

REPORT

on the international project "Social partnership in vocational education and training", implemented by National Observatory (NO) of Kazakhstan at the support of European Training Fund (ETF) and Representation of UNESCO, Almaty, December, 2001 - September, 2002.

Working group of the project:

Names and positions held	Description of Duties
Bentabet E.M – foreign consultant, ETF expert, Marseille, France	Provision of the information, consulting of local experts, preparation of a presentation
Tasbulatova Sh.U. – head of National Observatory (NO)	Management of NO overall activity, coordination and control of the project implementation, organization of the work at Almaty Akimat Expert Council
Kurasova A.M. – deputy director of the Almaty department on labour, employment and social protection, project coordinator	Preparation of the report on the actual state of social partnership in Kazakhstan, involvement in the organization and work of the Almaty Akimat Expert Council.
Belosludtseva V.N. – NO expert, associate professor of "Prestige" Academy, Almaty	Involvement in preparation and work of training seminars, development of comparative analysis of social partnership in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, preparation of final reports
Kadyrova S.U. – methodologist of vocational school #10, NO assistant Khasenova A. - NO assistant	Involvement in preparation and organization of seminars

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I. Introduction

The main idea of the project was to study, to generalize and to disseminate the experience of European countries (on the example of France), including the experience of Central Asian countries such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, in the organization of social partnership in the field of VET. It was also important for the specialists of Kazakhstan to analyze the positive changes that had occurred in the given field during the process of the project study, as well as after its completion.

Social partnership (SP) in the vocational training is a special type of interaction of educational establishments with the subjects and institutes of labour market, republican and regional government bodies, public organizations, and it is aimed at maximum coordination and implementation of all participants' interests, involved in this process. The essence of this process lies in the informative and organizational design of SP of different parties, necessary for the implementation of the worldwide accepted mechanisms of softening the crisis and essential for the transition to effective models of development under market conditions.

The SP Project is the continuation of the work of Kazakhstan's National Observatory (NO) over this problem that has been carried out stage by stage within three years. In 1999 the first review of the actual state of social partnership in Kazakhstan was prepared. In 2000 - 2001 the research was conducted, the main task of which was the development of a pilot model of social partnership in the Almaty VET system, designed for further distribution in other regions.

The main purpose of the considered project is to reveal and to define the key problems that are constraining the development of social partnership in the field of VET system of Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries, as well as the rationale of the ways of these problems' solution, taking into account the effective international experience.

The work resulted in the preparation of analytical reports and comparative reviews on different themes of the project. The above mentioned countries were involved in the preparation of those reports and reviews that reflected the key processes and tendencies in this field.

The final report, designed by the experts of Kazakhstan, contains a brief history of social partnership development in the country during the last decade, the description and analysis of legislative and normative basis, the role and the value of social partners at republican, branch and regional levels. In the conclusion the number of measures, directed at SP development in the field of VET and the mechanism of their implementation are offered.

The materials of the report are intended for state organizations and first of all, for administrative departments of education, departments of labour and employment, educational institutions, organizations of employers, public and scientific and other organizations and individuals who are interested in SP development in the field of VET system.

The working group of Kazakhstan's project expresses their gratitude to the ETF and Representation of UNESCO in Almaty for the possibility of participating in the development of such actual problem as social partnership in vocational training. We express our thanks to Mr. Bentabet E.M., project foreign adviser and ETF expert, for the provision of the substantial information on the project issues and for the possibility of learning more about the international experience in the given field. We are grateful to the heads of National Observatories of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan who were involved in the preparation of analytical reports on this problem. Their reports helped to prepare a comparative review of the existing state of social partnership in VET of Central Asian countries.

II. Short summary of the project's outcomes

During the process of the project development the following events were conducted.

1. Establishment of Expert Council at the Almaty Akimat as a regional SP working body of VET organizations and employers and urban government bodies, the model of which has been offered in the previous project of NO. The practical activity of the Council is carried out through three working groups, first of which decides the tasks of interaction of VET educational institutions with enterprises on the basis of updating the contents of vocational training; the second group defines the list of trades that are in demand on the labour market; and the third group is responsible for the development of entrepreneurship skills through training of the population.

The main function of the Expert Council is coordination of the interaction between the partners, who are interested in VET development in Almaty. The Council carries out preparatory, exploratory and organizational work, related to the negotiating process of social partners with the purpose of facilitating their decision-making. The most important part of the preparatory work is analytical and forecasting research of the labour market at branch and professional levels. That allows to provide the efficiency of different programmes of vocational training and job placement of graduates.

Expert Council organizers took into account the specificity of conditions of the transition period that are distinguished by their weak institutionalization of public and civil patterns, by their inefficiently developed branch labour unions, and by the low motivation of separate educational institutions. So, it was decided that there should be a working body with strong positions in the governmental organizations to regulate the interaction of social partners in Almaty. In this respect, Expert Council was offered to be established. Expert Council was proposed to be headed by the director of the department on small business. The name of the new body expresses the priority trend of their activity - implementation of analytical and consulting work during the adaptation process of VET system to the needs of Almaty labour market.

As a whole, the main functions of the Council are determined by the appropriate items of the Provision on "Regional Commission in the sphere of primary and secondary vocational training of youth and retraining of Almaty unemployed citizens", which has been developed under the framework of the previous project of NO, aimed at the development of a regional model of social partnership in Almaty (see Appendix 1). At present, the indicated Provision is being updated, taking into account the needs and possibilities of the new Expert Council.

The Council consists of 15 people who represent the following organizations:

- Almaty Akimat (departments: small business; education; labour, employment and social protection of the population)
- Oblast committee of trade unions of Republic of Kazakhstan
- Confederation of employers of Republic of Kazakhstan
- Branch associations of employers
- Board of directors of colleges and educational institutions of primary and secondary vocational education
- Almaty organizations of primary and secondary vocational education.

The main tasks of the activity plan of the Council's first group were to implement different events, aimed at the creation of special working groups according to trades, organization of training seminars for them on the issues of the analysis of employers' needs, and development of requirements for a training level of graduates, etc. Taking into account this document, colleges and professional schools have prepared their

plans of interaction with employers (see Appendix 2). One of the main points of their plans is to study the needs of enterprises that cooperate closely with educational institutions. The study was scheduled to be conducted in October - November in 2001. The plan of the second group of the Expert Council includes the implementation of the following events:

- Expert estimation of the needs of Almaty in main trades
- Review of the current situation in the system of training main trades for the city of Almaty
- Development of guidelines to the list of trades that are in demand on the Almaty labour market.

The work of the third group includes a complex of training events that are to be implemented through the systems of formal and informal vocational education. The purpose of all these events is development of youth and adult skills that are vital under the conditions of market relations.

2. The second constituent of the project was organization of a training seminar in July, 2001 for Expert Council employees on the issues of interaction of VET organizations with employers in the process of development of state VET standards and standards of trades (the Programme and a list of participants are given in Appendix 3). There was a presentation of the experience of Latvia on this problem. The presentation was given with the help of Mr. Joma S., project foreign consultant, employee of the Riga Agency for the development of VET programmes (see Appendix 4). The following questions attracted the attention of the participants of the seminar:

- The process of branch study during the development of standards of a trade;
- Technique of joint development of standards;
- Definition of aims of VET 4
- Organization of promotion examinations;
- Criteria of quality estimation and matrix of test jobs.

The results of the seminar allowed to update essentially the activity plan of the working group which is responsible for revising VET educational programmes, taking into account labour market demands.

3. The third constituent of the project is preparation of national reports on social partnership in the field of VET by all countries that participated in the project (see Appendix 5). In compliance with the project requirements, the pattern of the reports included coverage of the problems of history, the state of SP as a whole and in VET in particular, in such fields as qualification and standards, quality assurance, accreditation, definition of needs, financing etc. In each of those reports strong and weak characteristics of the ways of this problem solution, as well as unused possibilities and external threats were shown.

In the report of **Kazakhstan** the legal support of SP and emerging positive tendencies in the development of the social dialogue between employers and VET system, were stressed. For the purpose of stabilization and further strengthening of this cooperation, the experts formulated the following sentences:

- Gradual review and improvement of the legislative basis with regard to the quality of VET, employment and social partnership in these fields.
- Creation of social partners commissions for co-ordination of activities and preparation of decisions in VET on the basis of the model, designed for the city

of Almaty within the framework of National Observatory project, on the republican, regional and branch levels.

- Development of techniques for the definition of the needs of economy in workers and specialists, taking into account the priorities of branches, sectors of economy and territories, where market transformations are taking place, as well participation of social partners.
- The improvement of educational curricula, programmes, training standards, taking into account the opinions of specialists of the appropriate profile and employers.
- Performance of systematic labour market forecasting with all social partners and informing all interested parties about the perspectives of the needs in skilled personnel.
- The development of state and regional training programmes of qualified workers and specialists for 2003-2005 with the participation of social partners according to the needs of the labour market.
- Organization of training seminars on the issues of interaction of social partners in the field of vocational training on republican and regional levels
- Development of measures to encourage those employers who organize training and improvement of professional skills of their staff.
- Organization of information activities with regard to the importance and efficiency of social partnership in the field of vocational training.

In the conclusions and recommendations of **Kyrgyzstan's** report, it was mentioned that a new market type of social partnership is at the stage of coming-to-be in their country. According to them, the main obstacles on the way of SP development in the field of vocational training are:

- Undeveloped institutional basis of the associations of employers.
- Insufficient involvement, sluggish thinking of social partners in the field of vocational education and training.
- Underestimation of many employers of the importance of their staff development and the importance of their training and retraining.
- Lack or deficit of money resources of employers to organize training of their staff.
- Out-dated material and technical basis of the majority of VET educational institutions, that hampers training of competent personnel, in particular, technical specialists.
- Labour redundancy on the labour market, that allows the employers to search for manpower (mostly unskilled) independently.

It is recommended in the report:

- To improve the distribution of the information about the actual state of the labour market to all educational organizations that participate in the social dialogue in the field of vocational training, using National Observatory's resources;
- To change the policy and methods of organization of social partnership in the field of vocational training of skilled personnel; and social partners should undertake new obligations to implement them;
- To include the issues of vocational training and retraining of personnel in the obligations of the General agreement, regional and branch agreements, collective agreements.

