system of part-time studies (suspended in 2001), even in the fields of applied studies, technical, medical, etc., which are included in the regulated professions."<sup>110</sup>. Higher education, which is represented by a number of higher education institutions (HEIs), also underwent development. Until July 2014, the Albanian system presented the configuration as follows.

"A total of 59 institutions of higher education, 15 public and 44 non-public. Among them, 19 enjoy the status of university (12 public and 7 non-public), 5 college status (all non-public), 26 high schools (all non-public), 8 academy (2 public and 6 non-public), 1 institute (public, interuniversity center) and 17 branches (5 of public HEIs and 12 of non-public HEIs). The number of programs offered is a total of 1,560, of which 700 offered by public HEIs and slightly more by non-public HEIs. Divided by level of study, are: about 650 Bachelor programs, about 250 Professional Masters, about 350 Scientific Masters and about 100 third cycle programs, Doctorates and long-term specializations"<sup>111</sup>.

As the above data show, from the point of view of the number of students according to international standards / 1000 inhabitants, although many HEIs functioned, according to UNESCO and the World Bank, *Albania was ranked at that time after other countries for the number of young people of relevant age entering higher education and the total number of students in relation to the total population*. But compared to the per capita population, "in Albania there were about 20 HEIs per million inhabitants, almost eight times more than countries like the UK, which has internationalized higher

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[Official Gazette of the Republic of Albania, No. 9, March 16, 1999, Tirana, 1999, pp. 273-286. 46 Article. Law No. 7810, dated 6.4.1994 "On Higher Education in the Republic of Albania", with its amendments, as well as other legal provisions and bylaws related to higher education and which are in conflict with this law. Material published on the web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)]

106 Fletore Zyrtare e Republikës së Shqipërisë, Nr. 68, 16 qershor 2007, botimi Qendres së Botimeve Zyrtare, Tiranë: "Grafon", 2007, f. 1917-1962. Ligji Nr. 9741, date: 21.5.2007 "Për arsimin e lartë në Republikën e Shqipërisë". 101 nene. Material i botuar në faqen web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)

[Official Journal of the Republic of Albania, No. 68, June 16, 2007, Publication of the Center for Official Publications, Tirana: "Grafon", 2007, pp. 1917-1962. Law No. 9741, dated 21.5.2007 "On Higher Education in the Republic of Albania". 101 Article. Material published on the website: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)]

107 Fletorja Zyrtare e Republikës së Shqipërisë, Nr. 87, 26 korrik 2012, botimi Qendres së Botimeve Zyrtare, Tiranë: "Shtypshkronja e Qendres së Publikimeve Zyrtare", 2012, f. 4402-4426. Ligji Nr. 69, date: 21.6.2012 "Për arsimin e lartë në Republikën e Shqipërisë". 24 nene. Material i botuar në faqen web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)

[Official Gazette of the Republic of Albania, No. 87, July 26, 2012, publication of the Center for Official Publications, Tirana: "Printing House of the Center for Official Publications", 2012, pp. 4402-4426. Law No. 69, dated 21.6.2012 "On Higher Education in the Republic of Albania". 24 Article. Material published on the website: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)]

108 Po aty.

[Ibid.]

109 Komisioni për Arsimin e Lartë dhe Kërkimin Shkencor (KALKSH), Raporti përfundimtar për reformimin e arsimit të lartë dhe kërkimit shkencor (më tej: Raporti përfundimtar ...), Tiranë, Korrik 2014, f. 12.

[Commission for Higher Education and Scientific Research (KALKSH), Final Report on the Reform of Higher Education and Scientific Research (hereinafter: Final Report ...), Tirana, July 2014, p. 12]

110 Po aty.

[Ibid.]

111 Po aty, f. 13.

[Ibid., p. 13.]

education and has a very large percentage of foreign students. In terms of a country with 2.8 million inhabitants and an economy that invests, to date, no more than 40 million euros or 0.5% (0.4-0.6%) of its GDP in higher education, the number of HEIs at the national level remains, relatively, quite high<sup>112</sup>.

From an in-depth and detailed analysis of the functioning, management, organization and accreditation of HEIs, as well as from the evaluations made over the years by local and foreign institutions (MAS, WB, UNICEF, UNDP) it results that "The higher education system in Albania presented a series of complex problems, as well as did not fully respond to the current and future development needs of the country, both in terms of teaching and research"<sup>113</sup>.

Also, the rapid developments of the higher education system in Albania in the years 2008-2014 led to overlap of the academic offer of HEIs and lack of better adaptation of learning outcomes to market needs. Another shortcoming of the system was the pronounced and vertical centralization of decision-making. This was also caused by the lack of autonomy and full impartiality in decision-making by the above-mentioned national agencies and councils<sup>114</sup>.

