

National Observatory

**Social Partnership in Vocational Education and
Training
(Almaty)**

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Introduction

The National Observatory (NO) experts have developed this Report within the framework of the International project - “Development of a Model of Social Partnership in Vocational Education for Almaty City” with the support of the European Training Foundation. The main idea of the project is to promote social partnership (SP) in vocational education and training (VET) of Kazakhstan making use of the local and international experience and based on the model of such a co-operation in one of the most developed regions of the country, like Almaty. The authors reasoned the idea in the following way.

- Both national and international experience shows that SP is one of the crucial factors contributing to the improvement of the labour market environment and as such it helps to tackle the problem of life standard deterioration for the majority of the population, to improve social climate and to stabilise economy.
- SP partnership is quite possible at the national (Governmental), sector, regional and local levels (including individual companies and agencies). It is but natural that the higher the level the more resources and time will be required for its effective functioning. The fact is evident - it is quite reasonable and cost effective to set up and try a pilot SP model at the regional or local level. In case its viability and efficacy is proved this social partnership design could be replicated in other regions as well.
- Traditionally, partnership parties at the national level include Government, employers and trade unions. The agenda of their tripartite discussion normally includes such items as social, economic and labour relations and labour conditions. Theoretically it is implied that one of the most important labour conditions is considering and resolving problems related to vocational education and staff retraining. However the reality is that in the space of several last years of SP life history in Kazakhstan neither the general nor sector agreements of tripartite committees included these questions for discussion.
- In December 2000 a new Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Social Partnership” was enforced, in compliance with which vocational education is the subject of social partnership formation, which is necessary in order to implement tasks determined by the Law. First and foremost the following tasks and objectives are meant here – participation of the parties in the development and implementation of socially oriented policy and economic transformations, setting up an effective mechanism to regulate social and labour relations/ to promote the process of consultations and negotiations between social partners at all the levels. Thus, there is a legal basis necessary to set up and develop SP at all the levels and in any order, including regional initiatives.
- Within the framework of this project NOC experts have carried out a survey with the involvement of potential partners – representatives of VET, managers, employer organisations, trade unions, research centres, non-governmental organisations having to do with development and regulation of vocational training and retraining in Almaty. Out of 110 participants of the survey (including the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population, the Ministry of Education and Science) that filled in questionnaires 105 declared their will to take part in social partnership, except 5 employers.

The Report under consideration includes a brief overview of the current situation with vocational education and training, employment and labour market in Almaty, social partnership

development in this sphere as well as international experience as to the social dialogue in the field of vocational education. The authors of this Report are suggesting mechanism of SP system formation in the field of VET in one region, which implies modification of relationship of potential social partners, both “at the bottom” – the level of an individual school - and “at the top” – with the participation of power bodies of Almaty in SP.

The given project is a pilot survey that has been undertaken for the first time in the history of Kazakhstan. It meets the objectives of SP formation between vocational schools and companies, enterprises of different types of ownership, determined by the State Program “Education” (approved of by the Governmental Edict of 30.09.2000) as well as the requirements of other governmental regulations related to the development of primary and secondary vocational education. The Project has got the support on the part of the Department for Primary and Secondary Vocational Education under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan and power bodies of Almaty City (city Akimat).

While developing the present Report the authors made use of the survey results, laws and regulatory acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the field of education, labour and population employment, national and international sources, information available in the departments of education, labour, employment and social protection of the population as well as in the State Statistics Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Basic outcome of this Project is the development of the following documents: model of social partnership in Almaty, regulation on the SP city working body, recommendations as to this model implementation and its further development.

The information included into the given Report could be used by the state management bodies, regional education and employment agencies, primary and secondary vocational schools, associations of entrepreneurs, non-governmental and professional associations, other structures and individuals interested in the development of social partnership system.

We hope that information collected in the course of this Project implementation will be viewed as a good informative and organisational-methodological basis for the formation of a viable social partnership, aimed to reinforce links between VET system and labour market, entrepreneurship, business and other public and civic structures of Almaty.

The Working Group of the Project in Kazakhstan expresses sincere gratitude to the ETF management for the possibility to take part in the development of such a pertinent problem as social partnership in VET. Our heartiest thanks go to the Project external consultant – Ms. T. Tali for her substantial professional assistance and the possibility to better get familiarised with international experience in the field of interest. We are very thankful to the staff of north-west regional Observatory, to Mr. S.Ivanov and his colleagues for their active support in getting access to the experience of this region of Russia in effective social partnership formation within VET system.

1. General Functions and Social Partnership Goals

In different research sources the notion of “social partnership” (SP) is interpreted as:

- Co-operation form based on full-fledged partnership aimed to resolve social problems;
- Consolidation of the efforts of entities in order to tackle social problems on the basis of mutual advantage and responsibility;

- Joint activity of representatives of different social groups and structures with the aim to overcome social problems, activity based on the principles of respect of interests of all the parties involved;
- Relationship between several partners that takes into account interests of each of the parties and is targeted at resolving social problems.

The main idea of SP is highlighted almost in all of these and other definitions, which is - resolution of social problems by SP subjects on the basis of partnership and mutual benefit.

Social partnership in vocational education – *is a special type of co-operation between different educational establishments and subjects and institutions of labour market, national and local power bodies, public associations, aimed at maximum co-ordination and implementation of interests of all the stakeholders.*

A new phenomenon for the countries in transition is social partnership institutionalisation. The main objective and in fact the essence of this process is a meaningful and institutional-functional organisation of SP based on the involvement of different players into this mutually advantageous co-operation. Among the stakeholders there may be representatives of different public, governmental/non-governmental and professional structures, interested in mastering world-widely accepted constructive mechanisms of alleviating crisis phenomena and transition to effective models of social and economic development, including VET sector.

In Kazakhstan SP is targeted at looking for and making use of balanced decisions in case of conflict of interests social partners inevitably confront with in conditions of market relations formation. The subject of the dialogue, co-ordination and compromises is a complex of social, economic and labour agreements as well as that of wages. Traditional tripartite co-operation – Government, trade unions and employers – has to play an important role in future building of democratic, socially fair and effective relationship between social partners that are interested in developing human potential, creating a pool of highly competitive professionals in the labour market. At present this type of relationship is being established in Kazakhstan.

Experience of countries with market economy proves that with development of mechanisms and gaining experience on the part of SP tripartite agreements are (tripartism) gradually substituted by bilateral ones: between unions/associations of employers and those of trade unions. This type of co-operation is based on understanding by each of the parties the benefits they can gain through concerted decisions and lobbying these or those questions. This trend is true for vocational education as well, which has at present several models, basically reflecting the Government participation in this system.

2. Project Subject, Goals and Objectives

The subject of this Project is the study of possibilities and prospects of having viable effective links between VET schools of different types and forms of ownership on the one hand and employer associations, research, governmental and non-governmental organisations on the other. An attempt to devise a sample of bilateral spontaneous social partnership at the regional level is aimed at gaining experience in how to overcome inconsistency between a huge supply of quality labour and a sharp decline of demand for it. The subject of this Project implies the study of benefits not only of intersystem contacts, but also of co-operation at the level of individual VET schools. In any case the availability of such a SP body, which acts in the first place as a co-ordinating agency will make it possible to effectively decide issues of staff vocational training and retraining, which constitute an important part of social sphere.

Long term project goal is to contribute to the process of reforming social and economic sector of Kazakhstan by way of creating methodological and institutional bases for the effective social partnership, which is considered to be one of the crucial factors for the improvement of labour market situation as well as the situation in VET system.

Short-term goal is to develop experimental social partnership model within VET system in Almaty for it to be replicated in other regions.

Project objectives:

- To review the current status of labour market, employment and VET in Almaty, to determine the need of these structures in SP
- To arrange and carry out survey among potential social partners of VET system in order to learn about their attitude to the possibilities and prospects of co-operation;
- To determine potential structure of stakeholders from each of the parties – VET schools, employers and their organisations, regional power bodies and authorised agencies on issues of employment, trade unions;
- To substantiate the structure and function of a city Working Body in charge of social partnership in the field of vocational education and training.
- To develop suggestions as to the mechanism of functioning of social partnership model at Almaty level and its legal/regulatory basis.
- To carry out training of managers – representatives of all social partners in the field of vocational education and training in Almaty, to familiarise them with the experience of social partnership development.
- To disseminate the results achieved in other regions of Kazakhstan.

Expected outcomes

On Project completion it is supposed to achieve the following results:

1. Information of the real status of labour market, employment, SP in the field of VET in Almaty has been collected
2. The results of the survey among potential members of social partnership in Almaty, reflecting their expectations, needs and motivations for participating in SP have been processed.
3. The structure of potentially interested partners from each party – schools, employers and their organisations, regional power bodies and authorised agencies on issues of employment in Almaty has been determined.
4. The form and the structure of the SP Working Body in Almaty VET have been created, co-ordinated and approved of.
5. An experimental model of social partnership in Almaty has been devised with the aim to try it and implement it at a later stage in other regions of Kazakhstan.
6. The leaders – representatives of all the potential social parties in Almaty have been trained in issues of technique and organisation of SP in the field of VET.
7. All the interested organisations from other regions of Kazakhstan have been familiarised with the regional SP model.

On top of basic anticipated results the Project implementation will make it possible:

At a school level:

- To reinforce ties between schools and companies or enterprises;
- To determine new vocational profiles, which are in demand in the labour market;
- To motivate introduction of new curricula and programs;
- To stimulate the use of new educational technologies;
- To expand introduction of new approaches to managing VET schools;
- To improve program development for unemployed people retraining.

At a managerial level:

- To assist in the development of plans of regional vocational education reforms based on clear identification of responsibilities and activity sphere of the regional management level;
- To develop a model of organisational structures for holding a dialogue with other key participants and for the regular labour market assessment;
- To boost interregional co-operation.

At the level of employer organisations:

- To determine the sphere of mutual interests and benefits of business contacts with VET;
- To expand the possibility for qualification upgrading and for the staff retraining;
- To formulate one's requirements to the quality training of vocational school and college graduates.

At the level of employment agency:

- To reinforce interaction of employment agency with employers and schools;
- To improve information supply of authorised bodies as to the jobs and vacancies availability;
- To improve efficacy of actions aimed at employment of the unemployed including graduates of VET system;
- To find ways to achieve balance of labour market demand and education services market;
- To involve employers into the process of education and retraining of people losing jobs.

3. Basic Survey Results

Within the framework of the Project there has been carried out a survey of potential partners – representatives of formal and informal education, employer management bodies, trade unions, research institutions, public associations having to do with the development and regulation of vocational education and retraining in Almaty.