The experts of **Uzbekistan** consider that organization and development of SP depends on the initiative of administrative establishments of education and availability of a number of factors, that hamper this process. The main factor, that hampers SP development in their republic, is lack of conditions, rational and attractive for employers to interact with educational institutions on the republican, regional, local levels of management. It is offered in the report:

- To improve legislative and normative basis.
- To stimulate the interest of employers and businessmen in cooperation with VET institutions in the field of training of specialists for enterprises.
- To create conditions in colleges for retraining and improvement of professional skills of the people, who were sent there by the city employment services.
- To boost the advertising activity of colleges and works of graduates.
- To strengthen the obligation in creation of contractual relations between employers and educational institutions of secondary specialized and vocational education (SSVE) on the basis of the decisions of local government bodies, aimed at satisfaction of the needs of economy in manpower.
- To solve, on the local level, the problem of reduction of a certain volume of local taxes, paid by the businessmen who participate in the training of their staff
- To strengthen the ties of colleges with labour exchanges for the purpose of ensuring retraining and improvement of professional skills
- Marketing services should study the needs in skilled personnel, should substantiate the portfolio of orders in trades and should define the quota on the reception of entrants and conclusion of contracts on the basis of the received data.

4. The comparative review of the results of national reports' analysis and their key conclusions (see Appendix 6):

- In all countries the legislative basis for regulation of relations in the field of social partnership, mainly, was developed, however, the existing legislation in the field of SP regulates predominantly traditional problems, related to the solution of common social and economic problems, labour relations and working conditions; vocational training and retraining of personnel have not become an independent subject to be included in normative and legal acts, regulating the trilateral dialogue on the national and regional levels, so far.
- Even when traditional forms and patterns of social partnership, common for all countries, are retained, however, there are still some differences in the contents of agreements and obligations that are concluded at different levels. So, in Kazakhstan all agreements and obligations have, in the greater degree, a market trend; in Kyrgyzstan the emphasis is made on the employment of the population; in Uzbekistan - on the legislative activity.
- SP in the field of vocational training is still insufficiently formed and it is still on the initial stage of development, that can be, mainly, explained by the fact that the partners are not ready to interact and by the absence of the qualified management of this problem.
- Two potential parties are mainly ready for the social dialogue: state organizations, which are accountable for the system of vocational education, and VET organizations. Other partners feel a need in interaction, but there are no sufficient resources and mechanisms.

5. Organization of the international regional seminar in September, 2001, aimed at the exchange of experience in the field of social partnership in vocational education of Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) and

European countries (on the example of France), as well as at the development of guidelines for the organization of interaction of VET with real sector on the local level (see Appendix 7).

The representatives of Ministries of education and science, labour and social protection of the population of Republic of Kazakhstan, Almaty Akimat, organizations of employers and VET, regional committee of trade unions of RK, Embassy of France in Kazakhstan, a vocational lycee, Paris, France, international organizations, including representatives of UNESCO, UNICEF, ETF, Delegation of the European Commission in Kazakhstan, Research and development center on professional qualifications (CEREQ), Marceilles, France, National Observatories of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and others participated in the seminar.

The first part of the programme was devoted to the familiarization of the participants of the seminar with the experience of European countries in creation and development of the social dialogue in the field of vocational training.

During the presentation of Ms. C. Morel, ETF project manager, the urgency of this problem was stressed. The experience of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in involving social partners in VET in order to improve the state of employment, to stimulate an individual to develop his skills and to promote social solidarity, thereby to promote economic progress of the country as a whole, was reviewed. (see Appendix 8).

On the example of France, Mr. Bentabet, (CEREQ), project foreign expert, highlighted the issues, concerned with:

- Different levels of social interaction (professional, branch, level of an enterprise);
- Procedure of development and modification of VET diplomas and branch certificates;
- Involvement of social partners in estimation of professional qualifications (see Appendix 9).

The analytical material, prepared by Mr. Bentabet, was distributed among the participants of the seminar. The analytical material contained a comparative review of the current situation and development of social partnership in VET of Germany, Austria, Denmark, Switzerland and other European countries.

On the basis of the results of those presentations one can conclude the following: in the majority of European countries the role of social partners, mainly, is oriented at continuous training of adults, at the same time, however, the growing activity of governments and industrial confederations in the process of primary vocational training can be observed. It is explained by the necessity of re-structuring of large enterprises and by the availability of tough competition. Thus, training and re-training of workers have become an important aspect of their re-structuring strategy.

The experience of social interaction between the professional Lycee and enterprises was presented in the messages of the employees of that Lycee, Lamark J., Morett J., and Preslier J. (Paris). In their presentation "Priority of relations between a VET institution and its social and economic environment. From the experience of social partnership in vocational education and training of France", among other measures, aimed at strengthening cooperation, they mentioned such measures as:

- Social insurance of pupils at enterprises
- Creation of Council of employers that will place orders on preparation of workers and specialists
- Multilevel approach to the structure of vocational educational institutions
- Improvement of professional skills of teachers at enterprises
- Shortening of the period of general educational training
- Development of VET standards by special joint institutes
- Release of educational institutions from the responsibility of job placement of graduates, etc. (see Appendix 10)

The discussion of the presented experience was conducted in the working groups of the countries, participants of the seminar. They were offered to select the ideas, that can be useful for practical mastering in vocational education and training in Central Asian countries. The majority of the above mentioned ways and resources of SP development in European countries were approved as the most acceptable under the conditions of vocational education and training of Central Asian republics.

The second part of the seminar was devoted to the presentation and discussion of the national reports, that contained the description of the experience of SP development in vocational education and training in such countries as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tadjikistan and Uzbekistan. The participants of the seminar familiarized themselves with the experience in the implementation of the Almaty model of social partnership in the form of the establishment of Expert Council. The Expert Council functions under the framework of the Almaty Akimat department on small business. Summarizing the results of the discussion of Central Asian countries' experience, the generalized version of the comparative review of the national reports was represented.

The third part of the seminar was devoted to the round table. The participants of the round table discussed the spheres and the optimal volume of the competence of state bodies, regions, enterprises, public organizations and VET organizations in the implementation of the mutually advantageous social dialogue.

The purpose of the fourth part of the programme was dedicated to the development and discussion of the recommendations, that were made on the basis of overall results of the seminar.

The recommendations included the following conclusions and proposals:

- The operating social partnership in Central Asian countries covers, mainly, the sphere of social and labour relations in the field of payments and labour protection. Vocational training of specialists in compliance with the needs of the labour market is one of the major problems to be discussed by social partners at all levels. Now, these problems are realized not only by educational institutions, but also by employers, state organizations, the community, and, first of all, by parents and students.
- Essential legislative and institutional prerequisites for the social partnership development in the field of vocational training, such as: legislative and normative basis, associations of employers, educational institutions, specialized state structures, etc., were created in the countries.
- The necessity of SP is dictated by the needs in job placement, knowledge and skills of graduates of educational institutions, that are very essential in the labour market, as well as by forecasting of the needs in specialists of different professions and development of vocational training.
- At the same time social partnership in the field of vocational training is still insufficiently formed and it is still on the initial stage of the development. Its poor development is mainly explained by the fact that the partners are not ready to interact, as well as, by the absence of the qualified management of this problem.
- The information about the labour market, including the data on internal labour migration, becomes a very important source of the information, necessary for the direction of collective and personal efforts towards the creation of the potential of job placement. Employers and trade unions require the information about the professional structure of available manpower and about possible changes in demand in professional skills in order to define directions of investments, as well as to make decisions with regard to training and retraining of their personnel during the process of collective negotiations and at signing collective agreements and contracts.

- The public services of employment require the information for framing the policy of employment, for rendering assistance in creation of new jobs, for the development of programmes on training and retraining of personnel. Moreover, such information is essential for the organization, which monitors the situation on the labour market and adequate effect on changes.

The main obstacles on the ways of social partnership development in the field of vocational training and retraining in the countries-participants of the project are the following:

- Absence of the development strategy and concept of social partnership in the field of vocational training.
- Legislative and normative basis, regulating the problems of SP in vocational training is insufficiently developed.
- Low activity of state organizations in the solution of this problem and low level of their communications in this field.
- Unstable development of private business, limited nature of financial resources of enterprises.
- Insufficient involvement of employers, as the main participants of social partnership in the field of vocational education and training. Their poorly developed institutional basis, their inability to effect substantially on the labour market, as well as to express interests of employers with regard to the issues of education and training of personnel. Businessmen are not ready to get adapted to the market of educational services
- Absence of the system of privileges for enterprises, that cooperate with VET organizations; incorrect taxation of the enterprises, that participate in training of personnel.
- Negative influence of economic factors (shortage of financial, material and labour resources, in particular, in rural areas and small cities).
- Redundancy of proposals of different specialists on the labour market (it is more favorable for the employer to hire a trained specialist instead of investing his money in training and wasting time on partner cooperation).
- Domination of commercial interests of a number of educational establishments which do not bear any responsibility for training of certainly useless specialists or for inadequate quality of training.
- Inertness and poor ability of educational institutions to register inquiries of employers, absence of adjusted and continuous communication with the services that are engaged in citizens' job placement.
- Poor activity of the population, who wait for the solution of their problems from above and excise less initiatives to change the existing situation.
- Absence of the mechanism of interaction of educational institutions with employers, that can be rational and attractive for the latter, at republican, regional, and local levels;
- Absence of programmes of business development and creation of new jobs on their basis in the majority of regions;
- Absence of monitoring of the work of VET graduates;
- Poor investment activity.

For the solution of these problems the following first-priority measures are offered:

- To define the spheres of the competence of the government, regions, organizations of employers, enterprises, public associations and VET educational institutions in the social dialogue.

- On the basis of effective domestic and foreign experience to improve the contractual policy (and technology) between social partners and to develop organizations of interaction at republican, regional and local levels.
- To create regional working organizations (services) for the involvement of such potential partners in social dialogue and for the coordination of their activity in VET, who are capable to fulfill diverse functions, including information and analytical support, joint participation in updating the contents and technologies of vocational training, improvement of professional skills and retraining of the personnel of enterprises, etc.
- To lobby the introduction of amendments into the legislation that promotes the interest of employers and businessmen in cooperation with VET system.

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.

Plan of the Expert Council' working group on renewal of VET content

Problem. Practice has shown that social partners in VET do not pay enough attention to renewing VET content. There are problems related to the proportion of theory and practical work, identification of the list of training disciplines, insufficient account of labour market needs. The content of VET curricula does not sufficiently reflect the changes of the professional activity.

