



ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH ON LEVEL 5 EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS AT VET SCHOOLS IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO

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List of Abbreviations

MEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
AVETAE	Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education
NQA	National Qualification Authority
KPI	Kosovo Pedagogical Institute
MED	Municipal Education Directorate
CoC	Center of Competence
VUSS	Vocational Upper Secondary School
TUSS	Technical Upper Secondary School
VETI	Vocational Education and Training Institution
HEI	Higher Education Institution
DVV	Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (DVV International)
ETF	European Training Foundation
Cedefop	European Center for the Development of Vocational Training
ILO	International Labor Organization
NDS	National Development Strategy
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
KESP	Kosovo Education Strategic Plan
MTPT	Former Ministry of Transport and Post Telecommunications
MI	Ministry of Infrastructure



AI	Administrative Instruction
HACT	Heating and Air Conditioning Technician
WWT	Water and Wastewater Technician
ICT	Information and Communications Technology

1. FOREWORD

In recent years, the education system in Kosovo is making greater efforts to ensure faster improvement in the state of affairs. The sooner a considerable number of market economy challenges and needs are met, the better we will get closer to achieving the objectives stemming from multiple documents developed by the Government of Kosovo, Ministry of Education Science and Technology and other relevant institutions in the country, often supported with the expertise of the most developed countries of the European Union. Most of the existing documents regarding education in Kosovo, and especially documents prepared for vocational education and training and adult education highlight the need for greater cooperation between vocational schools and the business community in the regions where they are located, for purposes of better adaptation at vocational schools in offering educational profiles that meet the demands of the most developed sectors of the economy in those regions.

AVETAE as a new institution aims to strongly support the development of VET in Kosovo, and in line with European standards to enable:

- Meeting the needs of the labor market while keeping up with the changes in modern technology, and in the economic and social development of the country;
- Ensuring social partnership at all levels and at all stages of planning, development and implementation of VET programs;
- Mainstreaming education, training and work in the perspective of lifelong learning;
- Developing a European dimension of VET, ensuring transparency in qualifications and approximation of competences with the common European market.

Since early 2016, the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETAE) in Kosovo is a member of the European Association of Institutes for Vocational Training (EVBB) based in Brussels, which is an umbrella association of various organizations and state institutions, education coordination institutes and

educational providers at the national, regional, and local level from different European countries. The main objective of EVBB operations is to improve the quality of vocational education and training in European countries, create opportunities and conditions for a mobile labor force with the right occupational skills according to European market demands.

Being cognizant of the new challenges around the world, and of the phenomena with a huge impact on educational, economic, social, and political developments, AVETAE was established as a response to such developments. Kosovo is persistent in its pursuit of reforming vocational education and training, aiming to ensure that this part of Kosovo's education system shall forge employability skills. Therefore, the agency has assumed the obligation to ensure that vocational schools shall prepare their attendants for the labor market and provide opportunities for higher postsecondary and undergraduate studies, as the decision to establish the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education was preceded by the goal to reform the vocational education sector to ensure that the students' acquired skills and their competencies are equivalent to those of their peers in the education systems of EU countries. In recent years, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), supported by donors, has reformed the vocational education and training system in Kosovo and as a result of these reforms, Centers of Competence have been established with funding from the Government of Norway and the Government of Luxembourg. Centers of Competence differ from vocational schools for their modern infrastructure, equipment, quality of teaching, implementation of practical training of students, cooperation with businesses, implementation of modular curricula, cooperation with local and international institutions, and development of business models. As of today, there are six vocational schools under AVETAE management in Kosovo: VUSS "Shtjefën Gjeçovi" in Prishtina, VUSS "11 Marsi" in Prizren, Center of Competence in Skenderaj, Center of Competence in Malishevë, Center of Competence in Ferizaj, and Center of Competence in Prizren, which also have a multi-functional role because, in addition to regular three-year programs, they also provide short courses for all adults who need to receive new

qualification, retrain or advance their knowledge and competences to better respond to labor market needs. Subsequently, for the first time in the formal education system in Kosovo, AVETAE launched the fifth level of the “Special Educational Needs Teaching Assistant” and “Career Guidance Counselor” qualifications developed by PEARSON, a prestigious British institution, with funding provided for the Lux Development project as well.

Finally, the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETAE) in cooperation with the country office of the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association, also known as DVV International, launched a research project on Level 5 education qualifications, in the field of Vocational Education and Training, according to the National Framework of Qualifications in Kosovo. This effort places special focus on the field needs analysis and research to ensure the implementation of Level 5 qualifications at the vocational secondary schools and Centers of Competence in Kosovo.

The organization that provided the budget necessary to carry out the research and analysis related to the “Field Needs to Launch the Implementation of Level 5 Qualifications at Vocational Secondary Schools and Centers of Competence in Kosovo”, is the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (DVV International).

1.1. Cooperation between DVV International and AVETAE

DVV International has been supporting and developing adult education in Kosovo since 2005. The aim of DVV International is to build an effective and quality education system for adult education and lifelong learning.

DVV International provides worldwide support to national efforts to anchor adult education strategies in the fight against poverty. Therefore, DVV International in Kosovo qualifies decision-makers and links their engagement with regional and international approaches as part of the follow-up process to the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education – confintea VI, but also with regard to the requirements arising out of the prospect of accession to the EU. Central issues here are the financing of adult education through the public budget, improving the quality and scope of adult learning opportunities (validation and accreditation of institutions and courses), as well as ensuring inclusive non-discriminatory participation of adults in the education process.

The main focus of the work of DVV International in Kosovo in cooperation with the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETAE) is directed at training of teachers and trainers on the methodology and didactics of adult education aiming to contribute to quality improvement and further development of vocational education for adults at vocational secondary schools and Centers of Competence. DVV International in cooperation with AVETAE is also involved in the improvement of existing, and development of new, curricula and programs for adult education, including modular programs for Level 5 qualifications, which with better cooperation between line ministries, NGOs, businesses and private education institutions, can begin implementation in vocational secondary schools and Centers of Competence in Kosovo.

In recent years, and not only in our country but generally at a global level, markets are experiencing a dynamic and complex mobility in terms of jobs and skills to perform jobs,



requiring faster adaptation and better match up between the offer of vocational education and training schools and labor market requirements. Better understanding such labor market dynamics due to the rapid developments in technology, helps take their significant impact into consideration when changing educational policy agendas in many countries around the world.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research on the need to implement Level 5 qualifications in vocational schools in the Republic of Kosovo will serve the needs of AVETAE, MEST, and other actors in Kosovo, as a guide to developing curricula and relevant educational programs for this level of qualifications, based on the specifics of the national labor market, with the additional aim of providing information on capacity building needs of vocational secondary schools. The implementation of this research effort is based on data collected in the field from a specific number of vocational schools and Centers of Competence, including all regions in the Republic of Kosovo, to establish whether the schools are able to start implementing Level 5 qualifications. In our country, there are different reference documents or strategies at the governmental, ministerial and municipal level, which aim to direct the development of education, vocational education in particular, by providing the specific mission, vision, strategic objectives, measures and indicators. Such strategic documents have also been accompanied by relevant implementation plans, which establish budgets, implementation periods, responsible entities and priorities for each of the foreseen measures. However, it can be stated that most of these documents do not address in adequate and specific terms Level 5 educational qualifications. It is deemed that there are few public and private institutions that provide training programs for Level 5 qualifications at national level, while in many meetings organized by various governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as relevant foreign organizations in country, the business community is constantly voicing concerns about the need for better qualified skilled workers for certain sectors of the economy, and the need to improve and change existing educational programs in vocational education.

This document aims to open an information window concerning the situation at this level of vocational education, with the hope that in the future there will be other research in this regard, and in particular more in-depth research on the needs of businesses and how these fare against what is on offer by vocational schools. The initiators of this effort



(AVETAE in concert with DVV-International) are aware that the initiative does not fully bridge the existing gap in terms of the necessary information related to the prospect of implementing Level 5 qualifications in vocational schools, as in the future it is also essential to work with the businesses operating in different economic sectors at regional and national level.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research involved conducting a survey, by means of a questionnaire and subsequent analysis, comparison, and interview, which was specifically designed for this purpose by experts engaged in the project, and approved by the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education. This research collected important information from VET schools regarding the situation in these schools and the prospect of implementing Level 5 qualifications. Such information provides opportunities to make assessments, analyses and comparisons between profiles on offer by VET schools, but also the prospects of the current education system regarding this level in Kosovo.

For this purpose, the questionnaire was developed to include questions regarding general and specific information about the current situation in VET schools and the realistic prospects for introducing Level 5 qualifications. The questionnaire contains a total of 15 questions that are designed to be interrelated.

At the beginning, the questionnaire refers to general information on the knowledge about Level 5 qualifications in Kosovo, including general knowledge of this level, governing legislation and relevance of implementation at VET schools.

Next, the questionnaire covers other relevant information concerning the existing teaching staff capacities at VET schools surveyed for this purpose, specifically their assessment of the feasibility of implementing Level 5 qualifications, including the teaching component, which is quite important for the implementation of this level.

Another important component included in the questionnaire is the collection, and subsequent analysis, of information from VET schools regarding their preparedness to implement Level 5 qualifications in certain profiles, where the school has the right capacities and based on the labor market demands.



Further, the final part of the questionnaire covers important information to provided by VET schools on the prospects of cooperation between schools and businesses regarding agreements leading to internship opportunities for candidates attending studies at this level. Additionally, the questionnaire seeks to collect information on the training that school representatives think should be completed by the teachers to be able to teach at this level.