Main **tasks** of the survey included the study:

- Of the current SP status in the field of VET;
- Of goals, necessity of participating in SP and the degree of preparedness to it;
- Of the nature of expectations from other social partners;
- Of capacity for SP institutionalisation in Almaty.

The questionnaires have been distributed between 125 organisations and institutions. 110 filled in questionnaires have come back including those from governmental structures of the Ministry of Education and Science. 60 employers and also representatives of the aforementioned organisations and institutions have expressed their attitude to the problems of social partnership development. Among those interviewed there were the largest production enterprises and companies in Almaty – SC AZTM, OSC «Bakhus», OSC «Yrysty» (railway car repair plant), NC «Kazatomprom» and others, as well as representatives of science, public associations, trade union of education system workers.

Results of questionnaire review (in line with the list of questions):

1. *Estimation of the SP importance for VET development.* Basically all those interviewed recognise the necessity of SP development in order to boost the efficacy of vocational training and to ensure the balance between demand and supply in the labour market. Only five respondents were negative as to this question.
2. *Degree of involvement of different representatives in SP.* The majority of those interviewed noted the involvement of education sector into SP - 78%, of employment agency – 73% and of employers - 22%. In the opinion of the majority of survey participants public associations, research institutions and trade unions are not involved into the SP process.
3. *International and national experience in the field of SP that could be useful for the implementation in Almaty.* The most positive experience mentioned was that of co-operation between the Construction and Management College in Almaty and a number of city enterprises in thermal power, gas and construction sectors. Some examples of SP are mentioned from Pavlodar and Temirtau cities (Kazakhstan) though they are not specified. Germany, France, Bulgaria have been mentioned as the countries that have accumulated some experience in this field though no additional comments have been provided.
4. *Goals and necessity of participation in SP.* The need to take part in SP is viewed by the majority of respondents as a mandatory precondition – for education agencies - 84% of answers, employment agencies – 62%, employers – 53 % (more than half of them think it is very important for them to collaborate with other partners in the sphere of VET). The majority of those interviewed do not consider public associations, research institutions and trade unions to be their partners (only 4 respondents mentioned them as active social partners).
5. *VET problems and their resolution through SP.* 54% of respondents consider employment of graduates their major problem, that of training quality - 36%, youth unemployment - 31%, lack of future assessment of needs in these or those specialists - 28%, inconsistency between training programs and current production demands - 19%.
6. *Contribution of «your» organisation into the decision of the aforementioned problems.* 24% employers are ready to provide their production facilities for practical sessions and young people training, 11% - to conduct staff retraining, 28% - to employ young specialists. As for education and employment agencies, they mean to implement their functions within the framework of their determined status.
7. *What social partners should be involved into problem resolution?* The majority of survey participants mentioned all potential social partners, including Government and the Ministry of Finance.
8. *Co-operation Body for SP participants.* 82% of respondents made use of the «hint» included into the questionnaire and answered «regional committee under the Akimat».

The rest of the survey participants suggested setting up independent of the Government structures: Advisory Council, Board of Trustees.

9. *SP Legal and regulatory basis.* The Law on Social Partnership and development of an adequate regulatory basis, regulating co-operation between social partners, is considered by many of those interviewed as a major guarantee of effective co-operation.

10. *Nature and size of potential contribution of partners.* The answers under this item have split between the following priorities: resources

- Financial - 60%
- Informational – 37%
- Labour – 19%
- Intellectual – 12%

11. *Mechanisms of effective co-operation of partners.* In this item the interviewees used only the answers suggested in the Questionnaire:

- social order and social grant;
- Motivating the involvement of employers.

Nobody hopes there would be any motivation on the part of non-governmental sponsors.

12. *Wish to participate in SP.* All the potential partners have given a positive answer with the exception of 5 employers.

13. *SP related expectations.* First of all expectations are multifaceted and considerable. Secondly, major hope is laid upon education bodies, which in the opinion of 52% respondents should lead SP activity. Great hopes are tied up with employment agency, which in the opinion of many respondents has adequate potential but being separated from science it is unable to decide the problems of studying and predicting labour market (47% of answers). About one third of interviewees think that trade union may reinforce its position on protecting labour rights of young people. About the same number of people think that research institutions, in case they get an order from the Government, will use their capacity to prognosticate training specialists with due regard to labour market demand.

14. *Measures to motivate employers.* All the employers think tax benefits could be a motivation, specifically decreasing profit tax and also training highly qualified specialists according to their orders.

On the whole the survey results allow the following conclusions:

- the prevailing majority of employers that have taken part in the survey are positive as to idea of SP development in the sphere of VET, they are ready for the dialogue and co-operation;
- the majority of respondents noted weak co-ordination of employment policy and that of VET;
- Some concern as to the lack of transparent information related to the labour market status has been voiced out.

Among major factors that hinder SP development the respondents listed the following:

- weak legal-regulatory basis of SP;
- lack of motivating tax policy;
- incomplete process of institutionalisation of key VET partners (employers, trade unions);
- lack of clear guides for VET system as to the economic development and labour market prediction;

- weak technical supply and staffing of vocational schools and colleges to be interesting for the social partners ;
- poor awareness of people as to VET success and problems

Special mention should be made of the fact that despite some critical remarks about SP institution, diversity of evaluation and approaches on the whole positive answers have been given when answering the question on the necessity of setting up a regional SP body. Many of those interviewed were of the opinion that classic tripartite form of bridging interests used in labour relations sphere is not adequate for VET and should no be transformed into the process of bilateral position co-ordination with many functions and a larger number of partners (sample of a «Questionnaire» is given in Attachment 1).

4. Development of Vocational Education and Labour Market in Almaty

4.1 Assessment of Vocational Education and Training Status

Beginning with 90s a network of primary and secondary vocational schools in Almaty was characterised by a trend to decrease. During the last two years the situation in VET has got stabilised. As of 1.10.2000 there were 11 functioning VETs (6 vocational schools, 4 vocational lyceums, 1 special vocational school) with 4 thousand budgeted students and 10 colleges with the number of students that get education and training under the state order – 3,9 thousand people.

Accessibility of vocational education for the majority of adolescents, especially for children from poor and large families is still low. In recent years out of the graduates of basic and secondary general schools on the average less than 10% continued education in vocational schools, lyceums and colleges. Considerable increase of fee paid services contributed to the fact that accessibility level of vocational education has gone down.

Inability to pay for education forces a considerable proportion of general school graduates to refuse from further education, as a result of which the trend of social stratification of young people is growing. Many teenagers get involved into unqualified, service kind of labour. While trading in kiosks, in the streets and “shop tours” ensure sort of stable earnings at the same time this kind of activity has undermined the social value of highly qualified labour. This in its turn entails the problem with replenishment of the natural loss of older labourers in many of the vocational – qualification groups.

Training of qualified personnel has become rather challenging due to the elimination of the social institute of base enterprises that used to be practical training sites of vocational schools and traditionally bore the responsibility for construction, equipment, tools and material supply. Another problem that has become very pertinent is hands-on, practical training of vocational school students at enterprises and companies.

The period of 1999-2000 was characterised by a considerable growth of private secondary vocational schools, the majority of which train youth in popular specialities, like law, finance, economics, customs etc. but that are not really in demand in the labour market.

Legal-regulatory base of personnel training so far does not meet social and economic transformations and is a factor hindering the process. There is no legal mechanism that would stimulate employers to create new jobs and render support to vocational education.

Recent years have also been characterised by the outflow of experienced professionals and teachers from vocational schools and colleges particularly speciality teachers.

A very urgent problem of primary and secondary vocational education is the shortage of budget financing, which makes up only one third of what is really needed to ensure adequate functioning of primary and secondary vocational education institutions.

Elimination of the aforementioned and a number of other problems requires undertaking a multiple of measures at all the levels of VET system in Kazakhstan. It is impossible to resolve all these problems overnight. However the presence of a viable and effective SP body within VET system even at the level of one single city would make it possible to provide tangible contribution to the decision of the majority of raised problems as well as some other ones. This seems to be especially true in view of the fact that the city has already got some positive experience in individual vocational schools and colleges that are quite flexible and functioning effectively in new conditions thanks to timely established comprehensive links with companies and enterprises.

4.2. Employment, Labour Market and Youth Status

The city economic processes influence situation in the labour market of Almaty. The last two years could be characterised by the deficit of vacancies and by the structural imbalance between labour force demand and supply. Regardless positive dynamics in industrial production development, in construction, transport and other economy sectors the scope of shadow or hidden unemployment is sustained.

Table 1. Labour Market of Almaty in 2000

INDICATORS	Thousand people
1. Labour resources, total	775,7
Including: employed in economy sectors	547
2. Unemployed population	228
2.1. Unemployed labour force	197
3. Number of those that address employment agency	19
3.1. Employed	8,5
3.2. Recognised as unemployed	16,5
4. Unemployment rate, %	2,9
5. Out of the number of unemployed:	
- Have got subsistence allowance	9
- Referred to training and retraining	2
- Take part in public works	5,5

Transformations in economy sector, the resulting crisis and production decline have caused serious changes in sector employment structure in the city. Labour force demand has shifted from material production sector to the sphere of commerce and service, communication supply and credit-financial sectors.

The demand in professionals has obviously gone down. The proportion of specialists (not managers) in the field of basic (vocational) education makes up 54,9%, which is by 15% more than the number of them actually employed in line with their profession. The demand in qualified cross-section workers has also decreased and their number today is by 2,1 % less than in the field of basic (vocational) education.

The proportion of workers with low qualification on the contrary has a tendency to grow. Already in the first reform years the proportion of low qualified workers within the structure of those getting jobs increased and made up 13-14%. In 1999 this indicator was 28,8 %.

Assessment of the situation with the employment of graduates of VET schools reveals different imbalance between labour market demand and supply in different specialities. In some speciality groups demand in graduates meets their number, in others the number of those trained obviously exceeds labour market demand in them. Alongside with this there are some professions, the demand for which still exceeds the supply, but no training in these specialities is being done. To some extent this is due to their low prestige or rather high qualification requirement on the part of employers.

Deterioration of the labour market situation determines the inability of the young people that have no profession or experience to compete in the market. This is especially true in relation to the young people that enter labour market for the first time. Employment among adolescents including youth under 16 is yet another challenge. Unemployment among this category is not registered anywhere. The number of young people graduating from the 9th grade and not covered by further education or employment is growing too. In some cases young people get self-employed at an early stage. As it has already been mentioned in the previous section these are, as a rule, jobs that do not require high qualification or vocational training, like in the sphere of services, commerce or similar fields and that do not require social or legal commitments on the part of an employer.

The change in the employment structure and the processes of regrouping of those that have jobs is accompanied by the inherent labour market component – unemployment. Fixed unemployment level in 2000 made up 2,9% of economically active population, while its actual level is much higher – about 10%.