Objective: Feasibility study of the possibility for renewing the content of education oriented to the professional activity.

Activities

No	Title	Deadlines	Responsible persons
1	Set up 10 specialised working groups by occupations consisting of specialists of VET institutions and enterprises.	July-August 2002	Directors of VET institutions, Heads of enterprises and sector associations
2	Conduct a 3-day training workshop for members of the working groups.	September 2002	VET Institute of Kazakh Academy of education. Department of education of Almaty city, working group of the Expert Committee
3	Conduct labour market analysis based on questioning of employers.	October-November 2002	Working groups of VET institutions
4	Analyse curricula and training programmes on occupations, make amendments and complement them with account of employers' recommendations.	November 2002	Working groups
5	Develop requirements to the level of qualification of graduates.	November 2002	Working groups
6	Develop recommendations to conducting qualification examinations.	December 2002	Working groups
7	Develop draft State VET standards in selected occupations.	January-April 2003	Working groups, VET Institute of Kazakh Academy of education.

Expected outcomes:

1. 10 specialised working groups in various occupations set up and trained.
2. Employers' needs studied and analysed.
3. changes made in the existing curricula and training programmes in line with requirements of new technologies and specificity of enterprises and sectors.
4. Requirements to the qualification level of trainees developed and submitted for approval.

5. Renewed curricula and training programmes developed and submitted for approval.
6. Share of practical training is increased.
7. State VET standards developed and submitted for approval.
8. Efficiency of practical work and job placement of students and graduates increased.
9. Forum for discussion of common problems aimed at improving the quality of VET created.
10. As a result VET quality improved.

Composition of the working group of VET lyceum #1, Almaty:

#	Name	Position
1.	M. Abdukhalikov	Director, VET lyceum #1.
2.	N. Gumnina	Deputy-Director, VET lyceum #1
3.	M. Dosmagambetova	Deputy-Director, VET lyceum #1
4.	B. Naurizbaeva	Teacher of restaurant business
5.	L. Shilova	Teacher of restaurant economy
6.	N. Udod	Trainer
7.	T. Belova	Director, "Dostyk" restaurant
8.	V. Zueva	Senior manager, "Prussia" restaurant
9.	T. Dovgal	Manager, "Alatau" sanatorium
10.	T. Yukhno	Manager, hotel "Kazakhstan"
11.	Zh. Kurmashev	Manager, "Dusseldorf" restaurant
12.	N. Zhunusova	Senior manager, "Otrar" hotel

Chairman of the working group

M. Abdukhalikov

Programme of the workshop
**«SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP: WAYS OF INTERACTION BETWEEN VET INSTITUTIONS
 AND THE REAL SECTOR OF ECONOMY»**
 Almaty, July, 17 – 18, 2002.

OBJECTIVE:

- Familiarise the participants with the international experience of organizing interaction between VET institutions and enterprises (based on examples from Latvia).
- Discussion of the methodology of involving enterprises in the development of the content, technology and assessment of primary and secondary VET

EXPECTED OUTCOME: Recommendations developed for implementing the model of social partnership in VET in Almaty

JULY, 17

9.30 - 10.00	Registration of participants
10.00 - 10.30	Opening. Welcome words – S. Turzhanov, Chairperson of the expert committee, Director of the Department of small business, Almaty Akimat; A. Khalafova, Education specialist, UNESCO Cluster Office, Almaty, Sh. Tasbulatova, National Observatory Team Leader. Presentation of the participants.
10.30 – 11.00	Presentation of the findings of the National Observatory project «Development of a model of social partnership in VET in Almaty».
11.30 – 12.00	Break.
12.00 – 13.00	Experience of Latvia in organizing social partnership in VET. Questions and answers – Sniedze Joma, Programme Coordinator, Agency on the development of VET content, Latvia.
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 15.30	Participants of the VET process and their roles in the process. General discussion – S. Joma.
15.30 – 16.00	Break
16.00 – 17.30	VET levels. Formula of the succession of interaction stages. Presentation followed by discussion – S. Joma.
17.30 – 18.00	Summary of the day.

July, 18.

9.00 – 11.00	Modern economy requirements to training VET graduates. Implementation of interaction through the content and technology of training - What? How? Why? – Presentation and general discussion - S. Joma.
11.00 - 11.30	Break
11.30 – 12.30	Continuation of the discussion.
12.30 – 13.00	Involvement of enterprises in assessing of the outcome of training. Presentation – S. Joma.
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 15.30	Development of recommendations on implementation of the model of social partnership in VET in Almaty. Group work session.
15.30 – 16.00	Break.
16.00 – 17.00	Presentation of the group work results. General discussion.
17.00 - 17.30	Summary of the workshop. Closing.

Sniedze Joma. “Social partnership in VET: Latvian experience“

Theme

- Social partnership in VET

Agency for Vocational Education Development Programmes (Latvia – Riga)
Joma Sniedze

Who are stakeholders in VET ?

- Government structures
- Employers (associations, unions)
- Workers (trade unions)
- Trainers (VET schools)
- Trainees / parents
- society

Agency for Vocational Education Development Programmes (Latvia – Riga)
Joma Sniedze

Succession of stages in VET

- Characteristics of the sector (survey)
- Occupational standard
- State VET standard
- VET curriculum
- Qualification examinations

Agency for Vocational Education Development Programmes (Latvia – Riga)
Joma Sniedze

Scheme of the process of sector survey

- Sector borders
- Subdivisions in the sectors
- Types of employment / qualification
- Qualification levels *
- Setting priorities

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Joma Sniedze

Methods of sector survey

- Questioning in enterprises
 - Interview
 - Questioning

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Joma Sniedze

Qualification levels

CEDEFOP – EU Institute on VET issues
(Greece, Thessalonica)
5 taxonomy levels (according to X. Plant)
for solving problems in the field of
education

1. Routine
2. Diagnostics
3. Strategy
4. Interpretation
5. Invention/creation

Occupational standard consists of:

- Description of the type of employment
- Functions and kinds of work
- Specific environment factors
- Requirements to individual abilities
- Skills
- Knowledge (idea? understanding? application?) Bloom's taxonomy

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Sniedze

Methodology of developing occupational standard

- Teal Leader
- Experts (working group)
- “Brain storm”
- DACUM technique

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Joma

Sniedze

VET State standard

In Latvia

- Developed by Ministry of education and science
- Approved by Cabinet of Ministers

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Joma

Sniedze

Curriculum

Curriculum – is a planned document of the educational process describing **objectives** of training and means of **achieving** the objectives, and how the **outcomes** are assessed.

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Joma

Sniedze

- Objectives of education - is a description of knowledge, skills and **attitudes** of trainees achieved as a result of training activities.

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Joma

Sniedze

- Objectives of education – is not only the basis (beginning) of the didactic process, but also an assessment standard (outcome of training).

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Sniedze

Principal educational objectives

- Cognitive objectives (through brain)
- Psychomotor objectives (through hands)
- Emotional objectives (through emotions)

How can objectives be identified/set?

- Not very globally or narrowly
- The meaning /sense of objectives should be clear to everybody
- Exact, concrete, unambiguous
- Really achievable
- Measurable / verifiable!!!

- Student can escape bad training, but it is not possible to escape bad evaluation.
- Student should know from the very beginning what results he must achieve and how evaluation will be carried out.
- All objectives /outcomes identified should be measurable/verifiable
- Are we assessing (testing) what a student was supposed to have achieved?

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Joma

Sniedze

Qualification examinations – assessment of the training delivered

- Why? What for?
- What?
- When?
- Who?
- How? Using what methods?

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Sniedze

Quality assessment criteria

- Accordance to the objectives identified
- Objectivity
- Reliability
- Comparability of assignment / works
- Transparency / availability (accessibility)

Test matrix

No	Objective (from the curriculum / discipline /theme)	Importance, significance	Number of questions, assignments

National reports on social partnership in the field of vocational education and training

NATIONAL REPORT
**on social partnership in the field of vocational education and training in
Kazakhstan, Almaty, 2002**

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1.1 General review of social partnership

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- Legislative basis, regulating the activity of organizations, which carry out their activity in the field of social partnership
- Structure of organizations of social partnership
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- Structure of these organizations - degree of their independence, autonomy and representation
- The existing centralized coordination structures
- Relations of social partners with governmental bodies of central, regional and local levels
- Dominating forms of social dialogue (collective agreements, trilateral involvement, etc.)
- Main problems of social partnership

1.2 Social partnership in the field of SSVE

- History of social partnership development in the field of SSVE
- Legislative basis, regulating the activity in the field of SSVE
- Types and levels of social partnership (the activity of social partners)
- Areas, where social partnership is carried out (for example: primary and continuous vocational training, policy in the field of SSVE, participation of young people in the labour market, etc)
- Main obstacles on the ways of social partnership development in the field of SSVE

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- Qualification and training standards
- Definition of the needs in training and its planning
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- Ties of VET institutions with enterprises of small and medium business
- Creation and management of continuous training system and the activity in this area (both for the employed and for the unemployed)
- Allocation of finances

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- General estimation of social partnership influence on the policy in the area of SSVE
- Analysis of new trends of development

- Presentation of points of view and proposals of the most representative social partners, as well as the country's competent national organizations in relation to further social partnership development in the area of SSVE
- Definition of priority areas of strengthening social partners in SSVE
- Formulation of proposals with regard to the above mentioned priorities

Introduction

The present report “On social partnership in the field of vocational training in Kazakhstan” was prepared by the working group of National Observatory (NO) at the support of European Training Fund (ETF) within the framework of the international project of the same name.

The main purpose of the project is to define key problems, constraining social partnership development in the field of vocational education and training (VET) in Kazakhstan and taking into account the international experience to show possible ways of their solution. In their work on the report, experts based on the following arguments:

- Social partnership in the field of VET is a relevant factor of training specialists in compliance with labour market needs, that, in its turn, is the condition of lowering unemployment level and poverty combating.
- SP in the field of VET in Kazakhstan is developing and becoming more significant.
- SP development in the field of VET requires the creation of appropriate legislative and normative basis, interested partners to be institutionalized in associations
- The main SP partners in the field of VET are government organizations, educational institutions and employers
- The main SP trends in the field of VET are the adjustment of educational curricula, programmes, education standards, training of required qualification specialists
- The most significant obstacles on the ways of SP development in the field of VET is low interest, displayed by those partners who have no idea of effective social partnership benefits

The report, offered to your attention, contains a brief history of social partnership development in Kazakhstan, the description and analysis of legislative and normative basis, the role and the value of social partners at different levels of interaction: republican, branch and regional. In the conclusion of the report the number of measures, aimed at the improvement of social partnership development in the field of VET and the mechanism of their implementation are offered.