The research was developed and managed by project experts hired by AVETAE and DVV-International in Kosovo. For research purposes, it was foreseen to interview officials from relevant institutions involved in Vocational Education and Training, specifically those that developed the relevant documentation, or have been dealing with Level 5 qualifications.

4. RELEVANT NATIONAL DOCUMENTS GOVERNING LEVEL 5 QUALIFICATIONS

Though Level 5 qualifications represent a relatively new level of qualification being implemented in both public and private education in Kosovo, there are documents that in a fragmented way govern the applicability and functioning of this level.

Law No. 04/L-138 on Vocational Education and Training, provides that qualifications and modules of post secondary education that belong to Level 5 of NQF that are professional or academic are provided also from vocational education and training institutions (VETI).

Law No. 03/L-060 on National Qualifications provides that MEST or, where appropriate, other responsible ministries may require public education and training programs to lead only to specified qualifications approved by the NQA. This is regulated by secondary legislation issued by the responsible institutions.

An important document that addresses the prospects of implementing Level 5 qualifications, under job skills, is the National Development Strategy (NDS), an official document of the Government of Kosovo, as a plan for sustainable development. This document further states that: The Government should establish formal VET programs following secondary education, within Centers of Competence, with flexible programs to better meet the needs for personal change and development, and encourage schools to offer courses for adults outside regular school hours, made available on a payment basis.

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is the main document regulating the types and levels of qualifications awarded under the formal and informal vocational education and training system in both public and private institutions. In addition to other levels, NQF provides a descriptor for Level 5, entry and exit criteria for this level. The NQF is a national mechanism for the classification of qualifications awarded under the national qualification system, according to types of qualifications and level descriptors.

Another important document in the education system at the national level is the Kosovo Education Strategic Plan (KESP) by MEST. In KESP, in the framework of planning around strategic objectives and relevant measures, Strategic Objective 6. Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education, lists “very limited offer for level 5 of the KCF” [NCF] among main challenges.

The expected results under KESP provide for an enhanced education offer at Level 5 qualifications through:

- Identification of needs for Level 5 qualifications,
- Development of new programs for attaining qualification at Level 5 post-secondary education,
- Provide new Level 5 post-secondary qualification programs at VETIs, particularly at Centers of Competence.

Centres of Competence (CoCs), managed by AVETAE, are a new concept of VET institutions aimed at facilitating a major departure from content-based to competency-based curriculum, while providing excellent preparation for the labor market. Centers have superb facilities, good links with the labor market, and are supposed to serve as a model for vocational schools in Kosovo and the region.

Additionally, there is Administrative Instruction (MEST) No. 07/2017 for Establishing Employment Relationship for Teachers and Instructors of the 5th Level, which regulates the establishment of the employment relationship for teachers and instructors of the 5th level of Vocational Education and Training Institutions (VETI) and Higher Education Institutions (HEI).

As noted above, there are relevant institutions and documents that deal with Level 5 education qualifications, however we are yet to have a clear policy and documents harmonized by relevant actors that would drive the proper implementation of this level of qualifications.



To this end, running in parallel to this research, MEST recently launched an initiative for drafting an Administrative Instruction or Regulation on the Organization of Teaching at Level 5 Qualifications, aiming to regulate the provision of Level 5 qualifications of MEST VETIs.

5. QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT

The research team (Working Group) has taken several steps to preparing the questionnaire format and drafting the questions. The team reviewed several formats of questionnaires used in various research efforts, and finally it was decided that the format of the questionnaire should refer to documents related to education in general. Therefore, the questionnaire format model is mainly based on the European Training Foundation (ETF) guidelines on anticipating and matching demand and supply of skills, related to conducting research studies. The guidelines were prepared by ETF in cooperation with the European Center for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and the International Labor Organization (ILO). Other reference documents for the development of the questionnaire and the research as a whole include:

- ✓ Kosovo Education Indicators, prepared by MEST;
- ✓ Annual Statistical Reports with education indicators;
- ✓ Kosovo Education Statistics;
- ✓ Adult Education and Training in Vocational Schools in Kosovo, Research Report, prepared by the Kosovo Pedagogical Institute (KPI) and DVV-International;
- ✓ Kosovo Education Indicator Framework;
- ✓ Research Analysis - Involving Youth in Developing Vocational Education, prepared by the Initiative for Progress (INPO);
- ✓ Pilot Phase Data, prepared by AVETAE.

After determining the questionnaire format, the Working Group prepared the questions for the questionnaire, with both open and closed-ended options. The draft questionnaire format and the prepared questions were discussed at a workshop organized (by AVETAE with funding from DVV-International) specifically for this purpose, where participants included representatives of MEST, AVETAE, DVV-International, NQA, KPI and the headmasters or representatives of several vocational schools in Kosovo, including all



regions of Kosovo. The Working Group welcomed comments and recommendations regarding the format of the questionnaire and the questions in the questionnaire, and at the same time included these in the revision. The questionnaire was then addressed to the vocational schools, namely the management of vocational schools, which had participated in the workshop and at the same time received the relevant information and contributed to the questionnaire.

The questionnaire addressed to the vocational schools is presented in the following table.

Table 1. Questionnaire Format Development.



Questionnaire

Field needs analysis and research to ensure the implementation of Level 5 qualifications at VET schools

This questionnaire is initiated by **AVETAE** (Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education) in cooperation with **DVV-International**, administered to **VET** (Vocational Education and Training) schools and aims to obtain information for a field needs analysis and research to ensure the implementation of Level 5 qualifications at vocational higher secondary schools.

Name of school: _____

Location: _____

Rating scale:

Please provide a rating for the questions listed in the table below. Ratings should be based on the following scale: 1-Not at all; 2-Somewhat; 3-Average; 4-Above Average; 5-Very. Also, some of the questions require written comments.

Questionnaire for Upper Secondary Vocational Schools. Analysis and Research on Level 5 Qualifications, based on the National Qualifications Framework.						
1	What is the meaning of Level 5 qualifications?					
2	To what extent are you knowledgeable of the applicable legislation governing Level 5 qualifications	Not at all Very				
		1	2	3	4	5
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Do you think Level 5 qualifications are important?					
4	To what extent do you think it is important to provide Level 5 qualifications?	Not at all Very				
		1	2	3	4	5
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Should other primary or secondary legal acts regulate this level of qualifications, Yes / No. If so, what?					

6	What teaching staff capacities do you think should be further developed to provide Level 5 qualifications at your institution?					
7	To what extent do you think there is a need for capacity building for the teaching staff to be able to provide Level 5 qualifications in your institution?	Not at all				Very
		1	2	3	4	5
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	What profiles do you consider to be the most appropriate or sought after in the labor market in terms of Level 5 qualifications?					
9	Upon acquiring Level 5 qualifications, to what extent do you think a candidate will be more competitive in positioning in the job market?	Not at all				Very
		1	2	3	4	5
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Do you think that your institution has adequate capacity to provide Level 5 qualifications, Yes / No, if yes, in which profiles?					
11	To what extent is your school ready to provide Level 5 education qualifications?	Not at all				Very
		1	2	3	4	5
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Does your institution provide Level 5 qualifications, or did it provide such qualifications in the past, Yes / No, if yes, in which profiles?					
13	Do you think there is an adequate legal basis for recruiting teachers and instructors for Level 5 qualifications?	Not at all				Very
		1	2	3	4	5
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Do you think that the businesses with which your institution co-operates would be interested in deepening the co-operation to include accepting candidates for internships at Level 5 qualifications?					
15	What type of training do you think is needed for the teachers who will teach at this level?					

6. QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE ANALYSIS

The questionnaire listed fifteen questions requiring responses from the representatives of vocational schools in the country. The questions in the questionnaire are quite diverse, both open and closed-ended, where in the case of closed-ended questions it is required to give a rating in the scale from one to five (1-Not at all; 2-Somewhat; 3-Average; 4-Above Average, 5-Very), further it is required to answer statements with “Yes” or “No”, while in the case of open-ended questions, there was space provided to freely answer such questions in writing. Although most of the school representatives to whom the questionnaire was addressed had participated in the workshop where the form and content of the questionnaire was discussed, nevertheless ample time was provided to reflect on the questions in the questionnaire and respective responses. The questionnaire was administered to representatives of 18 schools from 12 towns in Kosovo, while the following figure maps the towns where the schools are located.

Representatives of vocational schools who participated in the first workshop organized by AVETAE and DVV-International and weighed in on Level 5 qualifications at vocational schools in Kosovo, had the additional opportunity to participate and provide feedback at a second workshop, where the draft report was presented and ample time was allowed to provide inputs to ensure the most accurate presentation of the research findings.