Seen in this light we say that the quality of universities at that time left much to be desired. We underline that in practice, such diplomas were "produced" that create nothing but degradation of the country and pessimism in people who possess fictitious or in some cases even false diplomas. It is already known the awarding of many diplomas and repeated scandals, which really created a destabilization of higher education internationally. The opening of many universities outside the standards and the unfair competition could be curbed only with the intervention and control of the observance of the legal criteria by the Ministry of Education in 2014.

"After a control process of the legal and documentary basis, in August 2014 the Minister of Education and Sports (MAS) proposed the closure of 18 private universities and 6 branches of public universities. Also, there was a temporary suspension of activity for 13 other universities, one most of whom regained the right to the activity a month later. MAS decision was based on the controls exercised by its teams and had a positive public impact on both academic and university circles. "A number of private universities were publicly identified as abusive models of diploma traffic and without the minimum standards of the scientific institution"<sup>115</sup>.

Seen from this perspective, it seems that the changes would take on a comprehensive character outside of which no higher education institution would stand, that all basic documentation, curricula, programs, teaching practices, etc., would be subject to revision and radical change. , that the teaching-educational process would be conducted in full compliance with **Law no. 15/2015 "On higher education and scientific research in higher education institutions in the Republic of Albania"** and the **policies of the Albanian state**. The latter, more and more, would conceive of them as part of a "didactic" process, through which the Albanian high school would pass, but that only one thing would not change - the backbone, which would lead it in every direction and in every transformation, its autonomy and academic freedom. Echoing this important element of the new reform, MES would draw attention to the fact that "the new law enables the creation of a unified system of higher education, research in higher education institutions, contemporary and competitive innovation in space European higher education institutions; the establishment of sustainable quality assurance mechanisms in higher education institutions, in line with European standards; guaranteeing equal opportunities, on the basis of merit, for all individuals who want to pursue studies in education high etc."<sup>116</sup>.

The academic year 2016-2017 finds Albania with 34 HEIs, of which 22 are private and with a number of students of 146,746<sup>117</sup>. Despite the reduction of the number of HEIs in our country, the same phenomenon continues for almost thirty

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112 Jani Sota, "An Overview of the Main Phenomena and Trends That Accompanied The Development of Higher Education (1990 - 2013)", to: *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, Vol, 7, Issue 3, Indexing SCOPUS, Publisher De Gryter, Genthiner StraBE 13, d-10785 Berlin / Germany, Oëner: Mediterranean Center of Social and Educational Research, Rome, Italy. November 2018, pp. 43-54.  
113 [Ibid.]

114 J. Sota, *High Education in Post-Communist Albania* ..., p. 193. Jani Sota, *High Education in Post-Communist Albania 1992-2013 - With a Foreword by Prof.Ph.D. Antonello Biagini*, Berlin: "LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing", 2019, p. 192

115 Afrim Krasniqi, "Reforma në arsimin e lartë 2015-2018: risitë dhe problematikat", në: *Kuvendi Shqipërisë*, Kuvendi, Nr. 7/2017, përgatitur nga Shërbimi i Botimeve Parlamentare të Kuvendit të Shqipërisë, Tiranë, 2017, f. 72.

[Afrim Krasniqi, "Reform in Higher Education 2015-2018: Innovations and Issues", in: *Albanian Parliament, Assembly*, No. 7/2017, Prepared by the Parliamentary Publishing Service of the Albanian Parliament, Tirana, 2017, p. 72.]

116 Fletore Zyrtare e Republikës së Shqipërisë Nr. 164, 21 shtator 2015, Tiranë: "Shtypshkronja e Qendrës së Publikimeve Zyrtare", 2015, f. 11449-11450. Ligji Nr. 15/2015, datë 27.7.2015 "Për arsimin e lartë dhe kërkimin shkencor në institucionet e arsimit të lartë në Republikën e Shqipërisë". Neni 1. Material i botuar në faqen web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)

[Official Journal of the Republic of Albania, No. 164, September 21, 2015, Tirana: "Printing House of the Center for Official Publications", 2015, pp. 11449-11450. Law No. 15/2015, dated 27.7.2015 "On Higher Education and Scientific Research in Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Albania". Article 1. Material published on the web site: [www.qpz.gov.al](http://www.qpz.gov.al)]

117 INSTAT, *Vjetari statistikor 2017* ..., f. 49-50.



years, that education and the labor market develop unrelated to each other and do not respond to national priorities to keep pace with the times. We are illustrating it with an example. In 2016, 59.2% of graduate students in higher education graduated. The remaining 40% consists mainly of those who graduate in the second cycle study programs (Master) and a small percentage in the third cycle study program (Doctorate)<sup>118</sup>. From the comparison of graduates in higher education during the period 2012-2016, between broad fields of study, it results that the largest number of them, belongs to the field of social sciences, business and law. The second place is occupied by the field of health and welfare, however the number of graduates in this field is 1/3 of those in the field of social in 2016, which goes up to 2/5 in 2015 and 2016. Natural sciences and engineering, still hold not very high values among graduates, however have an increase of 1.2% compared to 2012 and 2016<sup>119</sup>.