The materials of the report are intended for the use of state organizations in their work and, first of all, in the work of administrative educational bodies, services of labour and employment, educational institutions, organizations of employers, public, scientific and other organizations and individuals who are interested in the SP development in the field of vocational education and training.

1. General analysis

1.1 General review of social partnership

The formation of social partnership in the field of vocational training, qualitatively of a new type, is based on normative and legislative acts, which were adopted at the beginning of the 90-ies, during the coming-to-be process of Kazakhstan's independence. The Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on “Collective agreements” was one of the first acts, adopted on July 4th, 1992. A little bit later, with the purpose of the implementation of the Law's provisions, the governmental order on “Social partnership

in the field of social and labour relations” was adopted on August 3rd, 1992. This order ratified the Provision on “The Procedure of the conclusion of branch tariff agreements.” On August 24th, 1992, a special working commission, and then later the Republican arbitration commission on the settlement of collective labour disputes was established with the purpose of considering and coordinating projects of general and branch tariff agreements between Government of Republic of Kazakhstan, associations of trade unions and associations of employers and businessmen.

In July, 1993, three main parties of the cooperation approved the Declaration on the principles of cooperation. Taking into account the significance of the social dialogue, the President of Republic of Kazakhstan signed the Decree of December 14th, 1994, on Social partnership in the field of social, economic and labour relations, which stipulated the implementation of the constant dialogue between the representatives of the parties and the necessity of the conclusion of General, branch and regional agreements. From that time, seven General agreements, the last was signed in 2002, have been concluded in the republic. All that formed the normative basis for social partnership development and adoption of the Law of Republic of Kazakhstan on “Social partnership in Republic of Kazakhstan” in December, 2000. That Law legalized the social dialogue of partners, attributing to it the status of institutional mechanism. It is necessary to mention, that Kazakhstan is the only country among other CIS countries, that adopted a special Law and ratified seven basic Conventions of International Labour Organization (ILO) on social partnership.

Moreover, the legislative basis, regulating the activity of executive bodies, employers and workers, was developed and adopted, and the responsibility for non-fulfillment of collective agreements’ conditions was stipulated, as well.

Thus, it is possible to state now, that essential legislative and normative basis, regulating social partnership, has been developed in Kazakhstan.

Major parties of social partnership are state bodies, trade unions and associations of employers. Legislatively they have got equal possibilities and rights to adjust social and labour contacts and constructive dialogue.

Among state organizations of the republican level, the solution of SP problems, the development and improvement of normative and legislative basis, as well as organizational and technical activities are carried out by the Ministry of labour and social protection of the population of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Ministry has an appropriate office within the structure of the Department of labour and employment, the staff of which consists of 4 people. The services within the structure of departments on labour, employment and social protection, monitor the SP activity and render their assistance to develop constructive dialogue in oblasts. Such offices are functioning in two oblasts, in others there is one or two experts in the structure of different complex departments.

The second orderly partner of social partnership is trade unions. The Federation of trade unions of Republic of Kazakhstan has 30 branch associations and 14 regional associations with the membership of 2.2 million people. Independent trade unions actively operate in Kazakhstan, as well. They consist of 4 branch associations and 6 regional associations with the membership of about 300 thousand people. All of them are associations of workers.

As against trade unions, associations of employers are on the stage of formation. There are some republican associations of employers in Kazakhstan, such as Confederation of employers of Republic of Kazakhstan, which was established on December 22nd, 1999 with the membership of 569 legal entities, and Congress of businessmen of Kazakhstan, which was established on November 2nd 1992, which combines 120 legal entities. However, even in aggregate they represent not more than 5 % of the total number of employers of the republic.

The relations of social partners with governmental bodies of the central level are not simple. Some ministries and departments actively enter the dialogue with trade unions of workers. Today there are 30 trade unions at a branch level; only 18 of them could conclude agreements. Ministry of education and sciences of RK has concluded 2 branch agreements: one agreement with the trade union of workers of education and science and the second agreement with the trade union of workers of science. The main reason of a small number of the concluded agreements is the absence of special services in the ministries and departments that can supervise these problems. The second problem is a poor associability of employers.

As for the development of relations between social partners at the regional level, of 16 oblasts all these 16 oblasts had been permanently concluding regional agreements during the last years. On the urban and district levels 59 agreements of 196 possible quantity, according to the number of administrative territorial units, have been concluded. The work, in this direction, is slowing down due to the same reasons as at the republican level.

The dominating form of the social dialogue at the republican, regional and branch levels is trilateral agreements, and at the level of enterprises, organizations, companies - collective agreements.

Such problems as development of commodity market and business, employment of the population, labour protection, combating of poverty and unemployment, protection of home labour market, remuneration of labour, social and economic warranties of citizens, social protection of the most vulnerable groups of the population were defined as priority directions of negotiations during the last years.

1.2. Social partnership in the field of SSVE

The history of SP development in the field of SSVE in Kazakhstan is even shorter, than the history of general problems of social partnership. In spite of the fact that the issues of vocational training, retraining and improvement of professional skills of personnel were considered as one of the main parameters of social, economic and labour relations, these issues fell out of the spectrum of the discussed problems during the development and adoption of general, branch and regional agreements. Probably, it was connected with the solution of more actual problems, such as duly payment of wages, compensatory payments to the workers for harmful and difficult conditions of their work, help to the veterans and other similar measures of the material nature. The situation began to change after the adoption of the Law of Republic of Kazakhstan on "Social partnership in the Republic of Kazakhstan" in December, 2000, where in paragraph 4, and in items 4 and 17 it is said, that besides the provisions, that can stipulate agreements, the problems of vocational training and retraining of personnel should be stipulated, as well. In compliance with the Law, the Government undertook: "To take measures on the improvement of training of the unemployed and the improvement of professional skills of the occupied population" during the conclusion of the General agreement between Government of RK and republican associations of trade unions and republican association of employers (item 21) in 2001. Moreover, according to item 80 of the Agreement, the parties undertook: "With the purpose of the implementation of the Law of Republic of Kazakhstan on employment, to develop and to implement appropriate vocational training programmes for the unemployed". It should be mentioned, that in regard to the first promise concerning the organization of training of the unemployed, the Government fulfilled their promise. The appropriate Decree #836 of June 19, 2001, which approved the Rules on organization and financing of vocational training, the improvement of professional skills and retraining of the unemployed, was adopted. The Rules define the rights and responsibilities of the

services of employment, educational institutions, employers and the unemployed in VET. The Rules stipulate financing of training of the unemployed from the domestic budgets. As a result of that, actually 19.8 thousand of the unemployed of the republic obtained new trades or improved their qualification in 2001. In regard to the second commitment concerning the improvement of professional skills of the occupied population, nothing was done, although the same Decree emphasizes that “with the purpose of labour recruitment (vacancy) of the qualified personnel and improvement of workers’ skill level, the employer should take measures to develop systems of vocational training and intraproductive training of the staff at the expense of his own resources.”

In item 24 of the General agreement, concluded between Government of Republic of Kazakhstan and republican associations of trade unions and republican associations of employers in 2002, the Government has undertaken the obligation: “Together with the republican associations of trade unions and republican associations of employers to continue the implementation of the State education programme” and in item 46 of the Agreement, the employers have undertaken “to submit proposals to the Republican trilateral commission concerning tax preferences for that part of employers’ resources that is allocated for personnel training.” Thus, the process of social partnership in the field of SSVE began to develop.

The Republican Conference, devoted to “The state and problems of specialists training through the education system of RK under the conditions of contemporary development of economy”, which was held on February 23, 2002, in Almaty, contributed to the acceleration of this process. About 400 people, including proprietors and heads of large and medium enterprises of the country, HR managers, heads of educational institutions, representatives of ministries and departments, international organizations participated in the conference. Among the recommendations of the Conference, the following points, related to social partnership development in the field of vocational training, are to be singled out:

Item. 2.5 stipulates “the development of a model of organizational structures for the implementation of a regular dialogue with Ministry of education and science of RK and other key participants of social partnership, as well as for monitoring of the labour market, aimed at solving the problems, related to the provision of regions with specialists.”

Item 3.1: “to activate the inter-regional cooperation in the field of vocational training with the involvement of associations, funds and other non-governmental organizations.”

Item. 3.1 for employers – “to define the sphere of mutual concerns and benefits of business contacts with VET institutions at all levels” and other items, which promote social partnership development in the field of SSVE.

The implementation of the targeted project of the European Training Fund on this problem through the National Observatory is a very important step on the way of social partnership development in the field of SSVE, as well. In the course of this project three reports were prepared: the first report on the problem, related to “Social partnership in Kazakhstan” 1998, the second report on the theme “Social partnership in Kazakhstan - situation in 2000” and the third report was devoted to “Social partnership in vocational education and training” in 2001. A number of training and familiarization seminars for civil servants, representatives of educational institutions and employers were conducted.

Another international project of National Observatory (NO), entitled “Training for the development of enterprises”, which was implemented in 2001-2002 with the technical assistance of ETF, solved the problems, related to the up-grading of the role

of personnel training as resources, essential for the development of enterprises under new social and economic conditions and for the improvement of their competitiveness and profitability. The results of the study allowed to reveal the availability of employers' interest in cooperation with VET organizations in order to train and to improve professional skills of their staff. The analysis of the results of the sociological survey of employers, conducted under the project, has shown, that despite of the availability of such a need, the personnel training is not a constituent part of strategic development plans of a considerable number of Almaty enterprises, so far. Only half of the surveyed companies have plans and budgets for training and improvement of professional skills of their staff. Training is conducted occasionally at some inspected enterprises and it is conducted only when there is a need, arisen with the installation of a new equipment or implementation of a new technology. Although, as a whole, as it was mentioned, the majority of enterprises realize the importance of both the necessity of training and development of their staff. The total results of the survey allowed to reveal the acute deficit of concrete practical tools, methods and techniques of human resources management. A considerable number of enterprises, mostly smaller ones, experience considerable difficulties in allocation of resources for their personnel training. Despite of that, more than 70 % of the companies provide their employees with a possibility to be trained and to improve their qualification in this or that form.