Table 2. Unemployment rate (%)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
General unemployment rate	1,3	2,5	4,3	6,5	7,2	9,3
Formal unemployment rate	0,2	0,7	1,3	1,8	2,0	2,9
Male	1,6	2,9	2,4	2,6	2,6	2,7
Female	2,7	5,6	5,5	5,0	5,1	5,3
Young people 16-29	4,0	7,1	5,7	5,2	5,0	4,8

Inadequate information about labour market demand causes inconsistency between labour force demand and supply. This is why jobs and unemployment exist simultaneously. Average monthly bank of job vacancies maintained by employment agency included 600-800 jobs in 2000, while estimated number is 10 times more than the number of declared jobs. The majority of employees tend to ignore provisions of the Law “On Employment”, in compliance with which they are supposed to submit to the employment agency information on the number of jobs and vacancies available. For example last year not more than 0,5 – 0,6% of the legal entities functioning in the city submitted information on job vacancies.

According to statistic data social-demographic group of young people (18-29 years of age) in Almaty makes up about 30% of the total population. That means that it plays an important role in creating competitive labour force. However, as it has already been mentioned, young people constitute the most vulnerable labour market category: within the general structure of unemployed in 2000 its proportion made up 22,2% of their total number. In 2000 the largest groups of unemployed graduates of primary vocational schools (category of technical employees) were: accountants – 39,5% of the total number of this category graduates, secretary– typists – 32,9%, and secretary– reviewers - 25,5%.

It should be mentioned that the state employment agency in Kazakhstan has accumulated experience in training the unemployed making use of effective means, yielding rather good results. Thus, in Almaty retraining of the unemployed is done on a contractual basis with the participation of an employer and a trainee, the Department of Labour and Employment as well as the school itself. Four-party agreement has certain advantages over a tripartite one in terms of mandatory participation of an employer, which provides high probability of employment.

In concord with the Law “On Employment” the Department of Labour, Employment and Social Protection places state order for vocational training and retraining of the unemployed on a tender basis and at the expense of a city budget. The winners of the contract – public schools as well as private ones - carry out training and retraining of the unemployed, thus fulfilling important social functions and getting extra budget for themselves.

The professions that will allow the people to have their private business in future (a barber or a hairdresser, seamstress, driver and etc.) make up 50% out of 44 specialities the unemployed can get training in.

Table 3. Basic specialities offered for the unemployed retraining in 2000

№	Profession (speciality)	Graduated (people)
A	B	C
1	Accountant	500
2	Secretary – reviewer	300
3	Driver	100
4	Barber/hairdresser	100
5	Cook	80
6	Computer operator (Operator of electronic calculating machines)	60
7	Electric/gas welder	46
8	Computer designer	40
9	Security agent	40
10	Confectioner	39

The practice of training the unemployed in the West shows that many countries have refused from development of retraining programs based on labour market demand and supply. Market demand is not any more the only expert source of information, considering than co-operation with practitioners and social partners ensures a more accurate forecast of demand development in the filed of vocational training and speciality assessment at the regional level.

Given that unemployment is a long-term factor, matching the nature of market relations, it is important to organise the study of processes, which take part in shaping labour market demand and supply. This is becoming a key issue of adaptation of vocational education system to new conditions and as such an important subject of social partnership.

At the same time it is only fair to mention that in the last two years there was observed a trend to rehabilitation of the economy of Kazakhstan, which entails the increase of new jobs. This will require boosting of training activity to ensure the availability of qualified labour force that is not in demand in the labour market so far, as well as monitoring of this process. VET social partners will have to respond to these changes as well.

On the whole involvement of social partners in tackling the problems related to VET position, to labour market, employment and unemployment in Almaty may facilitate undertaking of the following measures:

- Setting up institutional and technical basis for co-ordination and forecasting requirements in qualified labour force;
- Transition to targeted training and retraining of employees and specialists in VET institutions in compliance with the orders placed by the employers;
- Creating necessary conditions to be able to increase accessibility of primary and secondary vocational education for teenagers and young people, as well as for adult population;
- Organisation of informational – consultative services for the young people on employment issues;
- Qualification upgrading and retraining of personnel of enterprises, companies and organisations with the involvement of leading schools – colleges and vocational school/lyceums;
- Exercising active influence on the policy of balancing education services market and labour market;
- Targeted and selective updating of educational and technical basis of primary and secondary vocational schools;
- Participation in the assessment of labour force demand, based on which the training is organised;
- Identification of new promising professions, which are in the city labour market demand;
- Organisation of constructive links between VET system and programs of training the unemployed;
- Dissemination of formal statistics related to the structure, training and retraining of the unemployed between social partners;
- Use of the employers' funds for the Programs of the unemployed retraining.

Co-operation of social partners in tackling tasks related to the labour market activity could be organised in line with the following scheme: employment department – labour market – specialists demand and supply – position of graduates in the labour market – co-ordination of enrolment plan for the coming year with schools – consultations with the employers. The efficacy of such a scheme has already been proved in the course of the implementation of a Project on social partnership development in the field of VET in Novgorod oblast of the Russian Federation (See Attachment 2. This experience will be described in details in the next section of this Report).

5. Overseas Social Partnership Experience in the Field of VET

In highly developed countries there has been accumulated a considerable social partnership experience in the field of vocational education, which is of practical interest for Kazakhstan. The countries of European Union, America and Asia give much importance to social dialogue on vocational education development. As a rule issues under discussion are related to reconsideration of the role of the state in organising and managing the processes of vocational education and all round management decentralisation.

In the course of ten years since the time social dialogue was launched at the all-European level social partners have been formulating their positions as to the most important issues of vocational education and training development, which could be grouped into 4 major directions:

1. Continuous education, including primary and further education
2. Vocational orientation of young people and adults
3. Professional qualification, including demand forecast and analysis, recognition of qualifications and their “transparency”
4. Material and technical base of education, financing, responsibility, investments.

Within these directions the partners are interested in the following issues:

- Determining the content of vocational education and upbringing the quality of curricula and programs, formation of a unified space for distant education.
- Determining terms and goals of development of professional qualifications and basic professional knowledge and skills.
- Carrying out professional orientation (identification of links between basic and professional education, ensuring employment of young people).
- The length of mandatory education.
- Industrial training organisation and carrying out.
- Teaching staff training.
- Provision of population employment and in the first place of youth employment. This problem is related to education, primary vocational training, professional orientation, vocational specialities and further education. It is gaining special importance due to the deterioration of labour market situation, growth of unemployment among young people and unmet demand of employers in qualified labour force.
- SP institutionalisation within the framework of VET. One of the key aspects of this question is institutional development and legal support of all the aforementioned directions.

In addition to already mentioned activity fields social partners will inevitably get involved into the decision of problems related to regional infrastructure and regional development.

The form of social partnership, as a rule, depends on the basic model (or system) of vocational education in the country. There are principal models that differ from each other by the degree of state participation in the system of vocational education and training, by the state role in this system development and also by the needs of social partners in consolidating their efforts.

1. The state does not play any role or its role is insignificant (USA, Great Britain, Japan). Thus, in Great Britain the prevailing policy in the field of vocational education is the one determined at the local level. The activity of partners within the framework of this policy is of voluntary character because it is considered that employers know better about staff requirements and training organisation. In this case collective negotiations is the best way to achieve any changes. This trend is the result of decentralisation of the Government activity and delegation of the responsibilities to local bodies and enterprises or companies. The dialogue is being conducted

within the framework of negotiation process, in the form of collective agreements, recognised by the Government, Trade Union Congress, and Confederation of British Industrialists, associations of employers and trade unions. The best way to hold social dialogue is through partnership at a company or an enterprise level. However financial control is done in a centralised way.

2. The Government performs planning, implementation and control over vocational education and training (Belgium, Italy, France). In Belgium the majority of VET programs are implemented through education system, which is controlled and financed by the State. However in the space of the last few years in Belgium like in other countries of this group both formal and informal participation of social partners in vocational education is growing at the managerial level. France is the country where the Government has a predominant role in SP and primary vocational education is fully under the State control, so, the Government and related power bodies bear joint responsibility for its status. Social partners take part in decision-making processes at the state level only through tripartite consultative bodies. In the field of continuous education decisions are made at different levels: in case continuous education is financed by the state budget the central government and the regions bear shared responsibility, while the state is responsible for specific commitments. Social partners take part in decision making both at the national and at the regional levels through tripartite consultative bodies.

In order to understand that a social dialogue is not just a negotiation process, as a result of which certain decisions are to be made, we are going to give some example of SP institutionalisation in France at the level of Burgundy. A very important part of preparatory work is analytical and prognostication labour market study at different levels - macroeconomic, sector and professional. Appraisal studies determine efficacy of different programs on training and employment in addition to employment monitoring. Since September 1989 the work on data collection and on updating research and analytical basis has been going on in Burgundy. This is necessary for a comprehensive consideration of employment problem and vocational education and training by all its organisers and participants together. Research and analytical agencies collect and analyse information pertaining to labour market, carry out preparatory research and organisational work before negotiation process between authorised persons of social partners takes place. Such preparatory work makes it easier for them to make effective and correct decisions in the field of employment, vocational education and training. One of the most important functions of such an involvement of partners is to build a bridge in order to simplify links between labour market and VET.

It should be mentioned that regardless the strong regulation of VET sector on the part of the government social partners continue to play more and more important role in traditional decision making process, having to do with the content and structure of vocational education. This is obvious from the third type of co-operation with the Government.

3. In case of expansion of needs in vocational education social partners together with the Government or individually may take direct part in planning, implementation and supervision and sometimes in financing new forms of education (Germany). Different experiments with combination of training and labour activity, in which social partners are taking an active part, could be considered as an example. Within the framework of the given model issues of vocational education and training are decided in the process of negotiations between social partners, including the possibility to do this on site.

Associations of employers play an important role at sector level. Their efforts are targeted at meeting the needs in training. The activity of trade unions is also high at this level. At the same time it should be mentioned that participation of trade unions and associations at the level of

enterprises or companies in vocational education is much lower. The activity of trade unions at this level is limited to getting information and providing an independent control. Company management controls 90% of the entire education at production level and is striving at carrying out independent of association of employers policy in this area.

In Germany social partnership starts at the stage of participation of key social partners (Association of employers and trade unions) in the development of standards of vocational education and training, different provisions and educational programs. Though political responsibility for education and training is borne by the Federal Minister, none of the documents will be published or enforced if social consensus between social partners and the Government as well as between social partners themselves is not achieved. Federal Government bears expenses for scientific – research activity and travelling costs of experts delegated by social partners to consultative meetings. Today 80% of economically active population of Germany take part in the system of primary and continuous vocational education. It is expected that by the year 2010 this indicator will get close to 90%.