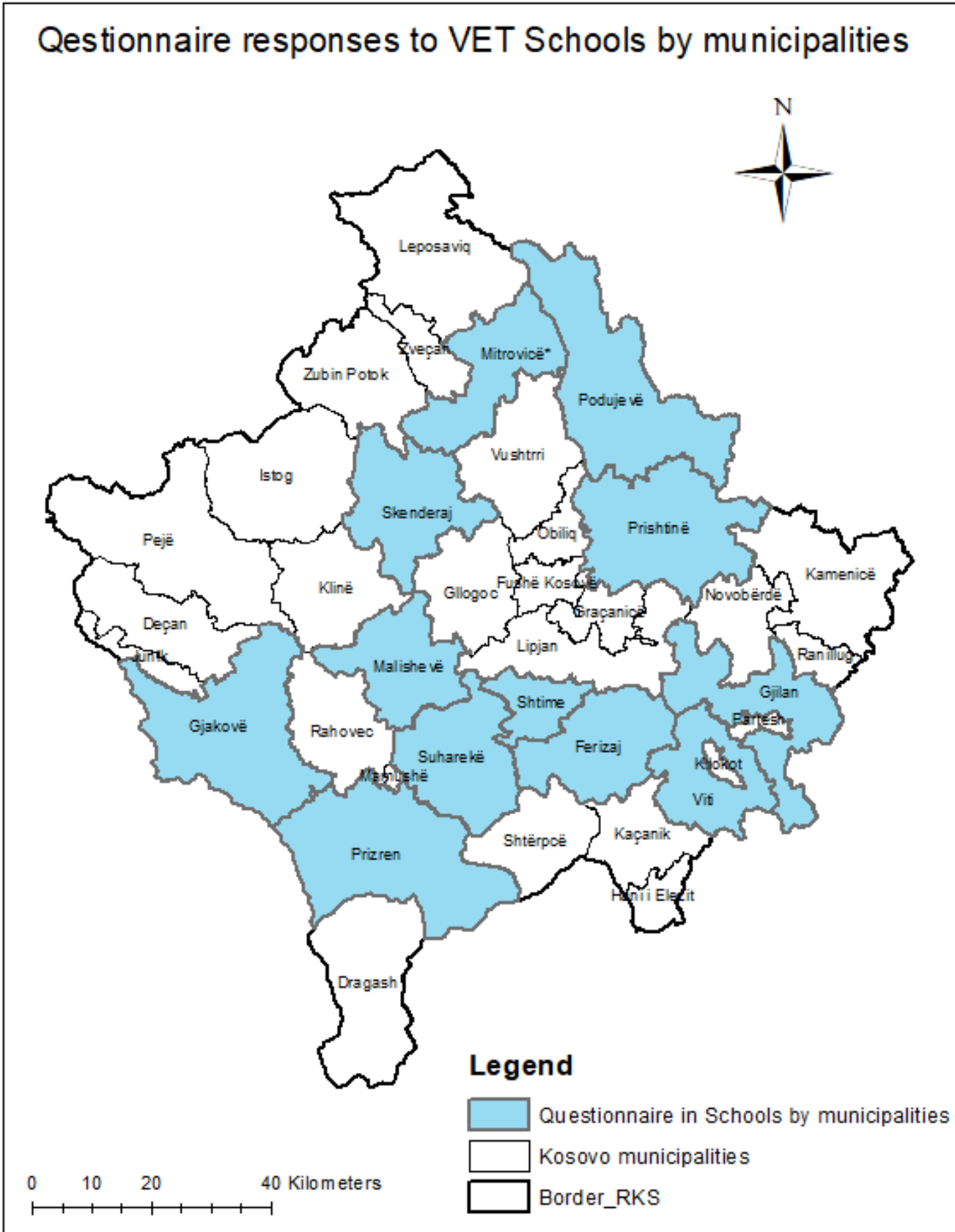


Figure 1. Territorial distribution of VET schools participating in the research.

6.1. “What is the meaning of Level 5 qualifications?”, Question (Q)1

Responses to Q1 in the Questionnaire

In general, school representatives answered this question as follows:

- post secondary qualification equipping candidates with certain occupational skills,
- expansion of knowledge, skills with vocational programs, enhancement the competences in a particular field,
- equivalent to the higher schools in the previous education system, much needed for our schools, responds to the labor market demands and needs, would be valid only for the vocational field,
- geared to preparing students for employment as senior or specialist technicians, specialization in the respective profile,
- advanced qualification in an occupation, improved recognition of qualifications according to labor market needs, improves access to evaluation and transfer,
- in accordance with the Bologna Process and Dublin Descriptors for higher education, such qualifications lie between upper secondary education and final Bachelor level courses,
- at this level, the candidate attains higher level knowledge in the relevant field and is able to conduct works in the particular line of occupation.

In the informational session on the research held with the school representatives at the first workshop, in some cases some of the school representatives asked for additional information regarding the knowledge on Level 5 qualifications, as it was understood that Level 5 qualifications are not yet offered by VET schools, and in some cases there is a lack of knowledge of Level 5 qualifications. Additional existing documents related to Level 5 qualifications were delivered to the schools following the meeting, in order to have more clarity in completing the research questionnaire.

From the responses provided by school representatives to the questionnaire regarding the first question, it can be concluded that generally VET schools have basic knowledge about the existing documents that govern Level 5 qualifications.

6.2. “To what extent are you knowledgeable of the applicable legislation governing Level 5 qualifications”, Q2

Responses to Q2 in the Questionnaire

The second question is from the set of questions where it is required to respond with a rating ranging from one to five according to this ranking: (1-None; 2-Little; 3-Average; 4-Above Average; 5-Very). Each of the school representatives to whom the questionnaire was addressed gave an answer to this question.

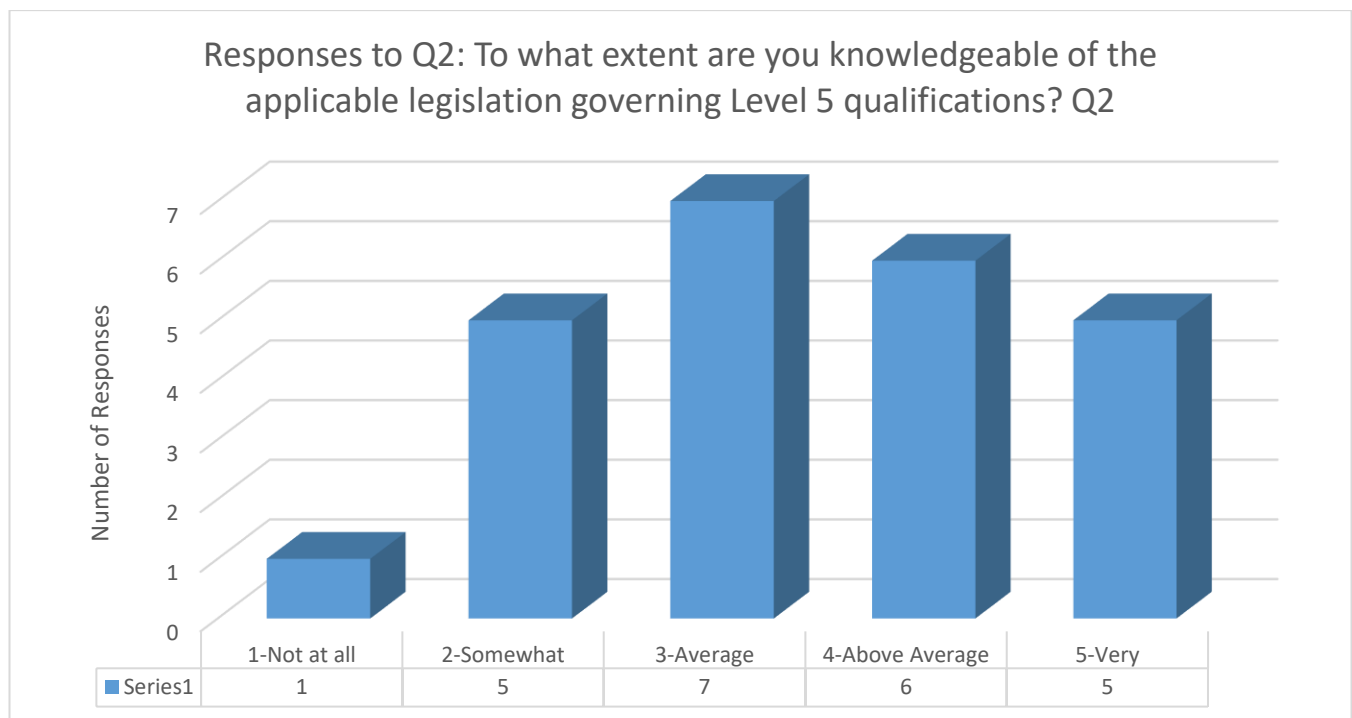


Figure 2. Graphic representation of responses regarding the knowledge of the applicable legislation governing Level 5 qualifications.

The ratings given by the respondents to the second question are provided in the chart above, where it can be noted that in general (more than one half) have “average” and

“above average” knowledge related to the applicable legislation governing Level 5 qualifications. There is only one case where the respondent stated having no knowledge regarding the applicable legislation governing Level 5 qualifications.