In order to define the approaches to the solution of these problems, the international conference on the shores of Issyk-Kul Lake was conducted. The group of the participants from Kazakhstan included representatives from Confederation of employers of Kazakhstan, Almaty Akimat department on support of small business, associations of Almaty and Shymkent businessmen, Ministry of education and science, Ministry of labour and social protection, VET institutions, non-governmental enterprises and other organizations. The high level of participants' representation reflected deep comprehension of the significance of the problems, related to the development of human resources, and the necessity of their solution through social partnership.

Thus, in spite of the fact that vocational training is not a substantial priority of the economic policy of Kazakhstan so far, definite achievements in this respect have been already outlined and the activation of this process has become more evident.

The main SP participants in the field of vocational training are:

- State organizations on behalf of the Ministry of education and science of RK and Ministry of labour and social protection of RK;
- Regional offices of these ministries, such as services of employment and administrative departments of vocational training;
- VET institutions
- Employers
- Trade unions
- Public associations

Unfortunately, not all parties of social partnership in the field of SSVE show any interest in cooperation in order to tackle the problems of vocational training, although social and economic development of the national economy largely depends on their solution.

Let's consider in detail the level of participants' involvement in partnership.

Ministry of education and science. The Ministry manages all stages of education of the youth. The adoption of the new Law on "Education" in June, 1999, became the incentive for further reforms in the education system and for the improvement of training quality and their control. The measures, taken by the Ministry during the last years, had a large effect on the stabilization of the situation in VET, i.e. the reduction of the network of primary and secondary vocational training was stopped, and non-governmental sector of educational services is actively developing. The Ministry is a major interested partner,

that undertakes definite steps to develop the interaction, first of all, with employers in order to promote job placement of graduates – young specialists.

Ministry of labour and social protection. The Ministry is the main developer of legislative and normative basis in the field of social partnership. The Ministry actively cooperates with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on social partnership. The Ministry determines the priorities in the field of social partnership to be included in General Agreement. However, the Ministry pays less attention to the issues of social partnership development in the area of SSVE.

Regional organizations of vocational training and services of employment play an active role in the creation of social partnership in the area of SSVE on the regional level, as they are interested in the growth of the citizens' employment and in the job placement of graduates of educational institutions. During the last years, the issues, related to combating of poverty and unemployment became the main priority for local governments, and their role in the solution of regional problems of employment, including creation of additional new jobs, personnel training in compliance with the needs of the labour market, vocational training and retraining of the unemployed, etc., was increased.

VET institutions. They are the most active participants of social partnership. They participated in the establishment of a significant number of associations, which defend their rights at different levels. Their main task is to train specialists in compliance with the demands of the labour market. In order to solve that main task successfully, it is necessary to set constructive and business relations with employers, state organizations and the community.

Organizations of employers. A small period of experience of the market economy only helped businessmen and different organizations to comprehend the necessity of unification in order to solve the problems, related to development and strengthening of their business, including the availability of a qualified personnel. However, the majority of organizations of employers are still in the process of coming-to-be and they are occupied, mainly, with the problems of their business survival under the present economic conditions, therefore, they are the least interested party in social partnership in the area of SSVE.

Trade unions. They conduct a definite activity to re-set their positions and their role of a social partner, that they lost during the first years of reforms. At the same time, they do not play a noticeable role in the formation and development of social partnership in the area of SSVE, so far. Even the trade union of the workers of education did not initiate any activity in this sphere, and that affects the overall development of the situation.

Public organizations and population

The population (schoolboys and students, their parents, participants of different courses of training and retraining) is more interested in the development of social partnership in the sphere of vocational education and training as consumers. They require social protection from low-quality educational services, because about 30 % of the population of Kazakhstan lives below the living wage, and 10 % are poor people. It is desirable to spend the resources, allocated for the education of children and adults from the families with low income, more effectively on their better training. However, the citizens are still insufficiently united in organizations, that can represent their concerns.

Annually about 500 thousand students and the unemployed are trained, are retrained and improve their professional skills in educational institutions of all types of ownership. All they need jobs. At the same time, in practice, VET system is not always capable to train pupils to new functional skills and necessary qualifications, high level of skills, flexibility and mobility in search of jobs, entrepreneur skills, that are required on the labour market. That hinders the process of job placement. A significant number of

graduates cannot meet the requirements and demands of the labour market. Many of them cannot get jobs according to the obtained profession. Therefore, initially, social partnership in the area of SSVE should be formed to solve the problem, related to the job placement of young specialists after their graduation from educational institutions.

At present, there is a tendency in the growth of the interaction of employers with VET institutions in the republic. That interaction is not restricted only to the solution of the problems, related to the provision of practice sites or job placement of graduates. They participate in financing through targeted training programmes and under the agreements of enterprises and companies. The opinion of employers concerning the development of training and qualification of graduates, etc. are taken into account.

The situation on the labour market and in the sphere of educational services requires the acceleration of educational institutions' reaction to the needs of the labour market, and generates the necessity of systematic analysis of demands, changes of trade types and revaluation of qualifications. Almaty vocational schools can serve as a good example of successful organization of vocational training in cooperation with employers. They train specialists for the confectionery production in close contact with the employers of the joint stock company "Rahat", cooks and waiters, taking into account the opinion of specialists of Almaty restaurants. Vocational lycee #15 in Almaty trains joiners and cabinet-makers, keeping contacts with the employers, as a result, their graduates have no job placement problems. Vocational technical school # 10 has established partner relations with the joint stock company "Basis", which is a general builder in the cities of Almaty and Astana, etc.

In the system of higher education, close contacts of educational institutions, such as the International Academy of Business, Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economy and Forecast, Academy of Management, Law School, etc., with national and international companies, such as Transoil, Kazakhoil, Kazakhstan Temir Joly, etc. are beginning to take shape. This cooperation allows the educational institutions to be better oriented in the needs of employers and to perfect training programmes.

A number of sectors, such as telecommunications, oil and gas complex, finance, and separate industrial enterprises began to take measures with regard to the improvement of professional skills of their employees by investing their money and by participating in the determination of the contents of training.

The organization of training for the unemployed citizens, registered in the services of employment, can serve as an example of the development of social partnership in the area of SSVE. In spite of the fact that it has a number of disadvantages, the essential principles of the building of training system are based on partner relations of the services of employment with educational institutions, irrespective of their forms of ownership, as well as with the unemployed and employers on the basis of appropriate agreements.

According to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on "Employment of the population" the government order on vocational training and retraining of the unemployed is placed on the open tender basis annually among VET educational institutions in all regions of Kazakhstan at the expense of local budget resources. Training is carried out in such professions that are in demand in the region and if there is a possibility of training specialists within a short period of time. As usual, these are mass trades for the sector of services, such as cooks, hairdressers, confectioners, security, secretaries, etc. Services of employment conclude contracts on training of a certain number of the unemployed in certain trades and at the fixed period of time with educational institutions that have offered the lowest cost of training under different equal conditions. Then the unemployed are informed about the concluded contracts and a list of trades to be trained. As soon as the unemployed decides what trade he would like to be trained, he will conclude a trilateral contract with the service of employment and the

educational institution. Till 2001 such agreements were quadrilateral, because the employer also participated in signing of the contract and his participation guaranteed that the unemployed would get a job after the completion of training. As the economic situation at the enterprises often changed, the majority of the employers did not want to undertake additional obligations with regard to job placement of the unemployed after their training. Due to the emerging difficulties, connected with the search for the interested employers, the involvement of employers in signing contracts was mandatory. Now it is cancelled, however, it does not contradict the legislation and in a number of cases it takes place. In particular, it often happens when the service of employment trains the unemployed on the base of state institutions of vocational training, who have good relations with such enterprises where graduates can do a practical work and get jobs after the completion of their training. According to the data for 2001, 330.4 thousand of the unemployed were registered at the services of employment. Of 330.4 thousand of the unemployed 19.8 thousand people had passed training under the above mentioned scheme. Of the total number of the trained unemployed, 13.2 thousand people, or 66.6 % were provided with jobs and 1.1 thousand of the unemployed, or 5,5 % started their own business.

According to the statistical data, from 70,000 up to 90,000 graduates of secondary and high comprehensive schools, who have no possibility to continue their vocational training, come to the labour market annually. Half of them become the unemployed, others can obtain only low-skill jobs. The aggravated situation on the labour market makes the young people, who have no qualification and no experience, uncompetitive. The number of pupils, who have finished only 9 classes, and who neither study, nor work, is growing. At the same time, the early independent earnings of the youth can be observed, as well. As a rule, it is a low-skill labour in the sphere of trade, services, and often without concluding any official paper with the employer, which means violation of the labour legislation. The only chance for this category of youth is to obtain qualification through a training programme of the service of employment, which covers the costs of training, preliminary medical check-up and payment of a trip to the to the place of training.

The formation of SP policy in the area of SSVE is the weakest link of the created system. Unfortunately, two ministries of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Ministry of labour and social protection and Ministry of education and sciences - have not yet taken measures in the direction of the development of joint normative documents on the definition of SP policy in the area of SSVE. At the same time, within the framework of the joint work of the ministries, the documents on job placement of graduates of high schools, who have obtained higher education under the framework of the state order, are now being developed. The technique of the definition of the needs in specialists with higher education is under consideration. However, the adoption of these documents unlikely decides the problem, because those documents are developed without the involvement of employers and other interested partners.

According to the experts of both Ministries, the joint development strategy of social partnership in the area of SSVE, its concept and implementation measures should be worked out, however, the activity plans of the ministries for 2002, unfortunately, do not stipulate such measures.