One mandatory precondition for social dialogue development within the framework of any model is the interest of partners. Since the majority of employers have many of their own problems, it is obvious that human resources development is not a priority issue for many of them. That is why one of the basic tasks of SP organisation is creation of attractive terms of participation in it. The following ways of motivating employers are practised globally:

- Government subsidies targeted at creating new jobs and in-service training.
- Setting up the fund of private employers that would cover costs of scholarship for students (redistribution of the funds of companies that deal with training and those that do not).
- Setting up training funds within the framework of collective agreements. Assets of this fund are formed either due to the wages fund taxation or due to the State subsidies.
- Granting loans for retraining courses with the aim to overcome deficit in qualified personnel, the shortage of which is an obstacle on the way of high technology development.
- State subsidies for in-service training.
- Tax benefits for enterprises that provide enrolment and employment of VET system graduates.

A brief review of SP experience in countries with different economies shows that there is rather a wide choice of examples for the development of this or that model as well as methods of organising social partnership at any level. For Kazakhstan with its transition economy experience of countries going through similar social – economic processes is of special importance. From this stand point Russian experience is of considerable interest.

Social partnership in vocational education has been developing very actively in Russia in recent years. Based on its own traditions as well as on creative approach to European community experience Russia has chosen SP organisation in line with the second model, when the State is mainly responsible for VET planning, implementation and control. Functioning and wide use of this model could be explained by a long-term tradition to centralise all spheres of the national life.

Specific examples of social partnership adaptation to new conditions could be considered at the example of north-western region of Russia. Here the Project of SP development is being implemented in 4 economy sectors: tourism, wood processing, transport and telecommunication.

At the first stage of the Project the participants have developed the general scheme of work with social partners, including the following directions:

1. Identification of categories of social partners for each of the schools, participating in the project.
2. Analysis of a vocational school capacity, specifically review of the services it may offer companies.
3. Identification of one's own interests in social partnership.
4. Listing existing forms of co-operation.
5. Identification of the most promising partners and forms of co-operation for mutual activity.

This list shows that sustainability of SP results in many instances depends on simple but very important actions, mandatory for every social partner participating in the project on creating SP within VET system. All of them are quite feasible in Kazakhstan.

At the level of an individual school methodology of co-operation development also implies going through certain necessary stages, within the framework of which the following tasks could be achieved:

1. Vocational orientation among social partners, including:
 - Fairs of jobs in employment agencies
 - Agreements on co-operation
 - Participation of school representatives in the seating of methodologists and teachers, in meetings with social partners
2. Co-operation with social partners on issues of industrial or practical training:
 - Creating a professional motivation related to one's speciality
 - Further steps in the implementation of personal professional career
 - Adaptation to early activity
 - Links between practical training and follow up employment
3. Employment of graduates and interaction with social partners
 - Expansion of the freedom of choice or flexibility for the graduates in professional activity:
 - Getting additional specialities
 - Upgrading education level
 - Co-operation with public employment agencies as well as with the informal employment sector
 - Stimulating interest on the part of the employers in giving jobs to graduates
 - Preparation of graduates to their new roles in production activity:
 - Legal training
 - Psychological training (self-promotion, self-marketing, self-management, methods of career promotion)
4. Support in professional career
 - Maintaining professional relations with social partners from the companies where the graduates work in order to get a feedback

The experience of north-western regions of Russia shows that effective ways of co-operation between social partners and consistency of such co-operation help the students to acquire necessary professional experience, the possibility to have a job and be in demand in the labour market. SP is becoming an effective means to integrate young people into the working environment, to make it easier for them to get adapted to quickly changing labour market situation.

As it has been mentioned in the Introduction, the external expert of this Project is Tiya Tali, which was the Co-ordinator of the similar project in Estonia three years ago. The experience of the country, where the research of this problem proved to be a success is of great interest. The research has actually revealed that:

- In transition conditions key social partners of VET should be public institutions (Ministry of Education and Ministry of Social Development), which will ensure unified quality standards and a system of national professions.
- In new reality trade unions are weak partners of VET, they are the so-called “sleeping partners” because their activities are limited to protecting the interests of employees of specific organisation or a company.
- To implement the project of SP formation it is reasonable to set up a Fund for VET support at the initial stage, which will include representatives of all organisations – potential VET partners that are taking part in the development of SP legal – regulatory basis and in the appraisal of specialities that graduates of VET schools get.
- One of the most important VET social partners in Estonia is The Chamber of Commerce (CoC), which has its representatives in the Fund for VET Support. Professional Boards under this Chamber function via their working groups, which in their turn represent different specialities. They develop characteristics and professional standards for different specialities, which are subject to consideration by education sector. In this way interaction between professional and educational aspects is achieved.
- When setting up SP bodies first of all it is very important to establish contacts with the employers and their organisations. The results of the survey they have been involved in made it possible to find out that Estonian employers consider that the most important requirement their personnel should meet is the presence of a system of personal or individual values, including attitude to one’s responsibilities, the ability to be active and to make decisions.

The experience of Russia and Estonia proves the importance of public management bodies in SP setting up, especially at the initial stage of its formation. In these countries they have effectively used the possibility of SP development both at the level of VET institutions and in co-operation with different sectors, public institutions including. In our opinion such an approach is quite appropriate for the SP formation in Kazakhstan.

6. Social Partnership in the Sphere of Vocational Education and Training in Almaty: History, Experience, Needs

The former mode of SP co-operation, created by the administrative system, had to function in conditions of tough management and involved permanent set of issues and permanent participants (state - trade unions - employers), whose main task was to carry out negotiations in the field of labour relations.

Tripartite committee working according to the plan of actions, which included participation and traditional negotiations of payment terms and working conditions used to conclude an annual General Agreement (national level) or collective agreements (sector level) that determined rights and responsibilities of the parties involved. This form of classic tripartism is still in place nowadays. However situation has changed and this does not make it possible to adequately fulfil these functions on reconciliation and co-ordination of the interests of the parties.

The process of radical social and economic transformations has generated absolutely new phenomena: change in the form of ownership, restructuring of economy and labour market birth. These had reflected not only on the nature of SP relations, but on their structure and the degree of their participation. The position of a trade union – basic representative of the employee’s interest has weakened. Representation of the interests of employers is a slow and controversial process. Numerous small companies and firms emerged as a result of the private sector formation process. They represent small business and their managers are not yet united into a union or an association of employers, they are not represented at negotiations within the framework of traditional tripartism.

As it has already been mentioned in a number of countries of Western and Eastern Europe and Baltic area in case there are no independent organisations representing employers and trade unions in the legal way a mandatory membership in Chambers of Commerce having full-fledged functions is required for the employers or entrepreneurs. In Kazakhstan CoC does not have a notable role, which in fact is limited to carrying out expertise and evaluation of different type.

Currently traditional form of social partnership has not undergone serious changes, especially in the field of VET. It has been developing along a single direction and in centralised way (from financing to pre-planned distribution of graduates) and this system turned to be in such a social and economic environment that has not managed to form its requirements and commitments in relation to vocational education. The state is still playing a dominating role within VET; social and economic changes did not make any serious impact upon the content and structure of social partnership. This fact is determined by a number of reasons:

1. Weak civil and social structure of the society;
2. Immature market with its excess of labour force supply
3. Uncertainty as to the prospects of development and priority role of economy sectors
4. Mentality of the people, including managers, which is characterised by general passiveness and waiting for the edicts - “prikazes” from the top.
5. Underestimation of the importance and role of human resources development, of alleviation of crisis situations and transition to a strong social policy.
6. Low level of civil responsibility of many of the schools (especially in private sector) for training specialists. As a result many of their graduates are not in demand in labour market.

New SP nature, which is expressed in targeting at respecting mutual interests, radically differs from former relations between schools and industry or production sector in conditions of socialist economy.

In difficult conditions of up-to-date SP formation there is a necessity in addition impetus, specific sample in this sphere that would allow overcoming current inertness, which has a destructive impact upon public awareness and development prospects. It is a real challenge to try and quickly overcome such things caused by many years of all sectors centralisation. However they should be taken into account and should be used productively in SP of transition period. The model being proposed in the Project is an attempt to set up a sample of social partnership that would combine the interests of the government, employers and VET. The rationale of such an approach is proved by the following factors.

Situational analysis in Almaty shows that there is a growing tendency to expand interaction between employers and vocational schools, which is not limited any more to giving facilities for practical training or to follow up employment of graduates. Sometimes employers take part in financing education if it is a targeted education or training under contracts with the employees of companies or firms. The opinion of employers as to the content of education, requirements to qualification of graduates and etc. is taken into account. It stands to reason to give some specific examples illustrating the possibilities of effective SP in the VET sphere of Almaty.

Example 1. Vocational lyceum №1, which trains specialists in hotel and restaurant business is one of the schools that have positive experience of interaction with employers. Such hotels of Almaty like “Otrar”, “Dostyk”, “Almaty”, “Kazakhstan”, “Ankara”, “Astana”, one of the residential complexes, which is under the President’ administration, sanatorium “Alatau”, restaurant “Prussia”, “Kazzhol” and others have been identified as social partners for the lyceum. These enterprises are the leading ones in the field of hotel and restaurant business in Almaty. The idea of this partnership is that the lyceum bears responsibility for theoretical training of students, development of their initial skills, while partner-enterprises bear full responsibility for practical training of the same students. The content of interaction, proportion and character of participation from each of the sides, co-ordination of their points of view is done through specially set up working groups, which could be viewed as functional-organisational structures of social partnership of this type and level. In many cases the correction of curricula and programs, aimed at meeting the demands of labour market and needs of students, is based on the group recommendations.

The lyceum and enterprises started their joint activity with the study of curriculum and programs. At the suggestion of enterprises the time for industrial training and practical sessions at the enterprise sites has been increased by 50%. The lyceum and enterprises have concluded agreements on joint training of specialists and these agreements determine the responsibilities of the parties. In line with the agreement the enterprises are to pay the salary for instructors – tutors, they also cover travelling costs and meals of the students during industrial practice and pay them salaries in case they are on the payroll for this period.

Instructors of industrial training and teachers of special subjects have had a two-week training in the working places of these enterprises. At the same time these enterprises give the possibility for practical training in line with the chosen speciality during pre-graduation industrial practice. Special attention in this co-operation is given to preparation and conducting final examinations in compliance with new original methodology. The aim of these examinations: to determine the level of qualification and preparedness of students to work according to chosen speciality, their professional competence. The students perform the practical part of the final examination at the enterprises, organising the guest service. Partner -enterprises bear 50% of the expenses.