6.3. “Do you think Level 5 qualifications are important?” Q3

Responses to Q3 in the Questionnaire

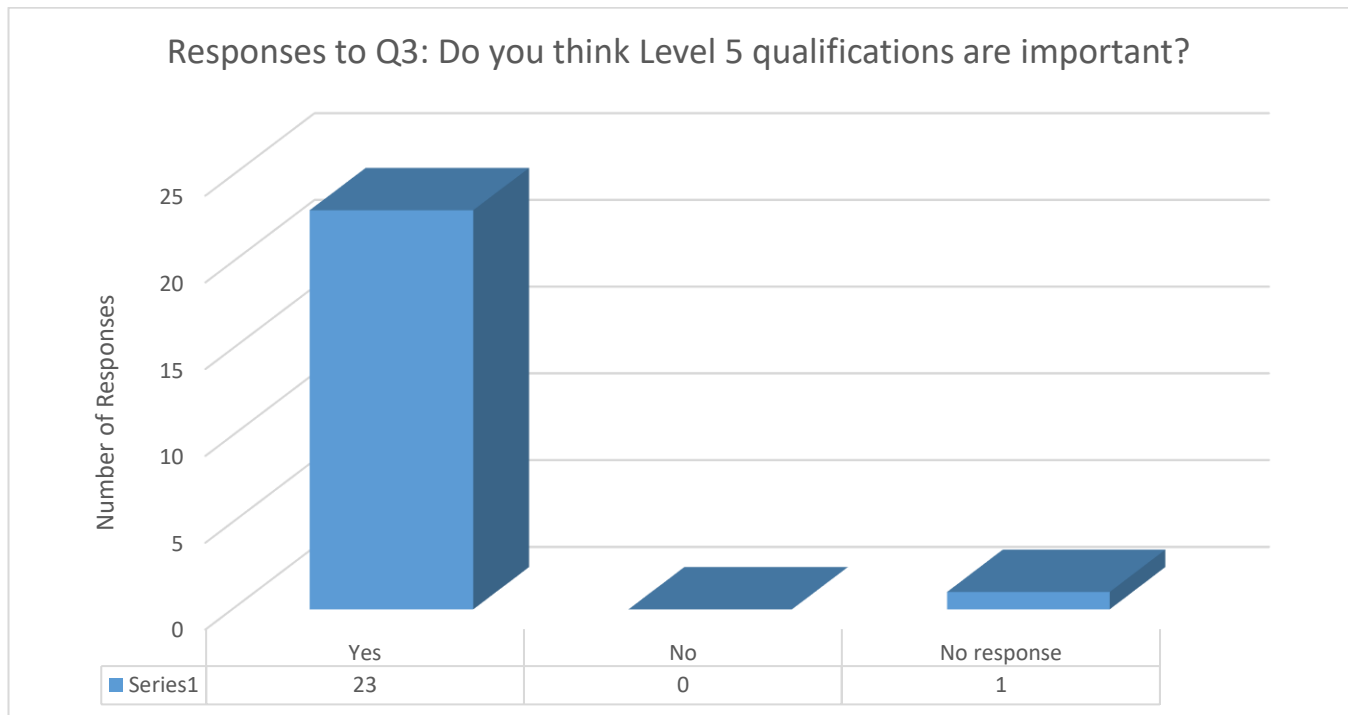


Figure 3. Graphic representation of responses regarding the importance of Level 5 qualifications.

From the answers to the third question “Do you think Level 5 qualifications are important?” it can be duly established that VET schools recognize the importance and express readiness to implement Level 5 qualifications, though they lack experience in such implementation to date.

6.4. “To what extent do you think it is important to provide Level 5 qualifications?”, Q4

Responses to Q4 in the Questionnaire

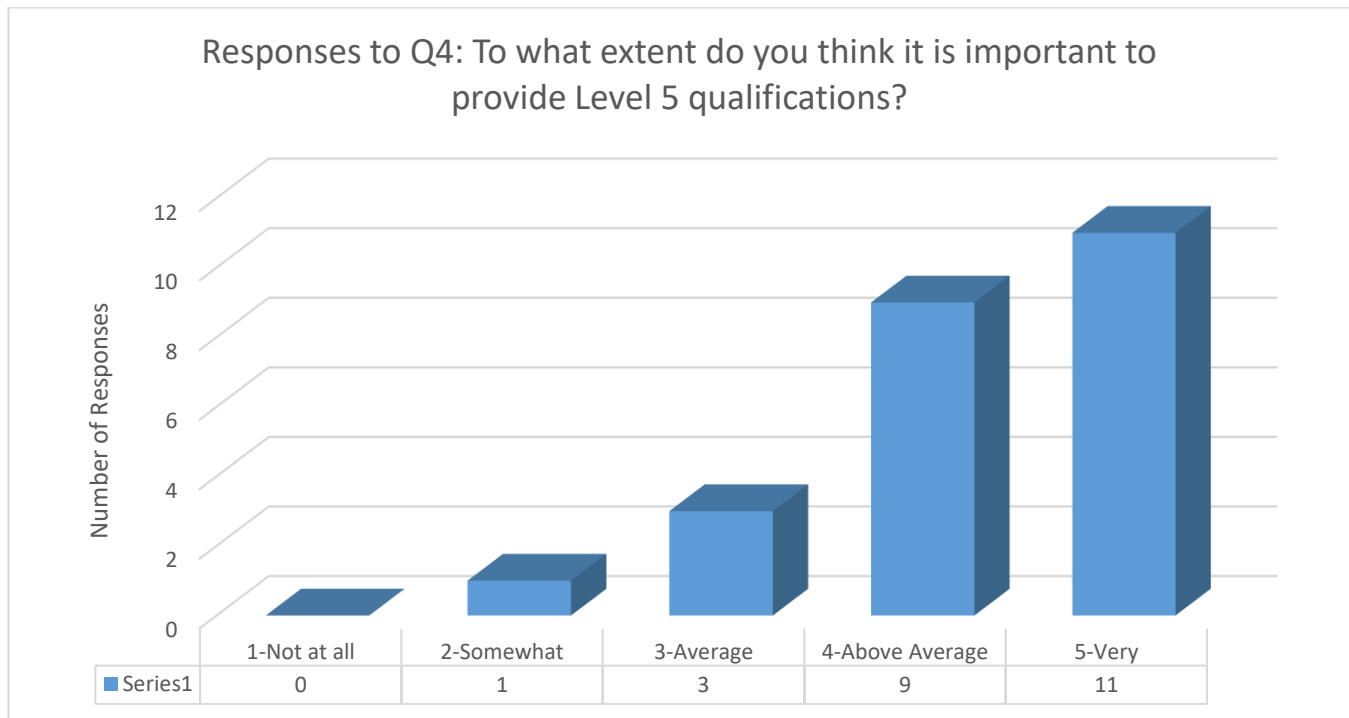


Figure 4. Graphic representation of responses regarding the importance of providing Level 5 qualifications.

Ratings obtained from the fourth question correspond to the responses given to the third question regarding the importance of Level 5 qualification. The chart shows that most of the answers to the question “To what extent do you think it is important to provide Level 5 qualifications” go in favor of “above average” and “very” ratings. Therefore, from this we see that Level 5 qualifications, though not yet implemented, are of essential importance to acquiring new skills for the labor market.

6.5. “Should other primary or secondary legal acts regulate this level of qualifications, Yes / No. If so, what?”, Q5

Responses to Q5 in the Questionnaire

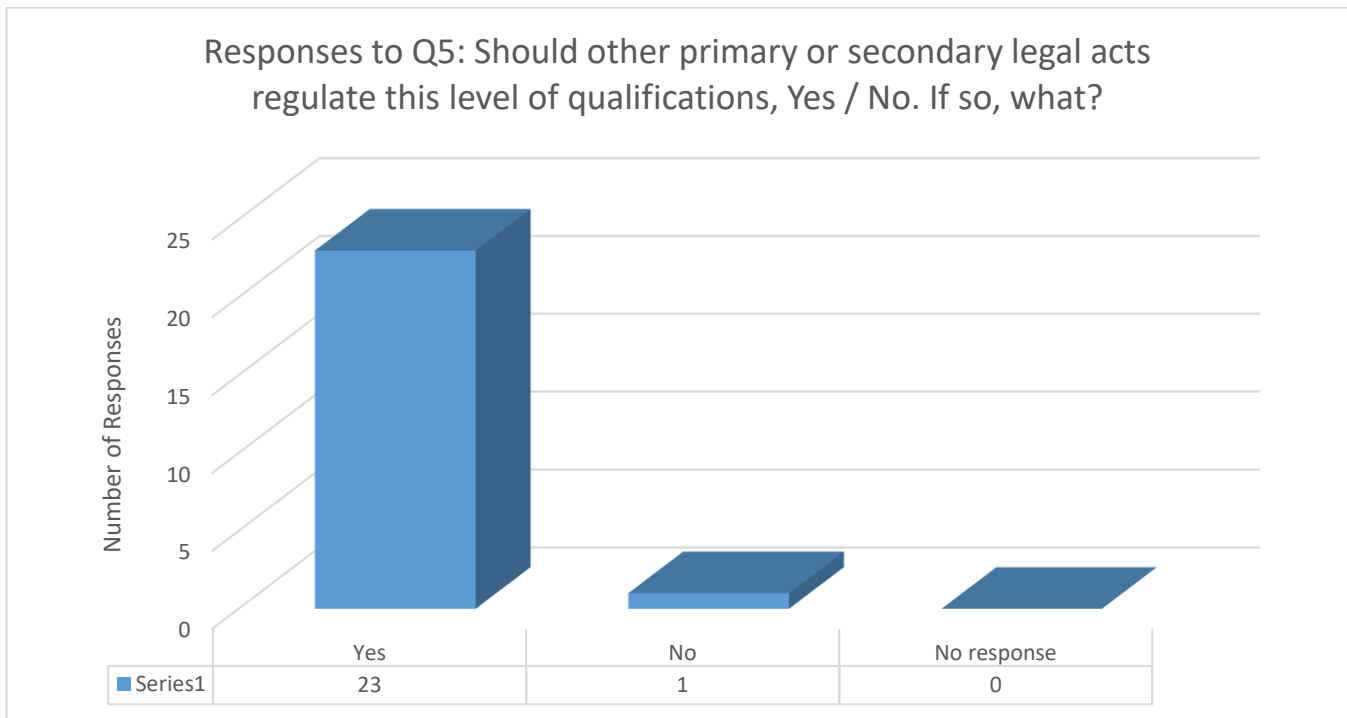


Figure 5. Graphic representation of responses regarding the need to issue other primary and secondary legal acts regulating Level 5 qualifications.

To the question “*Should other primary or secondary legal acts regulate this level of qualifications, Yes / No. If so, what?*” almost all VET school representatives who responded to this question are of the opinion that new documents and primary and secondary legal acts that govern this level should be issued. There is only one instance where there was a negative response provided, considering that existing documents governing Level 5 qualifications are adequate.