The autumn of 2017 would highlight another phenomenon, that of increasing job demand for specialists and technicians in some branches of the economy and oversupply in other areas for which there is less demand.

"In a balance sheet that the Ministry of Social Welfare has made for employment needs in various sectors, it has found that in businesses such as agriculture and agro-processing, clothing and footwear production, tourism, construction, transport, communications, energy, There is a shortage of specialists and technicians in the field of information and communication technology. There are very few graduates in highly demanded fields, such as technologists, accountants, agronomists, production managers, textile engineers, mechanical engineers, IT specialists, analysts and programmers. In addition, university programs are mainly theoretical and have shortcomings in terms of practical skills. On the other hand, there are a large number of graduates in such fields as educational studies, business administration, finance, law, English, history and geography. This result leads to distortion of the labor market, lack of labor supply, while there is demand for labor and oversupply in other areas for which there is less demand. Surveys by the Ministry of Welfare show that more than 50% of students graduating from Vocational Education and Training (VET) apply for university studies and many of them enroll in private universities, even in profiles that have nothing to do with profiles, which they attended in vocational schools"<sup>120</sup>.

Keeping businesses away from vocational education schools and vice versa is one of the main problems in this system and all measures taken so far to address this problem have not been successful. Further, the analysis made by the government itself shows that, "even the management, methods and culture of teaching are far from those found in advanced vocational education systems. Most students who enroll in vocational schools are people with "Low school results. Many of them think that it is easier to pass the class in AP schools"<sup>121</sup>.

In Albania, there is currently a lack of a professional orientation towards a market economy, which shows young people how many staff are required if a vocational school or a faculty is to be completed. Recently, thousands of young people are invading western states. On the other hand, these states want qualified people rather than people who come out of misery. Vocational education and training are considered one of the EU policies to become a competitive knowledge-based economy.

Taking into account the conclusions of the study conducted and especially from the data of official statistical indicators on the relationship of education with the labor market, as well as our experience in teaching in this area, we can say that the education system in Albania is reorienting to the needs of the overseas labor market than the country.

Critically, the main challenge is to develop a system and institutions that prepare productive staff in the labor markets, to become active citizens and to contribute to Albania's competitiveness with EU countries. Although theoretically there is talk of a variety of experiences on how to organize education in favor of the labor market, there would be many chances that the number of unemployed young people would be smaller. Studies conducted by ISTAT, clearly show that these two variables are closely related to each other. In many cases, there is an increasing trend. You may have completed high school, but you can not get a job or "defend" the degree given by the university, depending on

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[INSTAT, *Statistical Yearbook 2017 ...*, pp. 49-50.]

118 Po aty, f. 44.

[Ibid., p. 44.]

119 Po aty, f. 45.

[Ibid., p. 45.]

120 Blerina Hoxha, "Arsimi profesional, drama e tregut të punës", në: *Panoram Online*, f. 1. Material i publikuar në web site: <http://www.panorama.com.al/arsimi-profesional-drama-e-tregut-te-punes/> (I aksesuar në 21 shtator 2017).

[Blerina Hoxha, "Vocational Education, Labor Market Drama", in: *Panoram Online*, p. 1. Material published on the web site: <http://www.panorama.com.al/arsimi-profesional-drama-e-tregut-te-punes/> (Accessed on September 21, 2017).]

121 Po aty.

[Ibid.]

the position of the job. This phenomenon is happening today with HEI graduates, but especially with young people leaving private high schools. So obvious is this tendency that we can rightly say that higher education has become routine and passive.

In these conditions, the *dilemmas of the Albanian youth are obvious, nowadays is it professional or university education?* Experiences so far have shown that any investment in the education sector affects the development of the country. Despite the dilemmas that "unemployment" and "poverty" are on the rise, the youth of our country are optimistic about the future. The main challenge for the Albanian society remains the planning and implementation of a proper program in vocational education and training. Inclusive vocational education is of particular importance for employment, economic development and open opportunities for integration into society.

Importantly, "over 22.5 percent of the population participated in formal education for 2017-2018", which means that a significant number of Albanian families were included in the school system. The transition to a global market economy and in a more open regime, Albanians had a great need to acquire new skills to "face new changes"<sup>122</sup>.

Naturally, the question arises: What should be done? Timely orientation, either by parents or teachers for the profession after the completion of 9-year education of children. Orientation for vocational schools and the continuation of university studies in technical branches should function as "small economic enterprises", to be the main pillars for the development of future enterprises, manufacturing and service.