Outcomes of experimental activity related to social partnership show that on the whole education and training in the lyceum match the changes in the economy. Qualification level of the graduates meets the requirements of international standards. This is exactly what employers are interested in.

Example 2. Almaty College of construction and management has a long-term experience of social partnership with large companies and enterprises of the city. Among them there are: SC «Almatyintergaz», SC «Gorvodkanal», SC «Teplokommunenergo», construction corporation «Basis-A» and etc. Well-established long-standing co-operation allows the college to provide full-fledged industrial practice for its students, to ensure participation of employers in the work of the Examination Commission, in reviewing curricula and other activities. The results of such a constructive interaction is a high employment rate of the graduates of this college, which makes up from 70% to 90% in some specialities on the one hand, and the need for the companies to continue such a co-operation on the other.

Example 3. Of all the schools of primary vocational training VS №18 is known to have long-term (40 years) experience in training specialists for catering and commerce sectors. Former graduates of this school work in the majority of companies and enterprises of Almaty. At present this school has close contacts with

120 catering and trading enterprises, among them restaurant of the hotel «Ankara», restaurant «Sulu», which is under the hotel «Astana», a network of catering and commerce «Dastarkhan» and many other.

Interrelations of enterprises and schools are determined in the agreement provisions on industrial practice, it also determines school commitments as to preliminary training and preparation of students for practical sessions so as to ensure comprehensive and safe participation in enterprise technological process, as well as the commitments of an enterprise on providing students equipped working places with safe labour conditions. In case of failure by the enterprise to fulfil the terms of the agreement the school has the right to withdraw the students.

The instructors in charge of industrial training together with the enterprise employers do supervision over the activity of students. Such a scheme of practical training yields good tangible results. Real outcome of social partnership of vocational school and enterprise is employment of graduates: more than 50% of graduates work at the same enterprises they have practical training at. About 30% of students get recommendations from their supervisors without practical training and find jobs with other companies or enterprises.

This list of examples could be continued (for example, by way of describing the experience of SP between the Railway college and OSC “YRYSTY”- a railway car repairing plant). But the number of examples is not important, what really matters is a specific proof of SP feasibility in new conditions. While considering this experience as a positive one mention should be made of its shortage, e.g. one-sided character of VET schools interaction with the companies or enterprises, because under such co-operation mainly the interests of schools and colleges are met. In our opinion full-fledged partnership is possible only if, for example, VET school facilities are the base for qualification upgrading and retraining of company and enterprise personnel or other joint activities.

In any case the interest to the system of social partnership on the part of the employers and working collectives is quite possible, feasible and could be reasoned, for the better is the quality of vocational training the less there will be social problems, conflicts with the employers, the less there will be social tension. Regardless the fact that there is understanding of this, only a very small part of city companies and enterprises really take part in SP with VET schools. It is premature to state anything about the participation of trade unions in SP, since the process of their restoration and entering into a new type of relationship is at the initial stage. There is no accurate statistics on this issue so far.

The interest in partnership with vocational school on the part of employment agency in Almaty is also in place, but this interest is met only from time to time and not systematically.

General conclusion on the status of social partnership in Almaty means there is a need in social partnership on the part of the major VET partners (by the way, the same conclusion is made based on the survey results) though there is no real, targeted, comprehensive and organised activity in this field. There is no major initiator of setting up viable regional SP structure.

7. Legal Basis of Social Partnership

One of the important conditions of social partnership institutionalisation is the legal basis at the level of the State, which will make it possible to carry out interaction of the partners within the framework of legal environment.

During the last three years there has been formed a serious legal basis in Kazakhstan, which determines the strategy of education system development, labour relations and employment of the population.

- On June 7, 1999 the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Education” was passed
- On January 1, 2000 the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Labour in the Republic of Kazakhstan” was enforced
- In December 2000 a new, the third Law “On Employment of the Population” was passed, which incorporated a considerable number of amendments and additions, including sections, regulating population employment, vocational training of the unemployed and a regulation.

A new Law “On Employment of the Population” includes the definition of active employment policy, targeted population groups that are in need of social protection, it also includes the clarification of the notion of population employment, determines the rights and guarantees of the state in the field of employment. The Law provides for the well structured system of public bodies at all the levels – national, oblast, city and rayon, which contributes to the observation of the constitutional rights of the people in the field of employment. In order to expand the possibilities of the people in seeking for jobs the Law “On Employment of the Population” includes a new article – “Labour Mediation”. The Law provides for clear differentiation between economic policy of the government, the employment policy, social policy and policy in labour market. On the whole the specific feature of this Law is that it is market oriented and aimed at carrying out active measures as to the labour market policy.

In December 18, 2000 the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Social Partnership” was passed and enforced. It determines legal basis, tasks and the way the system of social partnership is to function. It also is an effective mechanism of the so-called regulation at the current transition period. The Law consists of 4 chapters and includes general provisions, basic tasks, principles and social partnership description, its organisation, types and content of agreements. The Law is comprehensive and analogous to international laws of this type. Social partnership tasks: to involve the parties into the development and ensuring socially oriented policy and economic transformations, to create effective mechanism for regulation of social and labour relations, to promote the process of consultations and negotiations between social partners at all the levels (The Law, Article 2,3). It is supposed that social partnership system will be organised at the national, sector and regional (oblast city, rayon) levels. According to this Law vocational education is the subject of social partnership formation on the basis of objectives and principles, formulated by the Law.

Thus, social partnership formation is based on the real legal basis, formed at the state level, which provides for the possibility to bring up the efficacy and to boost the activity of vocational education and training.

8. Social Partnership Model in the Sphere of Vocational Education and Training in Almaty: Goals, Principles, Terms and Forms of Interaction

The study of the national and international experience made it possible for the authors of the project to come up with their approaches to the formation and reasoning of the social partnership model in the sphere of VET, which is built on common regularities, developed by the world practice and with due account to the current realities of social-economic development of Kazakhstan and Almaty.

Under the model we mean the description of the scheme reflecting a modified structure of relationship between different components (including their functions) within the system under consideration. Any modification of objects or processes implies the description of objectives,

base line things or principles, anticipated changes, their content, the implementation process, terms and conditions and expected outcome.

The major reason why current relations between potential social partners in the field of VET are to be modified is to stimulate the formation and to demonstrate the possibilities of real social partnership in the aforementioned field at the example of a separate region – Almaty. As it has been mentioned in the previous sections the necessary preconditions to create the basic SP in this city are available.

In compliance with this goal the most important, in our opinion, is that SP is based on the following principle:

- Mutual benefits, respect of interests and capacities
- Validity and co-ordination
- Free will, equity and mutual support
- Practical validity and orientation at specific results
- Feasibility and transparency
- Active participation and responsibility
- Flexibility and creativity

To describe the content component of this model it is important to draw the following basic summary:

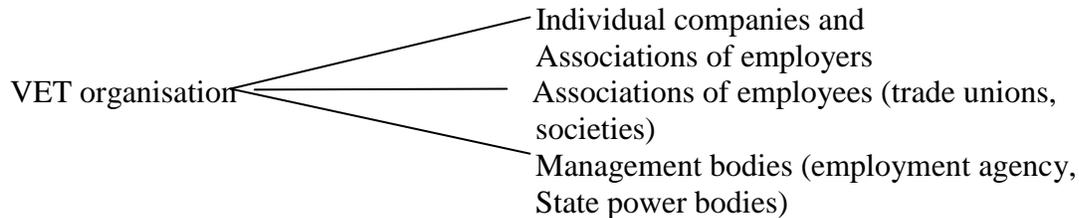
Understanding of the main idea of social partnership as a special type of interrelation between educational institutions and subjects as well as between labour market institutions, power bodies and public associations allows to determine three basic types of social partnership within vocational education system and SP levels. In other words, as it has already been mentioned, interaction is possible both between the sets of organisations and between individual entities. In the first case one of the SP parties may be a set of schools together with the education management bodies. They represent a single whole, an entity and are one party of the partnership within the system of market relations. Then the other SP party will include three basic components:

1. State management bodies
2. Employers and their organisations
3. Associations or union of employees (trade unions, public associations).

Such a sequence reflects the reality, the distribution of real powers and responsibilities of SP structure. At the background of current strong position of the government it seems that institutions, representing the interests of employers and trade unions are only at the stage of formation. Most likely this process will be long and controversial. There is no sense in expecting of them in the nearest time somewhat important and broad initiatives in terms of development of co-operation with other sectors, including VET. That is why in present conditions creation of **SP institutional structure under the state power bodies, functioning for free and including representatives of other social partners** – is one of the adequate options for Almaty. Lack of mature sector trade unions, associations of employers, which understand the importance of VET sphere development while the positions of public bodies is still strong makes it reasonable to use their capacity for the formation of new SP type. This “top-downwards” approach to SP formation does not exclude, but on the contrary, implies development of initiative of individual VET institutions in terms of interaction with the labour market, with governmental and non-governmental organisations. Constant progressing of these two movements towards each other will contribute to the formation and development of real partnership, in which the needs of every

SP participant will be taken into account. In conditions of transition economy and social sphere formation such an approach seems to be justified and promising.

At the level of an individual school the subjects of educational services market will complement the list of partners. In other words companies, enterprises and market regulation institutions should be viewed as social partners but also other education sector organisations, including this system management bodies. Thus, the general scheme of SP at the level of an individual school within the framework of the proposed model looks as follows:



In the general model (see Social partnership model, Attachment 3) the links of a school with these types of social partners mean the stage of formation and renovation of their relations. As it has already been mentioned the former system of base companies and patronage is actually destroyed. It seems that interaction specifically with these labour market players is the priority task of VET system.

The relations of school with the partners inside the market of education services partially survived from the “pre-market” time, except, of course, newly set up private schools.

The fact that labour market sphere and that of education are not only closely linked but overlap each other to some extent is very important for understanding the nature of a school interaction with some types of social partners. As a result of overlapping there emerged an in-between-space, with a number of organisations that participate simultaneously in the interaction system of both labour market players and that of education services. State power bodies, trade unions and employment agencies are among them for they all are actively functioning both at the labour market and at the market of education services. Promotion of their interest implementation is a key basis for strengthening the educational institution positions, especially when contacting employers.

Thus at educational institution level it is possible to speak of two types of social partners: representatives of labour market and market of education services. Such distribution is a principal one, since such typing is based not only on the nature and way of interaction but also on the system of common interests, which are implemented in the course of their interaction.

The relation of an educational institution with the subject and institutes of labour market is based on major interest of vocational institution system, which is to ensure to the extent possible full compliance of educational product quality with labour market demand. Educational institution itself or a school is not a labour market player and that is why is not competing with other participants of the given market.