6.6. “What teaching staff capacities do you think should be further developed to provide Level 5 qualifications at your institution?” Q6

Responses to Q6 in the Questionnaire

In summary, responses provided by schools to the question “*What teaching staff capacities do you think should be further developed to provide Level 5 qualifications at your institution?*” include the following assessments:

- Practical work (practical module) teachers,
- Staff with the appropriate superior training should be trained and certified,
- Must undergo an evaluation test to achieve a higher level of practical skills and work methodology,
- Professional competences of teachers should be upgraded,
- Professional training on new technologies, knowledge of NQF,
- Only pedagogical capacities, training in the field of professional pedagogy,
- Skills, knowledge, attitudes
- Our capacities meet the needs for Level 5,
- General professional trainings in relevant areas by profile,
- Ongoing (progressive) training,
- Supply equipment and training, as most of the staff are hold Masters degrees.

6.7. “To what extent do you think there is a need for capacity building for the teaching staff to be able to provide Level 5 qualifications in your institution?”, Q7

Responses to Q7 in the Questionnaire

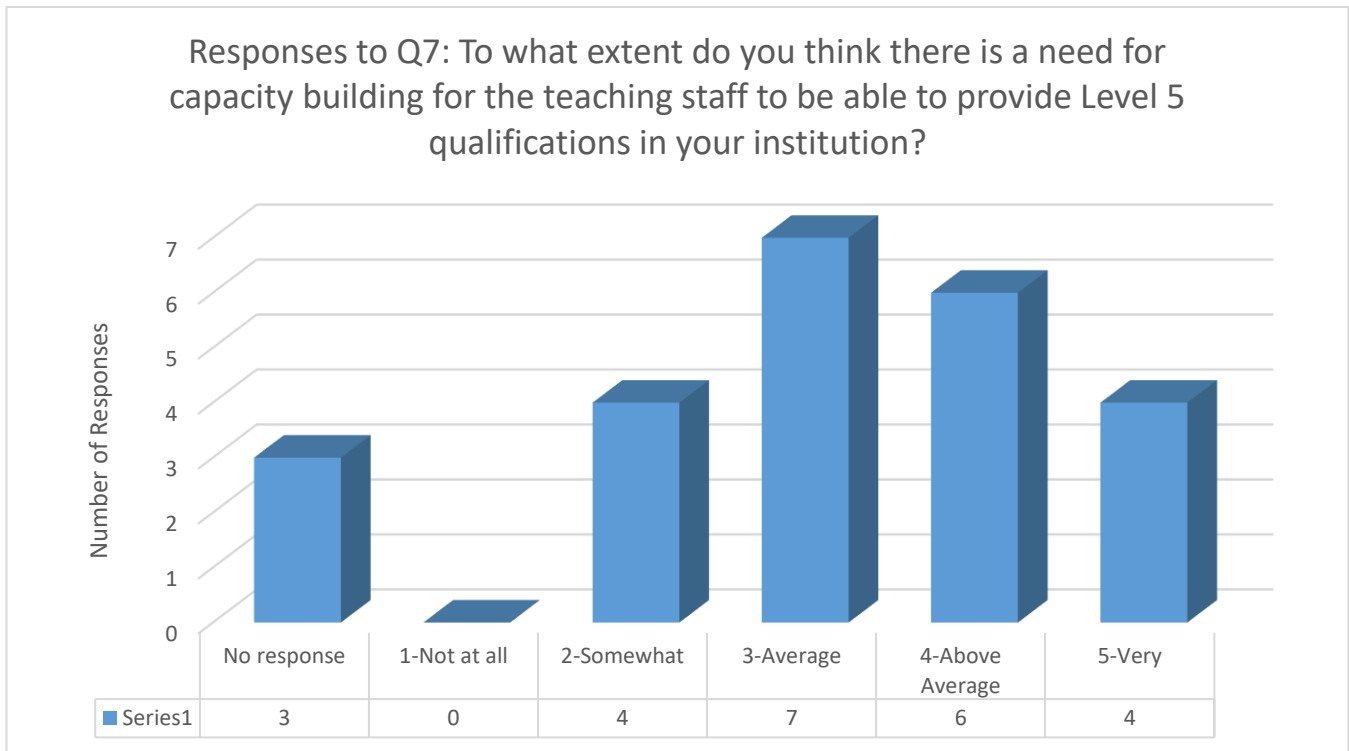


Figure 6. Graphic representation of responses regarding the need for capacity building for the teaching staff to be able to provide Level 5 qualifications.

On the seventh question of the questionnaire: “*To what extent do you think there is a need for capacity building for the teaching staff to be able to provide Level 5 qualifications in your institution?*”, the ratings provided by the respondents are shown in the chart above, where it is generally noticed (more than one half) answered “average” and “above average” about the need for capacity building for the teaching staff to provide Level 5 qualification education in their institutions.

6.8. “What profiles do you consider to be the most appropriate or sought after in the labor market in terms of Level 5 qualifications?” Q8

Responses to Q8 in the Questionnaire

In summary, responses provided by schools to the question “*What profiles do you consider to be the most appropriate or sought after in the labor market in terms of Level 5 qualifications?*” include the following profiles:

- Auto Mechanics,
- Energy,
- ICT,
- HACI,
- Welding,
- Construction,
- Road Traffic,
- Transport and Traffic,
- Electrical Technician,
- Mechatronics,
- Tailoring and Design,
- Sales and Marketing,
- Logistics and Warehouse Operations,
- Hospitality,
- Culinary,
- Horticulture,
- Garments,
- Veterinary,
- Interior Design,
- Phytopharmacology (Agricultural Pharmacy),

- Tourism
- Remote Controlled Equipment Operator
- Textile,
- Agriculture,
- Food Technology,
- Pastry,
- Metal Worker,
- Agribusiness,
- Farmer,
- Arboriculture - Viticulture
- Meat Processing
- Beekeeping,
- Fruit and Vegetable Processing,
- Customs Profile.

Considering the profiles mentioned in the questionnaires, and taking into account the profiles most frequently mentioned, it can be established that when answering the eighth question (“*What profiles do you consider to be the most appropriate or sought after in the labor market in terms of Level 5 qualifications?*”) school representatives most frequently mentioned the educational profiles according to the following order:

- ICT
- Auto Mechanics;
- Electrical Technician;
- Heat and Air Conditioning Technician;
- Construction.

6.9. “Upon acquiring Level 5 qualifications, to what extent do you think a candidate will be more competitive in positioning in the job market?”, Q9

Responses to Q9 in the Questionnaire

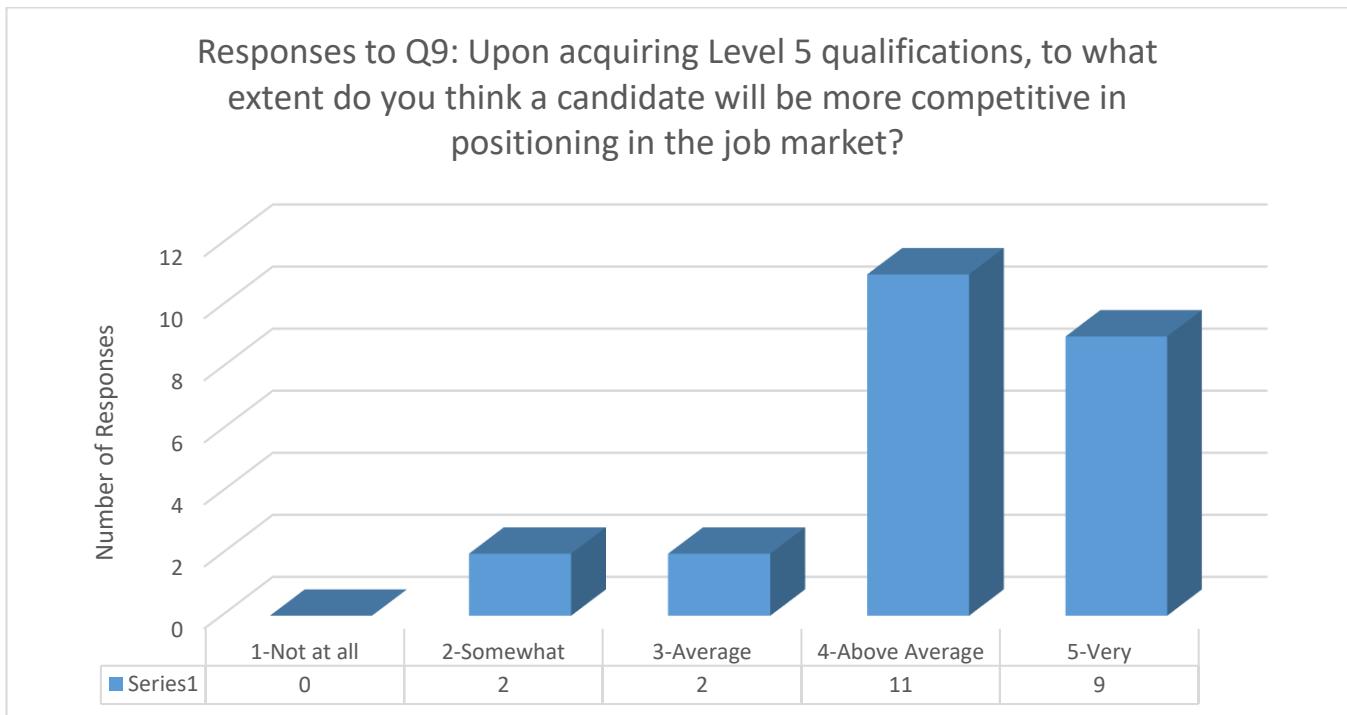


Figure 7. Graphic representation of responses regarding the competitiveness of candidates in the labor market upon acquiring Level 5 qualifications.