#### 4. Conclusion

Multilateral analysis of the main phenomena and trends in the development and consolidation of inclusive education at all levels and oriented towards the profession, allows us to draw some conclusions. The years 2008-2018 would be decisive for the development and consolidation of vocational education as one of the most important categories of the Albanian education system and higher education.

Developments in this area are in line with changes in all Albanian post-communist education. In addition to the general features, under the influence of various economic, political and social factors, where undoubtedly the most dominant would be that of adaptation, legal improvement and completion of strategies for the system of education and vocational training and higher education.

The Albanian state stimulated and financially supported the expansion of VET and HEIs, the provision of scholarships to a significant part of students, the training of pedagogical and scientific staff and their qualification, strengthened cooperation with international actors interested in the development of education Albanian, especially the professional one. This strong support, especially for the early years of democracy, but no less important during the study period, was related to two factors: First, the state remained interested in capacity development (education and professional development of the educational staff; reconstruction of the existing school infrastructure and equipping of cabinets; increase of budgetary and non-budgetary funds for education) and, second, the inclusion of new educational profiles and activities according to the needs of the labor market, but within a very fast time.

The education policy, reflected in the legislation prepared in these years, would also outline the appearance of the future education system. The vision of this system formalized with the Constitution of 2009 and further in the laws of pre-university and university education reform during the period 1992-2017, would take the most complete look and physiognomy in the years 2008-2018, but far from being "citizens of satisfied".

Although in essence, the policy of the Albanian state aimed at following the model of Western schools, for many reasons in practice the expected results were not achieved. The transition from a controlled economy to a decentralized economy, entirely oriented towards the private sector, brought drastic changes in the functioning of the labor market and the education system in general and the vocational education in particular, in line with the reality of a free market economy, which also led to the restructuring of education, training and employment policies in the labor market.

In accordance with the conditions of the time when the needs for senior specialists and secondary technicians were great - opening, shortening and closing of educational institutions (vocational-technical schools and HEIs) as well as branches, directions or profiles during the years 1992- In 2018, there were large oscillations which showed that they were not studied based on the needs for specialists according to the directions it had and the economy has in meeting the needs of the labor market of senior specialists and middle technicians.

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<sup>122</sup> *Këshilli i Ministrave i Republikës së Shqipërisë dhe Organizata e Kombeve të Bashkuara, Programi i Bashkëpunimit për Zhvillim të Qëndrueshëm 2017-2021, përkthim zyrtar, botim i Kuadrit për Zhvillim të Qëndrueshëm i Kombeve të Bashkuara, Tiranë, 2017, f. 25.*  
[The Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the United Nations, Sustainable Development Cooperation Program 2017-2021, Official translation, publication of the United Nations Framework for Sustainable Development, Tirana, 2017, p. 25.]

The main phenomena identified during the period under study for VET, would be those related to discrepancies between the directions and educational profiles offered and the demands of the labor market; lack of effective cooperation of VET providers with businesses (companies and companies); with overlapping directions of VET service profiles; with the lack to reflect in time the dynamic demands of the labor market at local and national level, etc. Curricula also remained the weak point. Despite the work done by both the responsible ministries and AKAFPK, it turns out that there has not been and there are no indicators on measuring the adequacy of VET curricula with today's and future labor market.

An integral part of the activity of the education system would be that of higher education, which would recognize its ups and downs, in accordance with the stages of economic and social development of the country. After facing the first difficulties to adapt to the basic international documents for higher education and learning, from the analysis of the whole process of expansion and consolidation of higher education can be concluded: first, the lack of knowledge, adaptation and analysis of the development of the activity of the higher education system has a negative impact; in its quality and massiveness; hitting the reputation created over the years for universities and colleges; determining the needs for qualified and well-trained teachers who guarantee the quality of teaching and learning; etc. Second, encountering difficulties in completing high quality and evolving curricula to reflect in time the dynamic demands of the labor market; creating a discrepancy between the educational offer offered and the demands of the labor market; creating mistrust and severing effective cooperation of HEI providers with actors (businesses, companies and companies) operating in the labor market; creating unwanted overlap of service offers to HEIs; etc.

Seen from a realistic point of view, both in terms of comprehensive expansion where the results are more tangible and quality, the development of the education system requires adaptations, legal improvements and the completion of the strategy for the system of VET and HEIs with in order for this system to move at the pace of time, in order to orient towards the profession and strengthen the labor market - as a system with many opportunities for education and employment.

In conclusion, we think that the great problems of inclusive, profession-oriented education cannot be mentioned in one article, or even in many such articles. Quality problems remain undoubtedly the most essential, but knowing the labor market and preparing young people for this market, which will soon be not only Albanian, I think requires a lot of thought and dedication.

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