Interaction of VET organisations in the market of educational services has absolutely different character. Quite often we observe not only overlapping but also the clash of interests. Only schools of a higher level, for example secondary VETs or tertiary VETs may became real partners for a primary VET school in this market, since only they can be viewed as users of

PVET product but again to a very limited extent. Interaction with other subjects of educational services market could be called partnership only conventionally, since schools very close to each other in their profiles in fact become competitors when fulfilling their interests. This does not mean that any interaction between schools especially with different forms of ownership is impossible. Simply this link will reflect the fulfilment of other interests and needs these schools may have: merge of resources, experience exchange, joint projects implementation and etc. Education complexes (mainly non-governmental) are becoming one of the most common types of co-operation nowadays. They are based on principles of continuity and include schools of all major education levels beginning with pre-school education (kindergarten) and up to post-graduate education. In other words actively developing market of educational services motivates VET schools to establish a dialogue process, to strengthen links including those inside the market itself.

What can contribute to the formation and strengthening of a social partnership system in vocational education right now?

Traditionally employers were considered to be key partners of schools, since they are the main users of their “product” and it is on them that the future of any educational institution depends. Diversity of enterprises, which is becoming more and more obvious in the labour market in recent years, makes the task of social partnership formation for the school that is only at the beginning of this process more difficult. That is why when planning joint work with an employer it is necessary to take into account not only the ownership form of the company, potential partner, its interest and place in the labour market, but also the prospects of economy sector development, in which this company functions.

More detailed information concerning the ways to build relationship with employers and to interest them in co-operation is given in the next section of this Report. Right now it is important to point out that loss of links between vocational education and enterprises resulted in the fact many of them do not pay due attention to the issues of retraining and qualification upgrading of their personnel. Those that still understand the importance of this issue have not weakened their activity in this field and have intensified staff training, developing their own educational structures, training centres, they delegate their employees to special practical training and different courses. To some extent companies have developed their own training base because of their mistrust to the state system of vocational education. However experience shows that provided there is a need schools are able to change such an attitude towards them on the part of the companies or enterprises, to prove their competency and to undertake the task to provide production sector with qualified specialists. Almaty has such experience, though not very frequent.

State bodies in charge of education management determine the policy of vocational education development through setting the standards, institutional norms and rules, which school has to follow. Major requirement that the government puts forward is that schools have to ensure standards and quality of educational services. As practice shows the lack of constructive interaction with public management bodies may cause certain dysfunction of educational institutions, deteriorate their positions both in the labour market and in the market of educational services. In present conditions schools and colleges would like first of all that management bodies implement such functions as co-ordination of the activity of major partners in the market of educational services, regulatory, legal and training - methodological provision, forecasting, prospective planning and organisation of staff training. Management bodies themselves are

interested in the implementation of these functions; it will give them a chance to be in demand and less criticised “from the bottom”.

The prospects of VET system co-operation with employment agency imply joint labour market study and analysis, forecasting the needs of enterprises and also the use of school facilities for training the unemployed.

Current controversies between education agencies on the one hand, employment agencies and local power bodies on the other hand are explained by the mistrust as to the quality of work of schools in new conditions. Insufficient reputation of vocational education system has a negative impact on the probability of dialogue between these potential social partners. It is possible to break this closed circle of reciprocal claims only through equal and mutually beneficial co-operation.

Different unions of entrepreneurs, associations, covering a diversity of enterprises and companies and trade unions could be viewed as public associations, which are subjects of labour market. Unfortunately this category of vocational training potential partners is so far rather passive in terms of educational policy formation. As it has already been mentioned the formation of vocational, civil and social institutions is at the initial stage. Though VET co-operation development specifically with this category of partners could contribute to bringing down social tension in society, to increasing their responsibility for vocational training organisation and could make it possible to increase their influence on legislative processes, which have to do with vocational education and training. All these are within the sphere of mutual interests.

Mass media may play an important role in partnership formation and development. Formally they are not subjects of social partnership system. However their influence upon the process of this system formation could hardly be overestimated. The possibility to involve and interest mass media will help to use them in the formation of active public opinion in relation to this issue, which will help considerably in the vocational education strengthening, will contribute to the success of social partnership formation.

This is on the whole the potential of VET major partners in the development of social interaction. This brief analysis proves our conclusion as to necessity in current situation to set up SP model that will consist of two sub-systems: intersystem (cross-sector) and interaction of one VET school with other organisations.

What forms and ways of co-operation of potential partners are adequate and promising in Almaty?

National and international experience shows that SP links are most common for contractual and institutional types of activity.

Contractual forms include all types of interaction of the basis of bilateral and multilateral contracts and agreements. Institutional contacts normally require setting up additional bodies like advisory and other types of boards. Educational institutions have been using contractual forms for a long time, however nowadays the content and subject of these contracts have considerably changed and are covering larger areas. In the former days traditional subject of such contracts would include the following functions:

- Organisation of industrial, practical training for students;
 - Work on probation and qualification upgrading for teachers;
 - Training and retraining of enterprise personnel;
- Today in addition to these functions the new ones appeared:
- Joint commercial activity and project implementation

- Joint participation in tenders, fairs and exhibitions;
- Organisation marketing services;
- Contractual and sub-contractual activity;
- Joint participation in international projects;
- Research and technical activity.

Institutional forms of co-operation mean the highest level of interaction with social partners in comparison with contractual ones. They imply setting up institutional structures with special terms of reference that will function on the basis of a charter or other regulatory documents approved of in line with established order. As a rule these are the so-called Boards (advisory, professional, trusteeship and etc.), which include education management bodies, employers, trade unions and etc. on top of schools. The activity of such Boards could be conventionally split into two groups:

- Advisory and
- Trusteeship

In concord with these basic types the SP institutional structures are called Boards of Trustees of Advisory Boards.

As a rule Boards of Trustees are set up for the implementation of a specific tasks of a specific school. They perform the following tasks:

- Promotion and perfection of an educational process, introduction of new methodological approaches into the process of education;
- Reinforcement and development of training and material base of an educational institution;
- Promotion of social support and protection for the students and teachers;
- Development of a system of incentive funds and grants;
- Assistance in the organisation of winter and summer rehabilitation and rest ;
- Organisation of contests and Olympiads;
- Organisation of sponsor aid for a school.

From this function list it is obvious that school is interested in setting up mainly such an institutional body. The interests of other stakeholders (like enterprises, companies, non-governmental organisations and etc.) are not reflected in this set of joint functions. That is why when setting up such type of structures it is necessary to think carefully of mutual benefits, but not of benefits for one party only.

The function of an Advisory Board is mainly the co-ordination of the activity of partners, which are equally interested in the development of vocational education. Advisory Boards carry out preparatory research and institutional work directly related to negotiation process of officials representing social partners in order to facilitate effective and correct decisions they have to make. A part of such preparatory activity is analytical and forecasting labour market research at different levels: macroeconomic, sector and vocational that ensures efficacy of different programs of vocational education and employment of graduates.

Initially the authors of the Project planned to discuss at the seminar of potential social partners the possibility of setting up an Advisory Board in Almaty as a working Body of a SP model, which would be in line with the international experience. In other words, the idea was that the social partners themselves would initiate this process at “bottom”. We presumed that such an approach would be more effective in terms of formation of institutional structures on democratic principles with due regard to the needs of the stakeholders themselves.

However the majority of this training seminar participants, which took place on February 15-16 of the current year, expressed their opinion that in transition conditions when the institutionalisation of public associations and civil structures is weak, when there are no sector trade unions, schools are poorly motivated, when there is a lack of SP regulatory-legal basis the working body for the organisation of social partners interaction could be only the structure that has strong position of a state management body. So, given the prevailing opinion it was suggested that the working body of a social partnership model should be the Regional Committee that could be set up under the Almaty Akimat and that could be headed by the First Deputy of Akim. The functions, terms of reference and tasks of this Regional Committee are described in the following document.

9. STATUTE of the «Regional Committee in the Sphere of Primary and Secondary Vocational Education and the Unemployed Retraining in Almaty »

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

«Regional Committee in the Sphere of Primary and Secondary Vocational Education and Retraining in Almaty» (hereinafter – Regional Committee) is set up for co-ordination of the activity of social partners – state management bodies, employers, schools, research institutions, trade unions, public associations interested in bringing up the efficacy of planning and staff training organisation with due regard to labour market demands.

- 1-1. Regional Committee shall be a permanently functioning body under the Almaty Akimat.
- 1-2. Regional Committee on regulation of social partnership relationship shall perform its functions in compliance with the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Decrees and ordinances of the Almaty Akim and the present Statute.
- 1-3. Regional Committee shall initiate processes of social partnership formation in the sphere of vocational education and the unemployed retraining in compliance with the strategy of social-economic development of Almaty and market requirements in vocational - qualification field.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

- 2-1. To promote the process of devising the strategy of vocational education and the unemployed retraining system development.
- 2-2. To involve management bodies, employers, research institutions, public associations that are interested in taking part in this process into vocational education reforming.
- 2-3. Negotiating and co-ordination of activity of social partners in the field of planning and organisation of staff training in line with the labour market requirements.
- 2-4. Development of proposals as to changes of the content of staff vocational training, possible correction of curricula and programs, introduction of additional modules into curricula.

- 2-5. Development of proposals as to the introduction of changes and amendments into the regional component of speciality list, into vocational standards for new specialities.
- 2-6. Assessment of the prospects of changing vocational-qualification structure of labour resources in line with the concept of the city social and economic development and with sector forecasts.
- 2-7. To assist schools in evaluating the changes in qualification characteristics of profile specialities.
- 2-8. Promotion and co-ordination of research work in the field of labour market analysis, updated system of staff training and qualification upgrading and etc.
- 2-9. Assistance to schools in organisation of annual competitions and contests among students for the best professional knowledge and skills.
- 2-10. Assistance in the development and publication of educational-methodological materials for the schools.
- 2-11. Identification of criteria for the evaluation of activity related to social partnership development in the sphere of staff training and submitting proposals to the Almaty Akim on awarding the Quality badge the «Best Employer».
- 2-12. Organisation of international co-operation in order to get access to the successful experience on social partnership in the field of process co-ordination in vocational education and labour market.
- 2-13. Setting up the Fund of Social Partnership Development under the Regional Committee, oriented at financing the study of vocational education and retraining related problems.

3. RIGHTS OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

In order to implement the identified tasks the Regional Committee has the right:

- 3-1. To introduce suggestions and proposals developed by the Regional Committee on social partnership to the city Akimat for consideration.
- 3-2. To submit to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan proposals on the formation and improvement of the State standards of vocational education.
- 3-3. To request the managers of public bodies, schools, employers and other institutions and organisations – social partners in the sphere of vocational education for necessary information, related to the Regional Committee terms of reference.
- 3-4. To invite to the meetings of the Regional Committee management bodies officials, managers of companies, organisations and other structures.
- 3-5. To submit proposals on the introduction of benefits for legal entities that provide vocational training development as well as means of adaptation to changing industrial and labour market conditions for the young people.
- 3-6. To maintain co-operation with international organisations while mastering new social partnership practice in the field of staff training taking the advantage of the best world achievements.