The main obstacles on the way of social partnership development in the area of SSVE, at our view, are the following:

1. Absence of SP development strategy and SP concept in the area of SSVE.
2. Imperfect legislative and normative basis.

3. Low activity of the Ministry of labour and social protection of RK and Ministry of education and science of RK in the solution of this problem and their low communications in this field.
4. Poor involvement of employers, as main SP participants in the area of SSVE.
5. Negative influence of economic factors, such as: shortage of financial and material and labour resources, in particular, in rural areas and small cities.
6. Redundancy of proposals of different specialists on the labour market (it is more advantageous for the employer to hire a trained specialist, instead of investing his money and wasting time on partner cooperation);
7. Domination of commercial interests of a number of educational institutions, which do not bear any responsibility for inadequate training quality and for training of the certainly useless specialists.
8. Inertness and poor ability of educational institutions to register needs and requirements of employers, the absence of the adjusted and permanent communication with the services that are engaged in the employment of the population.
9. Poor activity of the citizens, who only wait when their problems will be solved from above and excise less initiatives to change the existing situation.

2. Review of social dialogue development in the following areas of SSVE :

Qualification and training standards.

The development of new state obligatory standards of vocational training and educational curricula and improvement of the available ones in VET system of Kazakhstan are permanently carried out. The purpose of this work is quality assurance, flexibility, alternative vocational training, and orientation at training of professions that are in demand. That can be reached through the increase of the volume of practical training and mandatory training of entrepreneur activity techniques. The main work in that direction is done by the Institute of vocational training of Academy of education of RK.

The exploratory development of the state general VET standards in the selected sectors of the economy, taking into account the world experience and findings of the survey of employers, was carried out by National Observatory (NO) within the framework of ETF international project, which provides the Ministry of education and science of RK with their developments for implementation.

In 1999 the Ministry of labour and social protection of RK developed and adopted a new Qualifier of studies with their description according to groups of trades. It is also essential to conduct similar work to clarify a list of trades according to which vocational training and retraining of the population are conducted. The next stage in the improvement of VET technology is the development of packages of educational documentation and training tools for new trades (in the sphere of services, ecology, social activity, market infrastructure, marketing, audit and others), which have not been trained before.

At the same time, there are considerable minuses, related, first of all, to the duration of the development process and approval of standards. Quite often this process can last for many years and that has a negative effect on the actuality of the developed standards. The technical modernization and change of technologies are carried out much faster than the change of educational curricula and it has a negative effect on training of specialists. Moreover, there are some other problems of education. For example, textbooks on special subjects, in particular, in the Kazakh language, are updated and used in the educational process of VET institutions very slowly. Computer,

scientific and methodical manuals, multimedia schools books and visual aids are practically not used in the educational process. The latter is capable to improve essentially the quality of training and to increase the professionalism of graduates.

Definition of the needs in training and its planning

At present, the need in trained specialists is being defined, mainly, at the level of regions within the framework of the state order on training and retraining of specialists under all forms of education in accordance with the financial possibilities of the regions. This work is to be done due to the fact that in the 90-ies training of personnel was not practically conducted in a number of regions, mainly in rural areas. While a significant number of high schools and colleges were opened in cities. Those schools conduct, on the paid basis, training of prestigious trades, which are in large excess on the labour market, such as lawyers, economists, financiers, etc.

The main disadvantage of planning is the absence of republican and regional forecasts of the need of economy in skilled workers and specialists even for a short-term perspective. It will be possible to carry out such research work only when all social partners and, first of all, employers, are actively involved.

Quality assurance and accreditation of vocational education

Licensing of VET institutions in Kazakhstan, which grant certificates of education to their graduates, has been introduced. The larger amount of specialists is trained by these institutions. Moreover, certification of high schools, irrespective of forms of their ownership and departmental subordination, as well as introduction of rating system for high schools in order to monitor the level of their correspondence to the international education standards are carried out.

On the background of the aggressive activity in the field of licensing and other measures of training quality assurance in the sphere of formal education of all levels, the contents and technologies of informal vocational training remain outside of the control. That was mentioned during the research, conducted under the International Project of UNESCO "Estimation of informal education for softening of the economic transit influence."

General scientific and methodical management of all educational institutions, irrespective of their departmental subordination and forms of ownership and in compliance with the Law of RK "On education" should be conducted by central executive bodies of education. However, in practice such management in VET system is not conducted effectively, and that has an undesirable effect on training quality and possibilities for further job placement of graduates.

The ties of institutions of vocational education with small and medium enterprises.

As of the beginning of 2002, more than 300 thousand enterprises of small business, employing 1.3 million people, have been registered in Kazakhstan according to the data of National statistical agency of RK. Of 31.3 million people, engaged in small business, more than 300 thousand are employees of legal entities, about 1 million are individual entrepreneurs and farmers. Of course, the level of the developed countries has not been reached, so far, but the increase in the number of the people, engaged in small business, and the effective way of solving unemployment problems by creating new jobs provide people with the possibility to receive a profit. At the same time, small and medium business has not yet been actively involved in SP system with VET

institutions. Although positive achievements in this respect can be observed in Almaty, where organizations of small business, in order to survive under the conditions of severe competition, began actively to cooperate with educational institutions and to place orders for specialists of a concrete specialization, for example, cooks with the knowledge of the Italian cookery, barmen with the knowledge of European cocktails, etc.

Creation and management of continuous training system in VET is a considerable problem in Kazakhstan. The majority of the occupied citizens and the unemployed improve their qualification on their own initiative and at their own expense. If the employer improves professional skills of his staff, he does that occasionally, only when a new equipment is to be installed or a technology is to be changed. Practically, there are no organizations in Kazakhstan, that would systematically allocate resources to the improvement of professional skills of their staff. The declared training remains only to be a slogan during the whole life, so far.

Allocation of finances

As it was already mentioned, that primary and the majority of secondary vocational educational institutions (except for 9 colleges) will be financed from local budgets, although they train specialists not only for their own region. At present, the volume of local budgets in the total amount of finances, allocated for education of all forms, constitutes about 90 %. The decentralization of the management and financing was designed to stimulate educational institutions to react adequately to the demands of local labour markets. However, the balance on the labour market was not reached, and almost all vocational educational institutions began to experience a financial deficit. As a whole, training financing costs from the earnings of GDP to the republican budget, have decreased from 3.5 % to 3,2 % as against 1995. Due to that, the amount of finances, allocated to state institutions of vocational training, can be used only to pay out teachers' wages and to pay for public utilities. The essential improvement of the material base in VET system is possible only at the expense of sponsors and through social partnership development, which could attract partners to participate in the process of financing. Moreover, there are considerable differences in financing and provision of logistics to VET institutions of Astana, other large cities of Kazakhstan and rural areas. The majority of state bodies of education, except for the state order on educational services, have the right to be engaged in commercial activity, however there are some limitations, which do not allow, to the full, to develop additional commercial services. At the same time, according to the experts, such additional finances in a number of educational institutions constitute 30 % of their joint incomes.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

General estimation of SP influence on the policy in the area of SSVE

Social partnership in Kazakhstan covers, first of all, the sphere of social and labour relations in the field of payment and labour protection. At the same time, vocational education and training of specialists according to the needs of the labour market is one of the major problems to be discussed by social partners at all levels. At present, these problems are realized not only by educational institutions, but by employers, state organizations, the community, and first of all, by parents and students, as well.

In Kazakhstan all legislative and institutional prerequisites for substantial development of social partnership in the field of vocational training have been created,

such as: legislative and normative basis, associations of employers, specialized state educational institutions, etc. Its necessity is dictated by job placement of graduates of educational institutions, by their knowledge and skills that are very essential on the labour market, by forecasting of labour market demand in specialists and assistance in the development of vocational training.

At the same time, social partnership in VET is insufficiently formed and it is on the coming-to-be stage. Its poor development is largely explained by the fact that the partners are ready to interact and by the absence of the qualified management of this problem.

The analysis of new development trends

In order to define major directions, tasks and functions of social partnership in VET within the framework of ETF project, a model of social partnership in vocational training for Almaty was developed. Within the structure of the model and on the basis of the international experience in the implementation of social dialogue, the developers offer a mechanism of SP development in VET at the regional level. The mechanism assumes modification of relations between potential social partners as "from below" - at the level of a separate educational institution, and "from above" – with the participation of state organizations of Almaty.

As a result of the implementation of this project in the city of Almaty, Expert Council on social partnership in VET was established. Its position, structure, activity plan and working groups, engaged in the preparation of problems to be discussed at the meetings of the Council, were approved. Expert Council's groups work in three directions: interaction with employers to change educational curricula, training programmes and standards according to the requirements of employers; preparation of a list of trades, that are in demand in the region; and the third group develops recommendations for the implementation of universal schooling in entrepreneur activity. Four subgroups were created to work under the first direction, such as: a building school and a building college together with a building enterprise "Basis"; a vocational school #1 trains specialists of hotel facilities for the hotel "Dostyk"; a vocational school #4 trains cooks together with a number of public catering establishments; and a college of new technologies trains seamstresses together with the Association of enterprises of light industry of Kazakhstan. The first meetings of the Council have displayed the interest of partners in the development of a social dialogue and efficiency of the joint work. The experience of the Council can be used as organizational and methodical base for effective social partnership development, directed at strengthening of ties of VET system with labour market, services of employment, with the sphere of entrepreneurship, and other state and civil structures and should be disseminated throughout the republic.

Presentation of points of view and proposals of the most representative social partners, as well as competent national organizations of the country concerning further SP development in the area of SSVE

Within the framework of the project "Social partnership in vocational education and training", questionnaires were distributed among the most representative social partners and competent national organizations of the country concerning further SP development in the area of SSVE in 2001. One hundred and ten completed questionnaires, including from Ministry of labour and social protection of RK and Ministry of education and science of RK, were received. Sixty employers, including employers of the largest enterprises and companies of Almaty, such as joint stock company "Machine Building Plant", joint stock company "Bahus", joint stock company "Yrysty" (car-repair factory), non-governmental enterprise "Kazatomprom" and others,

as well as representatives of science, public organizations, trade union of the workers of education, expressed their attitude towards the problems of SP development.

The analysis of the answers displays, that, mainly, all respondents acknowledge the necessity of SP development, essential for the efficiency of personnel training and for the formation of the balance of supply and demand on the labour market. At the same time, the respondents pointed to the different degree of the involvement of different parties in SP: educational bodies - 78 %, services of employment - 73 %, employers – 22 %. According to the majority of the respondents, public organizations, scientific establishments and trade unions stay away from the process of social partnership in the area of SSVE. According to the respondents, the main problem, that is to be solved through social partnership, is job placement of graduates. 54 % of the respondents pointed to that problem, 36 % - pointed to the quality of training, 31 % - to the teenage unemployment, 28 % - to the forecast of the need in specialists of different trades, 19 % - to the improvement of educational programmes according to the requirements of the contemporary production. The majority of the participants of survey think that it is necessary to create a special body in the regions, which will provide interaction of the partners. 82 % of the respondents spoke about the establishment of a regional commission at the Akimat. Others offered to create structures, independent of the government: a Consultative Council or a Board of Trustees.