On the ninth question of the questionnaire “*Upon acquiring Level 5 qualifications, to what extent do you think a candidate will be more competitive in positioning in the job market?*”, the ratings given by respondents are shown in the chart above, where it can be noted that in general (more than half) responded with “above average” and “very” in relation to the competitiveness of candidates in the labor market after completing Level 5 qualifications.

6.10. “Do you think that your institution has adequate capacity to provide Level 5 qualifications, Yes / No, if yes, in which profiles?” Q10

Responses to Q10 in the Questionnaire

Of all the schools surveyed for research purposes, on the question inquiring: “Do you think that your institution has adequate capacity to provide Level 5 qualifications, Yes / No, if yes, in which profiles?”, only one responded that they did not have the necessary capacities to provide Level 5 qualifications. While all other respondents expressed readiness and claimed having adequate capacity in terms of people and infrastructure to provide Level 5 qualifications at their institutions. However, it is noteworthy that depending on the requirements and the circumstances in which these VET schools operate, there are also different requirements in the meeting the conditions for providing Level 5 qualifications, such as:

- Training of teaching staff,
- Profile-based infrastructure, labs,
- better conditions for internships, etc.

While, in terms of profiles, we also have diversity depending on profiling and what is on offer at the schools. In this regard, the profiles of the machinery, construction and electrical engineering profiles, such as profiles: Auto Mechanics, Welding, Metal Worker, Electronics, Electrical Technician, ICT, Construction. Further, there are profiles such as: Heating and Air-Conditioning, Food Technology, Mechatronics, Agribusiness, Tailoring, Culinary, Textiles, Veterinary, Horticulture, Garments, Interior Design, Wood Technology, Viticulture, Arboriculture, Beekeeping, and several medical profiles, such as: Dental Technician, Optometry, Nutrition, Physiotherapy, etc.

Based on the review of responses to this question, we can note that there is capacity and readiness in schools to provide cover this level, but lack a clear institutional vision in identifying the most important needs for implementing and delivering Level 5

qualifications, as an important component in the education system in Kosovo, to provide new knowledge, skills and competences to candidates aspiring to advance their knowledge in line with the new technological requirements and the labor market in general.

6.11. “To what extent is your school ready to provide Level 5 education qualifications?”, Q11

Responses to Q11 in the Questionnaire

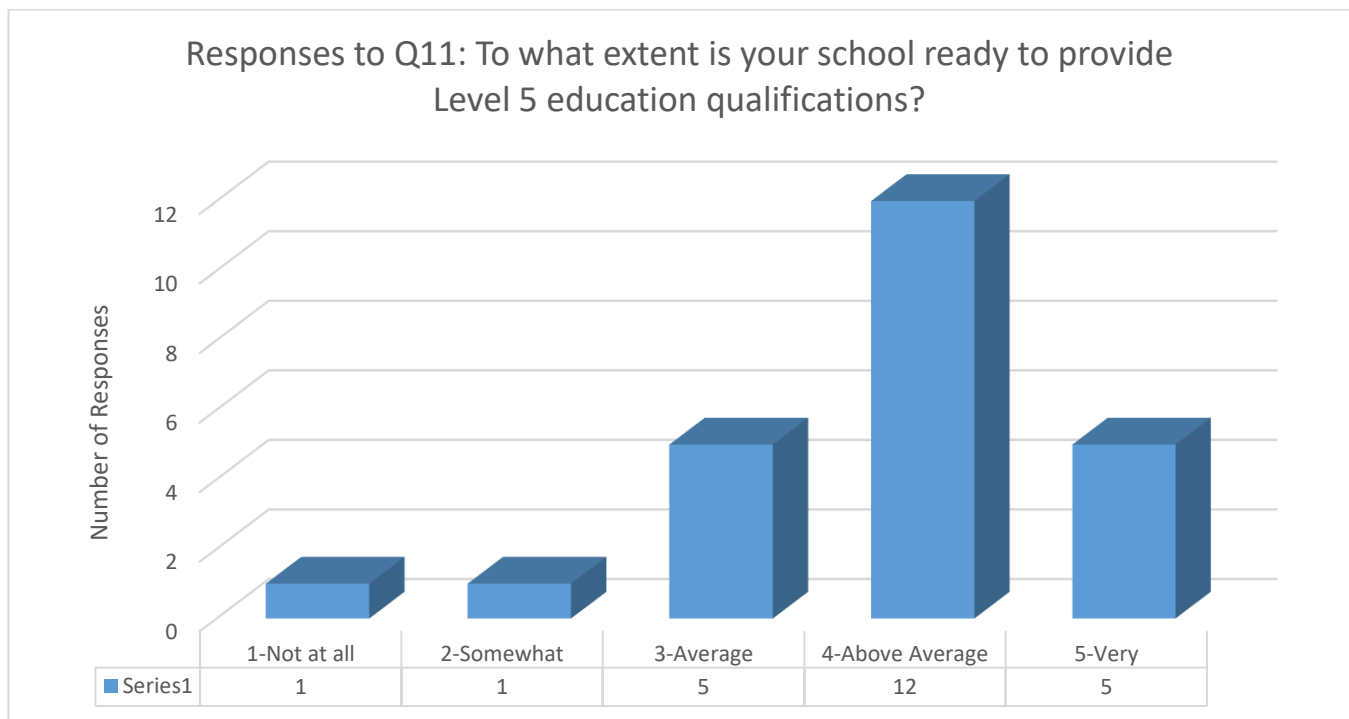


Figure 8. Graphic representation of responses regarding the preparedness for providing Level 5 qualifications.

As noted in the previous question, VET institutions that took part in this research are ready to offer Level 5 qualifications in their schools. This is also reflected in the responses to the eleventh question: “To what extent is your school ready to provide Level 5 education qualifications?”. Respondents’, namely VET institutions’, ratings are

generally positive, leading with 12 above average, 5 very, 5 average, 1 somewhat and only 1 not at all.

There were no comments solicited of respondents on this question, however based on their ratings, it can be noted that we are dealing with both readiness and demand to develop Level 5 in these institutions, based on the specifics of each of the schools and what they offer.

6.12. “Does your institution provide Level 5 qualifications, or did it provide such qualifications in the past, Yes / No, if yes, in which profiles?” Q12

Responses to Q12 in the Questionnaire

On this question, only one of the VET institutions surveyed among all others stated that their institution provides Level 5 qualifications. It is the Center of Competence in Ferizaj, with the following Level 5 profile “Special Educational Needs Teaching Assistant” All other VET institutions surveyed in this research, responded that they did not offer or are do not offering Level 5 qualifications so far. This is due to the lack of the supply in Level 5 that we have had to date in Kosovo, lack of awareness of the opportunities provided by this level for potential candidates, lack of information on this level and lack of alignment of relevant documents for its implementation at national level.

6.13. “Do you think there is an adequate legal basis for recruiting teachers and instructors for Level 5 qualifications”? Q13

Responses to Q13 in the Questionnaire

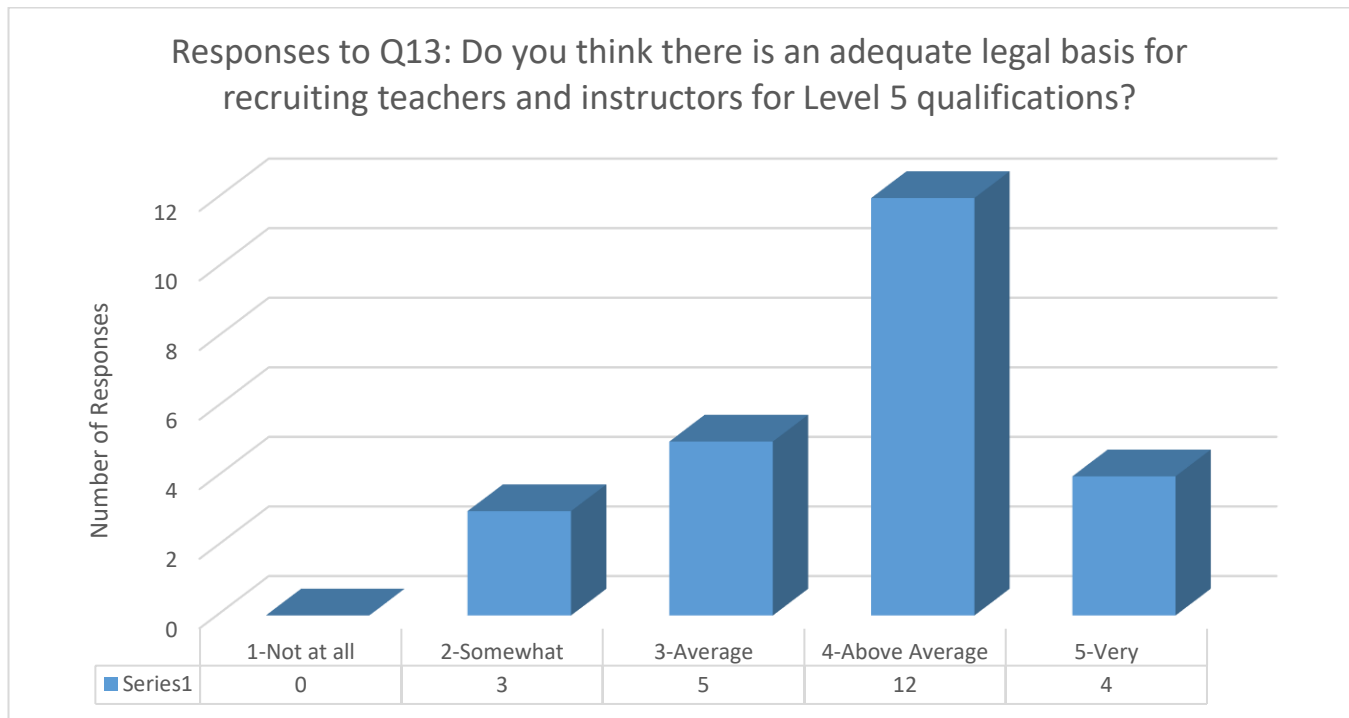


Figure 9. Graphic representation of responses regarding the adequacy of the legal basis related to the recruitment of teachers and instructors for Level 5 qualifications.