4. ORGANIZATION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

- 4-1. 17 reputable managers, representing participants of social partnership and interested in the development of vocational education and retraining are elected as members of the

- Regional Committee for the term of 3 years. Candidate nomination and discussion for the first term of the Committee functioning is done in the office of the First Deputy of Almaty Akim and then at the meetings of the Regional Committee at the proposal of experts.
- 4-2. A permanent Chairman of the Regional Committee is the First Deputy of Almaty Akim. The Regional Committee shall work according to the co-ordinated plan and shall convene meetings not less than twice a year. A decision shall be passed if half of the Committee members vote for it. The working body of the Regional Committee is the Secretariat, consisting of three staff members that shall perform the following functions:
- Analysis and systematisation of submitted proposals and other information and shall accordingly develop conclusion on them.
 - Preparation and holding meetings of the Regional Committee.
 - Control over the implementation of decisions and actions in compliance with the action plan.
 - Development of the Regional Committee reports.
 - Informing social partners on a regular basis about all the issues under consideration and decisions made.
- 4-3. The Regional Committee shall have the right to invite experts – vocational education specialists - on a temporary basis to develop and implement socially important projects and other relevant activities.
- 4-4. Members of the Regional Committee shall have the right to take part in the collegium seating (meetings, conferences) of institutions, organisations and enterprises that are social partners, having a deliberative voting right
- 4-5. People, members of the Regional Committee shall have the right to withdraw on their own free will or be withdrawn at the demand of the representatives that have nominated them after the discussion of application by the Regional Committee members. In this case social partners shall have the right to nominate new Regional Committee members instead of those withdrawn.
- 4-6. Chairman of the Regional Committee shall have the right to approve of new Committee members that may come instead of those withdrawn.
- 4-7. Expenditures connected with the Secretariat activity shall be financed out of the special expenditure article that shall be provided by the city budget.

5. STRUCTURE OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

(is to be formed on the basis of sector belonging)

1. Department of primary and secondary vocational education
2. Department of labour, employment and social protection
3. Committee on Economy
4. Statistics Agency
5. Small Business Department
6. Department on Migration and Demography
7. City Association (Union) of Employers
8. Public Fund of Employment Promotion
9. Kazakhs Academy of Education
10. Trade Unions
11. Representatives of the Board of School Principals (Formal Sector)
12. Representatives of private education sector

13. Representatives of public associations.

Notes:

- Agencies representing state management bodies (vocational education, labour, employment and social protection) shall have 15% of membership accordingly; Association of employers – 30%; Academy of Education – 10%; and the rest of the participants – 30% of membership within the Regional Committee.
- The Committee shall have the right to initiate setting up of working groups for some limited period of time and with a specific goal. It may be related to the study of labour market demand, with forecasting of major indicators of labour market development by key profession and speciality groups, development of regulatory documents, educational-methodological materials, education, qualification upgrading and staff retraining, both of those working and the unemployed, with designing the activity and etc. The organiser of such a group may be an individual VET institution provided it has effective partnership with enterprises and necessary resources.

10. Conclusion

Development of the regional partnership model made it possible to determine the following basic conditions for its implementation:

- Availability of a social problem, which is considerable enough but which could be tackled via partnership.
- Availability of a legal basis for partnership.
- The will of the parties to find the solution via interaction.
- Availability of capacities and resources complementing each other.
- Availability of the project necessary to achieve a common goal.
- Transparent and acceptable rules of co-operation, determining the rights, duties and degree of responsibility of each of the parties.
- Availability of interested environment and public opinion
- Availability of a working body responsible for regulation and co-ordination of interaction of the participants, representing all types of potential VET system social partners.
- Reorientation of the activity of VET organisations at studying the interests of their social partners, clarification of qualification requirements together with the employers, search of mutually beneficial projects, promotion of effective competitiveness of one's own school.
- Lobbying the inclusion into General (sector, regional) Agreement, regulating labour relations between the employers and employees and VET development issues.
- Implementing measures on optimisation of the state taxation policy, targeting enterprises at carrying out active programs on education and staff qualification upgrading.
- Enforcement of regulations on tax exemption of all the costs related to staff training.
- Reinforcement of regulatory and control functions of state bodies in the field of informal educational services.
- Policy in the sphere of VET, which will take into account real labour market and employment situation.
- Ensuring information “transparency” related to the situation in the labour market and in educational services market, raising the awareness of the population as to the profession and

qualification demand, forecasts of the main labour market macroeconomic indicators, problems with employment of graduates, rating of school and etc.

Major promising development directions of suggested experimental SP model could be as follows:

- Organisation of experimental SP model discussion in other regions of Kazakhstan and feedback analysis.
- Setting up a Regional Committee at the cross-sector level under the city Akimat, its activity monitoring in the course of 1 year, summarisation of the results and introduction of necessary amendments.
- Holding a workshop for the VET school managers on mechanisms of social partnership formation and organisation.

11. Glossary

Social partnership – joint activity of representatives of different social groups and structures, aimed at overcoming social problems and based on the principles of respect of each party interests.

Social partnership in vocational education – a special type of interaction between schools, subjects and institutions of labour market, national and local power bodies as well as public associations aimed at maximum co-ordination and implementation of interests of all the stakeholders.

Classification – type and degree of professional preparedness of a graduate to carry out professional activity and to continue education reflected in the school certificate.

Vocational education and training (VET):

Primary VET (PVET) – education students get in vocational schools, vocational lyceums, in production setting, in training centres, in training courses and etc. on the basis of primary general education; primary VE is combined with getting general secondary education and aimed at training qualified workers, employees in different fields of labour activity;

Secondary VET (SVET) – education aimed at training specialists in colleges, secondary special schools on the basis of general primary education; students are enrolled through competitive selection; this type of education may be combined with getting primary VE and secondary general education;

Tertiary VET – higher basic education (Bachelor's degree), tertiary scientific-pedagogic education (Master's Degree) and tertiary special education.

Profession – major type of occupation, labour activity of an individual, supported by education certificates.

12. List of abbreviations and acronyms

IVO – Institute of vocational education
KAE – Kazakh Academy of Education
Mintrudsotszaschity – Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population
MES – Ministry of Education and Science
NGO – Non-governmental organisation
OSC – Open stock company
VET – vocational education and training
VS – vocational school
MM – mass media
SP – social partnership
CC – chamber of commerce

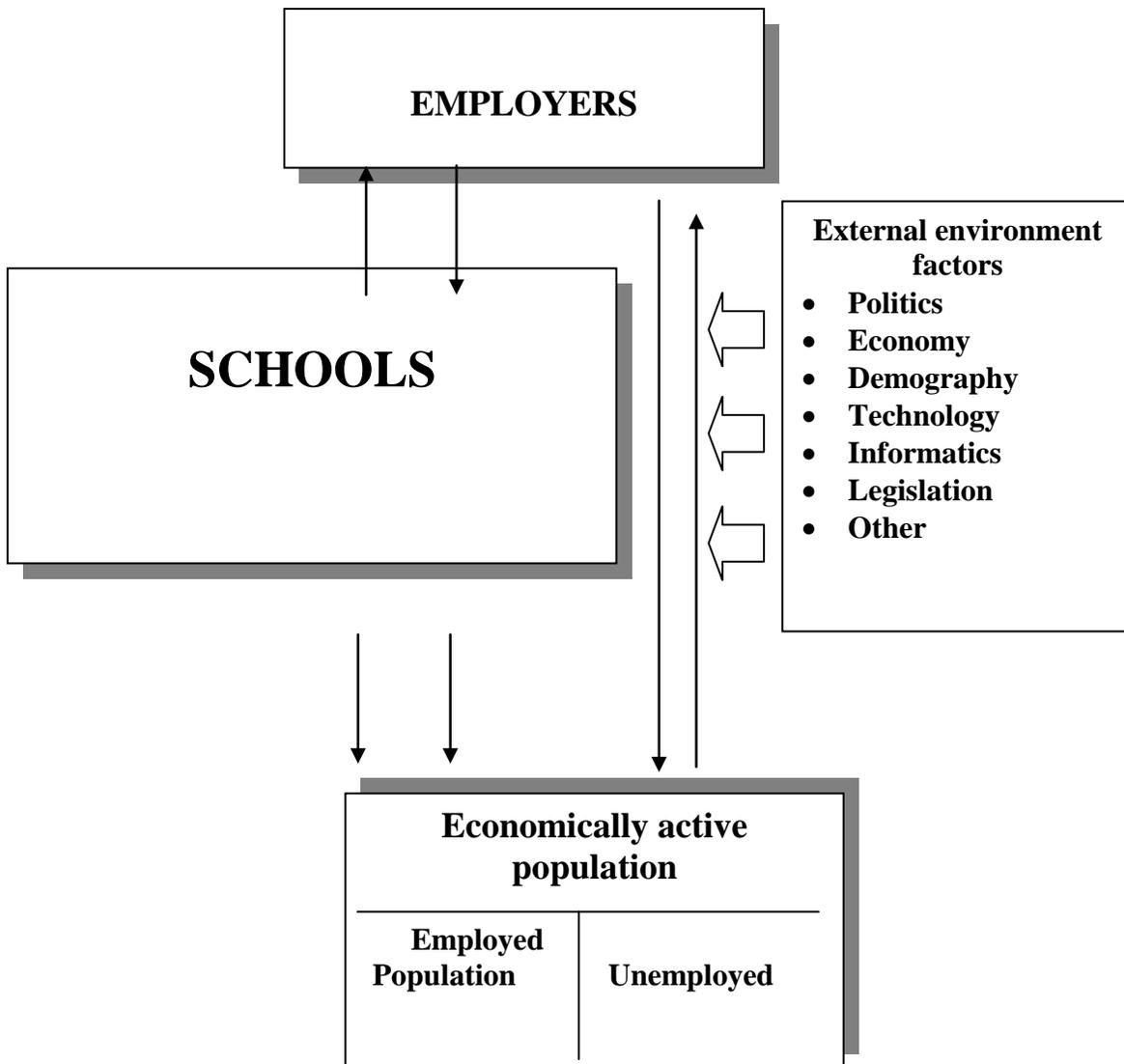
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14. Attachments