A considerable number of the respondents think that development of appropriate normative basis, that will regulate the interaction between social partners and will promote the implementation of the developed ideas, can serve as a guarantee of their effective interaction in the area of SSVE. Practically, all the respondents emphasized the necessity of development of such legislative incentives for employers to participate in social partnership as preferential taxation, in particular, lowering of the income tax. Public associations and scientific establishments can be encouraged through a social order and a social grant.

At the same time, the partners' expectations from the development of social partnership are many-sided and diverse. The main hope is set on administrative bodies of education, which, according to 52 % of the respondents, should manage this work. Large hopes are set on the services of employment, which has, as many of them believe, a sufficient potential, but they will be unable to tackle the problems of training and to forecast the needs of the labour market in isolation from the science (47 % of answers). About third of the respondents expect, that the trade union should strengthen their positions to protect labour rights of the youth. The same percentage of the respondents think that scientific organizations, if they are granted a state order, will use their potential for forecasting of the needs in training, taking into account the needs of the labour market.

The results of the sociological survey allow to make the following conclusions:

- The larger number of the surveyed employers accept the idea of SP development in the area of vocational training positively, and they are ready for a dialogue and cooperation;
- The majority of the respondents point to the poor coordination of the policy of employment and VET policy;
- Concerns, related to the absence of the information about the situation on the labour market, are expressed.

Definition of priority areas in SSVE where social partners are to be strengthened.

The review of social partnership development in vocational training allows to draw a conclusion, that, despite of separate achievements, that are more often

achieved within the framework of a number of international projects, governmental and public organizations are to take a number of measures, directed at the creation of social partnership and dissemination of experience everywhere.

Priority areas for social partners in the field of vocational training should be:

1. *At the republican level:*
 - Improvement of legislative and normative basis for SP development
 - Creation of social order on training, retraining and improvement of professional skills of specialists, taking into account social and economic development of the republic
 - Elaboration and implementation of the programme on vocational training development
 - Development of recommendations with regard to the revising of state education standard
2. *At the regional level:*
 - Definition of the need in training, retraining and improvement of professional skills of personnel, taking into account the situation on the regional labour market
 - Assistance in the elaboration of development perspectives of VET system and retraining of the unemployed
 - Submission of proposals on changes in regional lists of trades that are in demand on the labour market.
 - Development of proposals on changes in educational programmes and curricula, introduction of additional training modules according to the requirements of employers

The implementation of these measures will promote the solution of a number of social and economic tasks, set by the Government before the republic and regions in 2002 and for a perspective.

Proposals concerning the implementation of the above mentioned priorities

1. Gradual revision and improvement of the legislative basis, related to VET quality, employment and social partnership in those areas.
2. Creation of commissions of social partners to coordinate activities and to prepare decisions in the field of vocational education and training on the basis of the model, designed for Almaty within the framework of NO project on the republican, regional and branch levels
3. Development of scientific techniques for the definition of the need in workers and specialists, taking into account the priorities of branches, sectors of economy and territories, where market transformations are carried out with the participation of social partners.
4. Improvement of educational curricula, programmes, training standards, taking into account the opinion of experts of the appropriate profile and employers.
5. Implementation of systematic researches on the problems of forecast of the labour market with all social partners and provision of all parties in interest with the information about perspective needs in specialists.
6. Development of state and regional programmes of qualified personnel training for 2003-2005 with the assistance of social partners in compliance with the needs of the labour market.
7. Organization of training seminars on the issues, related to the interaction of social partners in the field of vocational training on the republican and regional levels

8. Encouragement of employers, executing training and improvement of professional skills of their staff
9. Implementation of information activities concerning the importance and efficiency of social partnership in the field of vocational training.

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Republic of Kyrgyzstan

National report on social partnership

1. General analysis

1.1. General review of social partnership

Social partnership, that has been developing in our country since 90-ies, is one of the mechanisms, permitting to proceed from confrontation to agreement in the field of regulations of social and labour relations.

The Republican trilateral commission (RTC) on regulation of social, economic and labour relations began to form the domestic system of social partnership on the basis of the decision of Government of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan on Education, adopted in 1994.

Unfortunately, it was not developed until 1997, when the General agreement between Government of Republic of Kyrgyzstan and trade unions and republican associations of employers was signed. At that time, the legislative basis was not yet developed. That agreement on the trilateral basis confirmed the necessity of the development of the social dialogue in the country.

The legislative basis of the system of collective and contractual regulation of social and labour relations in the republic began to be shaped during the subsequent years:

- Labour Code, laws of Republic of Kyrgyzstan on “Promotion of employment” and on “Labour unions” were adopted in 1998;
- In April, 2002 the Republic of Kyrgyzstan ratified the Convention of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on collective negotiations.

At the same time, till now, there are neither laws on collective agreements and contracts, nor laws on the procedure of settlement of collective labour disputes. There are no laws, regulating such issues as creation of associations of employers and implementation of their activity and the activity of SP organizations. The conventions of ILO on social dialogue are not ratified: Convention #144 on trilateral consultations and Convention #135 on the representatives of employees.

At present, the draft of the law on “Social partnership” is under consideration of the Jogorku Keneshe of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan.

The comprehension of the importance of the development and strengthening of social and labour relations between social partners allowed to form a new staff of the Republican trilateral commission on regulation of social and labour relations in 2000 and to start the work on the problem more actively.

According to the Provision, approved by Government of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, the Republican trilateral commission is entitled to develop and to implement the main principles of social and economic policy and to regulate labour relations, to consider and to adopt proposals to the drafts of national laws and major legislative and normative acts on labour and social issues, as well as proposals on the interaction with similar commissions at branch and regional levels.

During the last meetings of RTC, such issues as social and economic situation in the country, additions and amendments to the Labour Code of Republic of Kyrgyzstan, disagreement of the Federation of trade unions with the Rules on calculations of the average wage and the ongoing tariff policy, results of the implementation of the General agreement for 2000-2001, etc., were discussed.

With the purpose of the regulation of relations between the Government, organizations, employers and trade unions in respect to development and implementation of government policy, aimed at the promotion of employment and in

compliance with the Law of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan on “Promotion of employment”, Trilateral Council was created in October, 1998. The Provision on “Establishment of Trilateral Council for the regulation of the issues, related to promotion of employment” was developed, where its purposes, tasks and functions are defined. The Trilateral Council is obliged to carry out the policy in the field of employment of the population, irrespective of the involvement of its representatives in political parties, associations and

The principles of the Trilateral Council and Republican trilateral commission are described in:

- Conventions of ILO on implementation of its standards in the sphere of trilateral cooperation, including Recommendations “On consultations and cooperation between state authorities and organizations of businessmen and employees in branch and national scales” (Recommendation 13, 1960);
- “On trilateral consultations concerning the assistance in the implementation of international labour standards” (Recommendation 152. 1976);
- Convention # 144 and Recommendation #152 “On the procedure of trilateral consultations in respect to the assistance in the implementation of international labour standards and national measures.”

The current activities of the Republican trilateral commission on regulation of social and labour relations and the Trilateral Council on regulation of employment issues are governed by the Constitution of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, by the decrees of the President of Kyrgyzstan, governmental orders of Kyrgyzstan, conventions and recommendations of ILO and other normative documents that do not contradict the Laws of the republic.

Nine meetings of the Trilateral Council were held where 56 problems were considered.

The activation of the activity in this direction allowed to create trilateral regional and branch commissions during a short period of time.

Now trilateral cooperation is developed on the district level. As of May, 2002, 25 branch agreements (ministries, branch trade unions and associations of employers) and 5 regional agreements (regional governments, regional councils of trade unions, local unions of employers) on social and labour relations for 2002-2003 were concluded between executive bodies, local governments, employers and trade unions. For example, the committees of such trade unions as the trade union of state institutions’ employees, the trade union of industry workers, the trade union of workers of public utilities concluded seven agreements with different ministries and branch departments each.

More than 60 agreements were concluded at the district level between urban and district administrations, heads of rural localities, businessmen and trade unions. 78 percent of operating enterprises (where there are trade-union organizations) concluded collective agreements.

The concluded collective agreements stipulate obligations of employers in respect to pay rise, training and retraining of their personnel at the expense of the enterprises’ resources, as well as privileges and compensations of the workers, the level of which exceeds the rates, set by the current legislation.

1.2. Social partnership in the field of vocational education and training.

It is necessary to mention, that social partnership in the field of vocational education and training in this or that form has old-established roots, originated during the Soviet period. Almost all educational institutions of primary vocational training system had base enterprises, where specialists and workers were trained.

After the break of the Soviet Union the situation dramatically changed. Many major enterprises went bankrupt, as they failed to maintain the market competitiveness. As a consequent, vocational schools were left alone, trying to survive under such conditions. They began to search for new ways of cooperation with employers and enterprises of different forms of ownership. Educational institutions were in more favorable conditions as they were traditional partners of largest enterprises-monopolies: Trolleybus management, worsted-cloth factory, including such companies as Kyrgyzteleccom, joint venture "Katel", and others. The close relationships with the enterprises - partners were saved in those vocational schools: joint development of educational curricula on new trades in the appropriate branch, acquiring of practical skills on the base of an enterprise - partner. Moreover, the representatives of those enterprises are chairmen and members of examination boards of vocational schools.

Another form of social partnership is training of disabled children with hearing and speech problems in the professional Lyceum #18 in Bishkek through the Republican association of the blind and the deaf.

The legislative basis, regulating the activity in the field of vocational training, consists of the following main documents:

- Law of Kyrgyzstan "On education";
- Law of Kyrgyzstan "On primary vocational training";
- Law of Kyrgyzstan "On the list of primary vocational training institutions";
- Concept of further education development in Kyrgyzstan till 2010, approved by the Decree by Government of Kyrgyzstan on April 29, 2002, where the problems of further development of vocational training system are stipulated, as well.