Job recruitment in general is one of the most important elements to achieve high performance and success, which as a process of high necessity is also present at the implementation phase of Level 5 qualifications.

On the question posed in the questionnaire “Do you think there is an adequate legal basis for recruiting teachers and instructors for Level 5 qualifications”?, from the responses, also presented in graphic form, we can note that the legal gaps related to this process are quite small, nevertheless it is not unnecessary to complete the legal infrastructure regarding the recruitment of teachers and instructors for Level 5 qualifications in the future.

The respondents’ ratings are generally positive, leading with 12 (twelve) responses with “above average”, 4 (four) with “very”, 5 (five) “average”, 3 (three) with “somewhat”.

From this it is noted that in general, and always referring to the answers given by respondents, the issue of recruiting regulation for teachers and instructors for Level 5 qualifications is currently good, not excluding the possibility of regulating the legal infrastructure related to this process in the future.

6.14. “Do you think that the businesses with which your institution co-operates would be interested in deepening the co-operation to include accepting candidates for internships at Level 5 qualifications”, Q14

Responses to Q14 in the Questionnaire

The cooperation of institutions, that provide or will provide in the future the implementation of Level 5 qualifications, with businesses that will continue to engage candidates for internships to include Level 5 qualifications, is an inevitable good which affects the achievement of the purpose for implementation at this level of qualifications.

Building positive relationships between school partners requires communication and cooperation between all involved parties, and this communication and cooperation should be in the interest of enhancing quality, and the purpose of this communication and cooperation is to improve the learning process, experiences and outcomes.

Most of the schools surveyed, in reference to the fourteenth question, have expressed a positive opinion regarding the continuation of cooperation for the implementation of internships to include Level 5 qualifications, where 20 (twenty) responses are positive, 3 (three) - “average” and with (Not at all) is only 1 (one) response. From this, it can be noted that currently there is cooperation between the surveyed schools and the expectation of such cooperation exists for the future, which will significantly contribute to a better implementation of this level of qualification, which will show significantly better results.

6.15. “What type of training do you think is needed for the teachers who will teach at this level?” Q15

Responses to Q15 in the Questionnaire

The purpose of the training is to develop the teaching skills by providing opportunities for the professional development of teachers. Training is aimed at preparing teachers for the research and implementation of contemporary teaching and learning methods, which is the reason why this question was included.

The responses provided by school representatives are quite different, but always express the need for adequate training where they think it is necessary depending on demand and the school’s infrastructure.

A summary of respondents’ responses is provided below:

- Occupational skills training and training in occupational didactics, pedagogy
- Training on new technologies and ICT, mentoring, curriculum and professional standards, basic knowledge on NQF,
- For internship and apprenticeship firms,
- Training on innovative equipment, e.g. Information Technology, electrical installations,
- Look into models from countries that apply this level,
- More advanced training on practical learning modules,
- According to the profiles and needs that emerge in the market, and by student request
- All teaching and learning related training,
- Advanced academic level courses, more on the practical part
- Vocational training by profile,
- Vocational training,
- Advanced vocational training,

- Trainings related to the better understanding of this level, curricula, professional literature,
- Vocational and didactic training,
- Specific trainings directly related to the content of the qualification.

Based on the responses received from school representatives who have been subject to the questionnaire for research on Level 5 qualifications, they consider it essential that teachers who teach this level should be trained mainly on the appropriate vocational profiles, new (innovative) technologies, training in occupational didactics, pedagogy, mentoring, etc. However, they also suggest content specific training and focus on the best way of implementing Level 5 qualifications and professional literature to reach a broader range for teachers who will teach at Level 5 qualifications, to ensure candidates are well well prepared and have skills that match the needs of the labor market.

7. LINKING LEVEL 5 QUALIFICATIONS WITH RELEVANT INSTITUTIONS

7.1. Conduct of Interviews

Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education Ms. Fikrije Zymberi, Acting General Director, AVETAE

The Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, through its program for “Employment Promotion through Business Skills Development” between 2008-2014 in cooperation with MEST, supported four vocational agricultural schools (Gjilan, Ferizaj, Vushtrri and Peja) in order to improve the quality and vocational skills of graduates by preparing them for the labor market.

In the period 2008-2014 the focus was on enhancing the practical learning of students by means of internships and the links between schools/municipalities and the private sector, thus affecting the reform and development of the VET education system in Kosovo in the field of agriculture.

“MEST/DANIDA Office prepared the four schools for active participation in the WB/DANIDA support program as a provider of short-term courses on agricultural services for targeted farmers.”

The support objective of this program was to enhance the capacity of four vocational upper secondary agricultural schools (Ferizaj, Gjilan, Vushtrri and Peja) to provide quality education in accordance with the curricula of agriculture and food processing, and engagement in lifelong learning, improving the employability of graduates.

The following profiles were supported by this program: Field - Vegetable Crops; Arboriculture - Viticulture; Horticulture; Food Technology; Livestock and Veterinary,

for which occupational standards have been developed and approved by the NQA for Level 3 and Level 4 qualifications. For these profiles, there are ready developed teaching materials covering 98% of the strictly vocational subjects, schools are equipped with adequate infrastructure (labs, workshops, greenhouses, plantations, farms, etc.), have good connections with the private sector, adequate training of teachers, therefore it could be considered that these schools can implement Level 5 qualifications, where employment will be a measuring indicator.

MEST / Division of VETA / Sector of Lifelong Learning - Ms. Radica Berishaj

Level 5 qualifications, especially when formulated within credit-based modular frameworks, provide the potential to act as gateways to many educational destinations and are not limited one posting on a single educational track. NQF provides the tools to address these issues precisely by utilizing a common conceptual basis in learning outcomes. Level 5 qualification recipients should be able to:

- move to meaningful employment;
- attend further education within the same track in the education system;
- move to another track in the education system e.g. transit from the vocational field to the academia in higher education.

Level 5 qualifications of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) are developed both for students/candidates and for employers. Students/candidates are drawn by the value added to their employability and potential for access to further studies and flexible learning tracks. Employers value the importance of their labor market - Level 5 qualifications usually relate to certain vocations.

NQA / Sector of Qualifications - Mr. Milot Hasangjekaj

Comments on NQF Level 5 development from the NQA perspective.

The **Law on National Qualifications** regulates the development and maintenance of the National Qualifications

Framework (NQF) and the awarding of qualifications in the entire education system, and also establishes that the National Qualifications Authority (NQA) shall develop and maintain a comprehensive framework of qualifications, i.e. qualifications system. The purpose of this Law is to develop the qualifications system according to the hierarchy of the European Qualifications Framework through the National Qualifications Framework, which includes Level 5 of NQF, while paving the way for the qualifications at this level to be under the national qualifications system. For more information: https://akkks.rks-gov.net/uploads/law_on_national_qualifications.pdf

The **National Qualifications Framework** is a document that clearly describes the knowledge, skills and competences for each Level from 1-8, including Level 5. Level 5 is defined between two components of the education system, vocational and academic. Additionally, according to level indicators, this document defines: form of formal/informal delivery, duration, and some other details relative to Level 5 delivery. For more details (page 31): For more information: <https://akkks.rks-gov.net/en/nqf/national-qualifications-framework>.

Udhëzimi Administrativ *On Criteria and Procedures for the Validation and Approval of National Qualification and Accreditation of Institutions Providing Qualifications in Kosova.* [sic] This AI regulates the provision of vocational qualifications in Kosovo, subject to NQA validation and accreditation process for VET providers for Levels 1 through 5 of vocational qualifications. The AI establishes the principles and criteria for the validation and accreditation process, which must be met for Level 5 qualifications, both formal and informal, for validation and placement in the NQF. Other documents/guidelines supporting Level 5 in one form or another:

- Guidelines for quality assurance of accredited institutions that offer postsecondary VET. For more information: <https://akkks.rks-gov.net/en/resource-pack/quality-assurance>

- Developing modular qualifications;
- NQF evaluation and certification, Practical Guide “Toolkit”, etc. For more information: <https://akkks.rks-gov.net/en/resource-pack/qualifications-and-credits>

For Level (5) development purposes, the NQA has put forward a request to the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), implementing the ALLED II Project (an EU-IPA Project), for developing specific guidelines for Level 5. This request has been approved and is part of a dynamic project plan, scheduled to commence at the end of 2018.

Luxembourg Development Cooperation / “Support to VET Reform in Kosovo” - Mr. Blerim Haliti

LuxDev Project

Since 2003, with the upgrading of higher pedagogical and technical schools into faculties and universities, respectively, there has been a gap in the formal education system in terms of Level 5 qualifications.