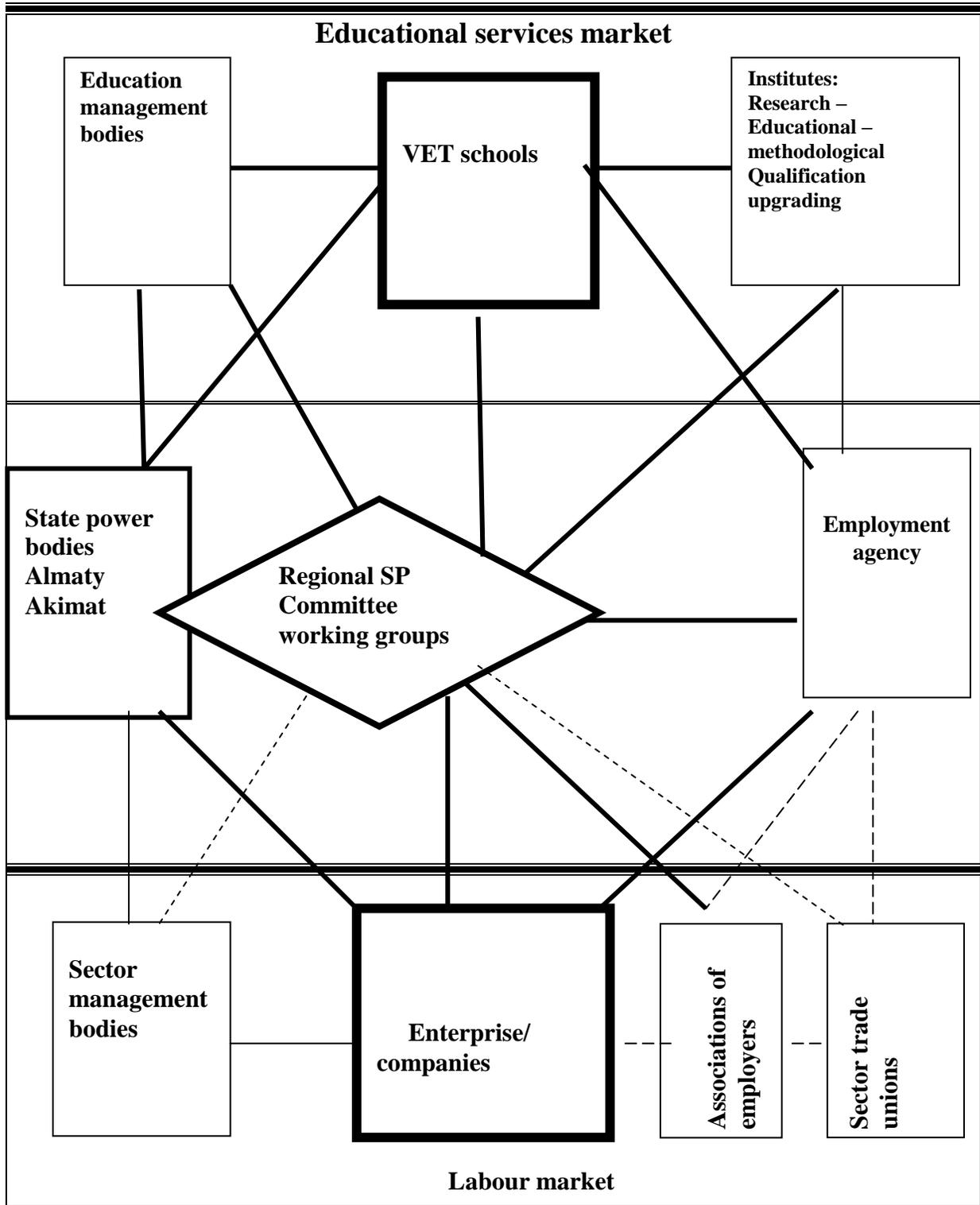
Attachment 1

The Scheme of interaction of labour market subjects and schools



Attachment 2

Scheme – model of social partnership in VET sphere of Almaty



Recommendations on the Implementation and Development of Social Partnership Model

Formation of social partnership system in contemporary social and economic conditions is rather a long and complex process, which depends on a number of subjective and objective reasons: economic situation, social conditions, the preparedness of the power bodies to get involved into it as well as on the will, wish and possibilities of school managers. In each specific case the situation may be more or less favourable for social partnership development. In any case there is a possibility to determine several major stages, specific for this process.

The 1st - preparatory stage

Basically at this stage it is necessary to recognise the necessity to establish a new type of interaction with labour market, to assess its own potential and to understand industry needs. This is the time school personnel has to answer the following questions:

- What should be understood under the social partnership system?
- What school problems could be resolved through social partnership development?
- Who are the major partners of this specific school?
- What can a school give to its real and potential partners?

In order to answer all these questions it is necessary to inventory real and potential partners and their interests. For example, it is necessary to study that industrial sector, for which the school trains specialists. To collect the necessary information in order to know by what enterprises, organisations and professional associations this sector is represented; how this sector is seen in strategic plan of the region development, what potential it has.

Information about educational institutions, functioning in your market segment of educational services can give material for analysis. It is necessary to try and have comprehensive information about professional standards or qualification characteristics and about current educational standards at different levels of vocational education.

But the most important task of the first stage, without which it is impossible to pass over to the next one, is provision of motivation on the part of the entire school personnel to do complex and labour intensive work

to be able to form sustainable system of co-operation with different categories of social partners. This process is characterised by the break of psychological ideas, stereotypes that have been formed under the former system of social-economic relations. Schools have to refuse from the attitude “we are liable” to “in what way may our school be useful for the social partner”.

In case of successful completion of the first stage of social partnership formation schools may face the following results:

- A school personnel is aimed at social partnership development.
- Database on potential social partners has been formed and split by their categories and current and potential forms of co-operation with them have been described.
- Database on schools, functioning in the same educational market segment has been formed.
- Database on current educational curricula has been formed.
- Prospects of this economy sector development in this region have been analysed.
- The validity evaluation of training specialists for this economy sector at a certain educational level (quantitative labour market analysis) has been done.

The 2nd stage – institutional

The objective of this stage is to establish sustainable links with the social partners. Within its framework agreements on co-operation are being prepared, mechanism of co-operation with different categories of social partners are being developed. Thus, elements of future social partnership system are being organized, forms of social partnership are being determined and a pool of school social partners is being formed.

Experience shows that the personnel of lyceums, schools and colleges is not always successful in establishing contacts with the employers. It should be mentioned that this is due both to objective and subjective reasons. Very often this happens because of the lack of mutual interests, but more often because of the inability to find mutual interests, which is determined by the lack of communication skills, because school representatives are simply unable to structure negotiation process, to prepare to a meeting and to consolidate the results of negotiations. This is why it is important to prepare each of your visits to each of your social partners.

Successful implementation of the second stage of social partnership formation yields, as a rule, the following results:

- Agreements on co-operation signed with different categories of social partners: on practical training of students, on employment of graduates, on expertise of educational-methodological materials, on continuous education, on practical training of teachers and pedagogy specialists and so on.
- Development of statistic and analytical materials concerning labour market situation, its qualitative and quantitative parameters as well as the structure of qualification demand for the required professions have been collected.

The 3d stage – system formation

The goal of the 3d stage is to unite into a system of already available elements of social partnership and those that are under development at the present stage. Interaction with partners is becoming sustainable and permanent in nature, support of contacts with employers is acquiring that character, that is why clarifications are introduced into functional instructions, activities related to social partnership are being included into the work plans of schools and etc. Formation of institutional structures of social partnership is becoming one of the most important school activity directions – formation of permanent boards, councils, and committees, working groups that unite all the stakeholders and regulate relationship between them.

Advisory Council could be an example of this type of structures. Such Councils should include representatives of schools, industry, professional associations, education management bodies and employment agencies. Regulatory documents of such Councils (regulations, charters) are being prepared and approved of, procedures of its functioning are being determined, which will take into account the interests of all its members. The work plan of the Council is being developed (for example, co-ordination of curricula with industry representatives, hands-on training for teachers and practical training for students and etc.).

Thus, at the 3d stage of social partnership system formation the interaction of schools with all the interested parties takes place at the technical level. At this stage social partnership mechanisms are formed at school level.

The outcome of the 3d stage is the achievement of the following results:

- Functional instructions of different categories of school personnel are complemented by the responsibilities related to co-operation with social partners.

- Measures as to social partnership are included into the school work plan.
- Standard documents on social partnership that include agreements, contracts, on teacher hands-on training, on advisory council activity, on employment of graduates and etc. are already developed.
- Permanently functioning institutional working body is in place.
- Sustainable co-operation with different categories of social partners has been established.

In conclusion it is necessary to point out that results achieved at the last stage need to be constantly supported and consolidated, since a considerable number of social and economic factors do not contribute to sustainability of this system so far, while the lack of regulatory basis necessary for social partnership makes it very much dependent on the influence of subjective factors in social development.

Attachment 4

Recommendations on the Formation of Regulatory – legal; Basis of Social partnership *(at the level of an individual VET school)*

The process of social partnership system formation in the field of vocational education is in need of regulatory documents, which still are to be developed. Development of such documents may be done already today at the level of school itself. The right for an independent educational process running, for determining its activity management structure, staffing, distribution of functional responsibilities and etc. is in direct responsibility of an educational institution or a school. This right is fixed in the article of the Law “On Education”. Within the framework of the implementation of the school rights for the development of adequate regulations (on practical training of students, on research – methodological activity, on attestation of teachers and etc.) educational institutions may include into these regulations items aimed at social partnership development.

While implementing the right for self determination, for staffing, for distribution of functional responsibilities schools have the right to require form the personnel performance of some activity on promotion of

partnership relations with enterprises and other types of school social partners. A manager may **determine** for his deputy and other selected persons **terms of reference, distribution of functions on establishment of partnership links, establishment of contacts with employers, on collection of labour market related information and etc.**

Sections related to involvement of employers into research-methodological and institutional-technical activity, included into adequate school regulatory documents, will make it possible to expand the possibilities for establishment of partnership relations with enterprises and companies. It is necessary that in each school the Statute on the organisation of research-methodological activity should contain **items on mandatory participation of employers in reviewing new and amended curricula and programs.** In the statute on the state final attestation it is necessary to provide for a **wider representation of social partners in the Attestation Committee.** Practice shows that in the majority of cases, schools form 5 member Attestation Committees; 1 or 2 people are invited from outside organisations. It is reasonable to expand both the membership number of such Committees, as well as the level of representation of employers in them and other social partners. It is desirable that not less than 3-4 Committee members should represent outside organisations, which have partnership links with schools.

Introduction of mandatory hands-on teacher training in the companies or enterprises, which have partnership links with school, can contribute to the strengthening of social partnership system. Inclusion of these items into the Statute on teacher qualification upgrading will create a real basis not only for skills perfection, but will also open new horizons of co-operation with employers.