In the National Qualifications Framework, Level 5 is defined as post-secondary/non-tertiary qualifications, and as such can be developed in academic or vocational terms. With the operationalization of NQA, several colleges have developed this level of qualifications and were accredited for this purpose. In the formal education system, with the request of MEST, supported by the LuxDev Project and in cooperation with the prestigious PEARSON institution, two qualifications at this level were developed last year and are being implemented, one at the CoC in Ferizaj and the other at the CoC in Prizren.

As is the case with all other vocational qualifications, these qualifications must be in line with the NQF and relevant guidelines developed by the NQA. There must be a clear justification in terms of labor market demands and should be based on the occupational standards.

Constraints

In principle, there were no constraints to the development and provision of qualifications at this level. Recently, MEST has taken the initiative to draft a regulation/administrative instruction to clarify all points that are not currently not regulated by the NQF or any other documentation. The lack of a defined pay scale for the teachers may also be a constraint, as this category is not addressed specifically. The Agency is aware of the issue, and the relevant authorities should urgently intervene in the draft Law on Salaries to introduce this category and assign due coefficient. The teaching experience for adults in public VETIs may be represent a constraint to the provision of such qualifications, but this may be offset by additional training for teachers and instructors. Therefore, in such cases it is suggested to VETIs to plan in advance for such activities. And finally, a constraint that may not come up very frequently, but has been noted based on the experiences of the two CoCs (Prizren and Ferizaj), is attendance by candidates throughout the theoretical lectures and the practical part, as most of them were employed. As it may also be the case in the future, employed persons may still be the potential audience to attend such training, for purposes of continuing professional development. Therefore, the existing curriculum structure with practical and theoretical modules requires due diligence in scheduling the delivery of such qualifications, considering the type of audience mentioned above.

Conditions

There are no specific conditions, apart from the infrastructure and staff available at VETIs. All VETIs and HEIs are encouraged to develop and implement programs for Level 5 qualifications. Since such qualifications are offered to adults and are not part of compulsory education, the possibility of introducing additional tuition fees for this qualification should be possible. Thus, generating additional revenues would facilitate the establishment and improvement of the most appropriate conditions.

Labor Market Relevance

This is a bit more complex. As these qualifications lead to particular specialization, research may be conducted at different levels, however the private sector and the chambers of commerce in the relevant sectors should always be consulted in advance.

Kosovo Pedagogical Institute / Sector of Research / - Mr. Agim Bujari

In 2015, a program document titled “Training of Vocational Secondary School Teachers for Working with Adult Learners”, was drafted and finalized by the Kosovo Pedagogical Institute (KPI), and accredited by MEST. This document can also serve for the professional development of Vocational Education and Training (VET) instructors at Level 5 qualifications in Kosovo.

Cactus Education - Ms. Vildane Kelmendi

Cactus Education is a private higher education institution providing Level 5 qualifications in the field of Information and Communications Technology. Two profiles have been accredited by NQA, offering a two-year program for Level 5 qualifications for:

- Network and System Administrator, and
- Web and Mobile Application Developer

Therefore, Cactus Education provides Information and Communications Technology related profiles only, in compliance with the curricula of Microsoft, Cisco, IBM, etc. It is now the third year since they started implementing Level 5 qualifications and the first cohort has already graduated with Level 5 qualifications. All graduates from the first cohort are engaged in the labor market, and most of those who attend Level 5 studies in most cases by the end of the first and/or the beginning of the second year are offered jobs in institutions that need candidates with relevant qualifications for information technology. It is worth highlighting that one of graduates from the first cohort was awarded a fixed-term internship in Switzerland and the company where he interned



offered him a job, a fact which implies that the program implemented at Cactus Education meets not only the needs of the domestic market in Kosovo, but also suits the needs of the European labor market.

It stands to reason to state that employability of students at Cactus Education following the completion of the respective qualification levels is quite high, due to the fact that the education profiles are relevant to the labor market, but also due to the good institutional policy in ensuring consistency in the engagement of and cooperation with the businesses in this field.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As noted above, this research effort placed special focus on the field needs analysis and research to ensure the implementation of Level 5 qualifications at the vocational secondary schools and Centers of Competence in Kosovo. At the first stages of research, a joint meeting was organized with the heads of vocational schools to gauge their perception of the significance and the need for the implementation of Level 5 qualifications, and at later stages, the realistic prospects for implementation were taken into account by means of the questionnaire and the interviews conducted with the relevant actors.

At the initial meeting with the school directors and the discussions at the meeting, among other things, there was emphasis placed on the need for further information regarding the documentation prepared by the responsible institutions, namely one of the main conclusions turned out to be the need for promotion and outreach for vocational schools regarding the role and significance of Level 5 qualifications, because only two public schools and one private school have started implementing this level to date. Often, and perhaps even duly, vocational school representatives associate Level 5 qualifications with the organization of teaching in the former higher schools that existed prior to the war and up to the first three to four years after the war in Kosovo. From 2002 until 2015, initially the public institution of the Technical Secondary School “28 Nëntori”, and then the private college “Tempulli” in Prishtina, and the Driving School “Profesional” in Prizren, provided a so called fifth level learning arrangement for driver-instructor for Category B motor vehicles. This six-month learning arrangement was based solely on the translation of literature (i.e. teaching materials) from the countries of the region, but did not have a clear curricular structure and there were no approved occupational standards for this purpose, while the implementation of this program was enabled through mutual agreement by the respective Ministries (MEST and former MTPT now MI) and with the

permission of MEST. In the last three years, this program has been interrupted as with expiration of licenses these institutions were required to prepare and submit relevant occupational standards for approval to NQA, to develop curricula and teaching materials. To date, only the occupational standards have been prepared for this purpose and approved by NQA. It should be noted that the candidates' demands to attend such a profile have been quite significant, and it appears necessary to prepare a general package of documentation to re-initiate the learning arrangement for this profile at Level 5 qualifications.

Among the public vocational schools that have started to implement this level, there has already been a successful implementation of a Level 5 program for the "Special Educational Needs Teaching Assistant" profile in one of the schools (CoC-Ferizaj), while in another school (VUSS "Shtjefën Gjeçovi" in Prishtina) a Level 5 program for "Career Guidance Counselor" is in the process of regular implementation. In both cases, these were made possible with funding from the Government of Luxembourg, namely Lux-Development, and the use of qualification modules from the internationally renown organization for learning qualifications, broadly referred to as "Pearson".

While, at the private vocational higher school "Cactus Education", the first cohort has already completed Level 5 qualifications in the field of information technology, namely in the following profiles:

- Network and System Administrator, and
- Web and Mobile Application Developer

At the meeting with representatives of the vocational higher school "Cactus Education", it was realized that the market needs and demands are to have additional programs in the field of information technology, as the businesses that cooperate with the school are constantly looking for persons with such qualifications.

Through the administration of the questionnaire, the vocational schools had the opportunity to share about the actual situation and indicate the possibilities for implementing Level 5 qualifications, depending on the conditions that the schools can

offer. Further, through the questionnaire the schools had the opportunity to express demands regarding their needs in carrying out training for teachers or equipping workshops for the implementation of practical work.

Certainly, in terms of implementation, Level 5 qualification programs include certain financial costs, depending on the duration, number of candidates, and type of educational profile, and such financial costs are subject to significant changes due to the need to carry out practical work with costly equipment (learning aides) in some specific educational profiles.

In their responses to the questions in the questionnaire, school representatives gave their opinions on understanding, knowledge of legislation, significance, capacities of VETIs and teacher staff, matching of educational profiles with labor market demands, supply and preparedness of schools to provide Level 5 qualifications, training needs and interest of businesses to cooperate in arranging internships. Therefore, based on the responses provided to the questionnaire, the following conclusions and recommendations were identified:

- Level 5 qualifications as postsecondary qualifications should equip candidates with certain vocational skills, enhance competences in a particular field, specialize candidates in the relevant profile,
- To provide Level 5 qualifications in the existing VETIs, it is required to engage in capacity building for the teaching staff, to ensure effective completion of the vocational practical work, through additional training and certification, and in particular professional training on the use and implementation of new technologies.
- The most appropriate or sought after profiles in the labor market, in terms of Level 5 qualifications are as follows: ICT, Auto Mechanics, Electrical Technician, Heating and Air Conditioning Technician, Construction, Road Traffic, Mechatronics, Tailoring and Design, Sales and Marketing, Logistics and Warehouse Operations, Hospitality, Culinary, Horticulture, Garments, Veterinary, Interior Design, Phytopharmacology (Agricultural Pharmacy), Food Technology,

Pastry, Metal Worker, Agribusiness, Farmer, Arboriculture-Viticulture, Meat Processing, Beekeeping, Fruit and Vegetable Processing, Customs Profile.

It is worth noting that the profiles that are most frequently mentioned as important, and which received the most wanted in the labor market rating by school representatives, are the following:

- **ICT;**
 - **Auto Mechanics;**
 - **Electrical Technician;**
 - **Heat and Air Conditioning Technician;**
 - **Construction.**
- Profiles for which the schools have the relevant capacities in terms of teaching staff qualifications and have established Level 4 occupational standards, have the necessary space and contemporary equipment for carrying out the practical work module at the school, and have already entered the accreditation process for these profiles, therefore it would be good to have them move on with Level 5 qualifications as there is already some information available on these profiles regarding the market needs for them, are as follows: Auto Mechanics, Heating and Air Conditioning Technician, Metal Worker, Tailoring, Electrical Technician, Office Administration and Management, Salesperson, Social Health Care Assistant, Physiotherapist Assistant, Travel Agent, Food Technology, Livestock, Veterinary.