The direct involvement of employers and their interest in the results of training exerts influence on the quality of training of graduates. Moreover, the possibility of the social dialogue opens out broad perspectives for further development and strengthening of links on the regional level and on the international level.

At the same time, there was no institutional basis of social partnership until 1998, when Trilateral Council on regulation of employment problems was established, which laid the basis of social partnership in VET. The problems of labour market development and improvement of VET system were considered at the meetings. All partners emphasized the necessity of closer mutual cooperation. Kyrgyzstan training development concept till 2010 is one of the achievements in the adjustment and strengthening of social partnership in the current year, which stipulates the priority development trends of VET, and development of social partnership is one of them.

However, till now, such partnership has not been properly developed, so far. One can say that social partnership in the field of vocational education and training is now at the stage of coming-to-be.

The main obstacles on the way of the development of social partnership in the field of vocational education and training are:

- Poorly developed institutional basis of the association of employers, which has not yet achieved the level, when they could substantially influence on the labour market and express interests of employers in the issues of their personnel training. At present, there are different types of associations of employers, who have similar purposes and tasks, however, the process of their consolidation has not yet completed.
- Low activity, sluggish thinking of social partners in the field of vocational education and training. Many employers do not pay due attention to the development of their staff, their training and retraining, so far.
- Absence or deficit of money resources of employers to invest in training of their staff.

- Morally and financially obsolete material and technical base of the majority of VET institutions does not allow to train competent specialists, in particular, specialists of technical professions.
- Labour redundancy on the labour market, morally and financially obsolete educational equipment in the majority of educational institutions do not allow, to the full, to train competent specialists who can satisfy the requirements of employers. Such situation allows the employers to search for the manpower (mainly unskilled) independently. That is also an inhibitory factor in the development of social partnership.

2. Review of the development of social dialogue in VET.

Standardization of primary vocational training puts forward definite requirements to the basic training. And these requirements are spread not only to the youth, but also to the adults, including the unemployed, who are undergoing short-term training courses. The basic training includes necessary level of general training for obtaining this or that qualification. The disadvantage of basic training is compensated through the network of evening schools, correspondence schools, operating in the republic, through the network of private schools, and through training programmes by correspondence and distant training in the system of Ministry of education, science and culture, as well as in the system of primary vocational training.

For the purpose of partnership promotion with other departments, in particular, with the Ministry of education and culture, some research and production complexes under the scheme “a secondary school- a vocational school- university” were created. Such complexes were created on the bases of the Naryn state university (Professional Lyceum #87), International University of Kyrgyzstan (Professional Lyceums #10, and #98, Bishkek). The partner links with other organizations are extended, too. Russian-Kyrgyz professional Lyceum #28 was established in Belevodskoye (jointly with one of the interested partners: Institute of VET development of Russia). Vocational school #№92 in Bishkek actively cooperates with the public association of national skilled craftsmen support.

In order to satisfy the needs of clients and employers in skilled workers and specialists, direct agreements between educational institutions and enterprises are concluded. Such agreements, concluded between vocational Lyceum # 20 and Bishkek trolleybus management; between vocational lyceum # 17 and the joint stock sewing association “Aigul” and ‘Tekstim”; between vocational lyceum #98 and enterprises in the sphere of telecommunications “Katel” and “Bitel”; between vocational lyceum #16 and the joint stock company “Tekstilshik”; between technical training college #92 and the joint-stock company “Kyal”, are effectively implemented.

As the social partnership with employers and trade unions is not well developed, the partnership with non-governmental organizations is being established. For example, the work with young people, who, for different reasons, do not attend classes and who have not received any education, is conducted in cooperation with non-governmental enterprise “Center of children protection” and with the assistance of different religious organizations. The main reason is financial difficulties (i.e. this part of children are from one-parent families or from large families) or a long-term illness. One of the directions of the work is to provide children with the possibility to obtain fundamental education, and hereinafter - vocational training.

Since August, 1998, on the basis of the agreement of the state department on employment and Balykshin center of employment, the project “Assistance in the promotion of employment for invalids of the second and third groups” has been carried

out. Initially, short-term courses for the unemployed to receive basic training for further obtaining a profession of re-conditioners of books were organized.

One of the directions in the general training system is training of invalids. Through the cooperation with the non-governmental organization "Association of employment promotion", the projects, targeted at training and further employment of women, will be implemented. These projects are: the project of the joint stock company "Naker "Creation of self-sustainable women" in the city of Talas, the project "The second life for the book" in the cities of Bishkek and Kadji-Sai, the project "Improvement of women' professional skills" in the Issyk-Kul area and others.

The public organization "Awakening" works with the invalids with mental deficiency. The purpose of such work is creation of conditions and possibilities for disabled people to obtain skills in reading and writing, and essential professional skills, so that hereinafter they could provide themselves in the conditions of self-employment.

With the purpose of helping such group of people, specific features of the work with invalids and their vocational training are studied. With the assistance of the Danish organization "Save children" and the local government of Bishkek as social partners, on the basis of the vocational school #18, vocational training of adults with speech and hearing problems has been conducting within 3 years. Training of young auditory handicapped, including their technical qualification training, has started in the current year.

The main source of financing of primary vocational training is the republican budget. The training of adult unemployed is financed by the Fund of employment promotion, which is the part of the Social Fund.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

The information about the labour market, including the data on the internal labour migration, more often becomes an important source of the information for the direction of collective and personal efforts towards the creation of job placement potential.

Employers and trade unions require the information about the professional structure of the available manpower and about possible changes in demand in professional skills in order to define the directions of investments, as well as for taking decisions, related to training and retraining of the personnel in the course of collective negotiations and when signing collective contracts and agreements.

The state services of employment, together with other departments, require the information for the development of the policy of employment, for rendering assistance in the creation of new jobs, for the compilation of programmes on training and retraining of personnel. Moreover, such information is essential for the organization that monitors the situation on the labour market and adequate effect on changes.

National Observatory of Kyrgyzstan (NO) could have increased their potential in collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of actual and reliable information about the labour market. These analytical materials could have influenced the policy and the programmes in the field of employment and training of personnel. Moreover, the National Observatory (NO) could have conducted monitoring and could have given their estimation.

Practically, SP parties (association of employers and trade unions) are poorly involved in the work of National Observatory (NO). Cooperation of SP parties in the data collection, their analysis, as well as in the provision of an access to the system of vocational training will help to avoid expensive dual activity in this area and to increase the efficiency of National Observatory (NO).

The results of the analysis would be used for strengthening of national potential and collective and personal decision-making in the field of employment and personnel

training with the help of National Observatory and their database. However, the shortage of organizational and technical possibilities, non-use of the available mechanisms of social partnership - trilateral organizations (RTC and TC) - reduce the potential of National Observatory (NO) and restricts the possibilities of implementation of the social dialogue in VET.

The efforts, directed at SP organization in the field of personnel vocational training, will allow to change the policy in this sphere and will help social partners to undertake necessary obligations, related to its implementation. Despite of a rather small number of achievements, all social partners consider, that the trilateral commissions and trilateral councils should be strengthened as institutes. They are one of few forums, where social and labour problems, as a whole, are discussed. The government plans to hold regular consultations with social partners. Nevertheless, at the national level it is important not to miss the opportunity to make the trilateral commission as an effective tool of the social policy, oriented at reaching of the consensus.

The role of social partners, their concrete involvement and their responsibility in VET can be strengthened through the obligations of the General agreement, regional and branch agreements, collective agreements.

At present, due to the weak partner relations in the are of SSVE, the problems of vocational training and retraining are not reflected in these major normative acts. Vocational training in Kyrgyzstan is a complex system, characterized by a large variety of relations, links of its components. Under the conditions of radical social and economic reforms, ongoing in the republic, new methods of work and better developed partnership that promotes training of personnel, who can be competitive on the international labour market, are very essential.

National report on social partnership in the field of vocational education and training in Uzbekistan, Tashkent 2002

Short summary

Rules of the social development testify that under the market conditions of management, at the present stage, there is no unity in the comprehension of the economic concerns of SSVE system and the interests of different enterprises and state organizations in the field of personnel training and satisfaction of the needs of the economy in qualified manpower in Uzbekistan.

In this connection there is an address less nature of personnel training in colleges.

The economy in itself can not be developed harmoniously without the coordination of the interests of the government, colleges, enterprises and citizens. The special value, thus, is attached to the development and effective and substantial functioning of the civilized mechanism of the interaction of the government, employers and educational institutions in the market of educational services, founded on the strong legal basis. If there is such a mechanism, each of the parties optimally will implement their interests and will lay the basis for the development of the national economy.

Within the framework of social partnership, the special value is attached to the mechanism of coordination of economic interests in the sphere of education.

Such mechanism is a special institute of civil society -- social partnership, founded on the recognition of the necessity and values of all interested parties and their right to defend and to implement their interests in practice.

These interests should include the interests of a large part of enterprises of the country and all SSVE institutions. Under these frameworks, colleges and businessmen should reach coordinated decisions for the sake of preserving production possibilities.

As a whole, social partnership is the system of relationships between employees, employers, public authorities, local governments, directed at the provision of the coordination of interests of employees and employers in the regulation of labour and other relations.

The system of social partnership is a permanently functioning aggregate of bodies, organized by social partners; the procedure of interaction and functioning, that are defined by them; joint documents (agreements, contracts), developed by social partners on the basis of international standards, the Constitution and legislation of Uzbekistan and regional documents.

Social partnership in the field of vocational training is a type and a system of relations between educational institutions and enterprises of different forms of ownership and organization of production and labour, under which integration of enterprises and colleges is provided.

The aim of SP development is to render assistance in the regulation of the volume of training and qualitative improvement of manpower.

As it is mentioned in the Provision on social partnership, social partnership in the system of SSVE is a cooperation of educational institutions, state organizations, employers, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, institutes of local governing, citizens, that is directed at the implementation of organizational, economic, legal measures in the sphere of personnel training and labour market, in order to provide the branches of Uzbekistan's economy with competent specialists.

Social partnership is carried out on the basis of:

1. Observance of the legislation;
2. Options of conditions of business cooperation;

3. Voluntary participation and equality of the parties;
4. Responsibility for the execution of the undertaken obligations;
5. Organization of monitoring of the execution of agreements' conditions;
6. Creation of personnel training mechanism that can react to the change of needs in the quantity of trainees and their quality;
7. Regulations of terms of training;
8. Compulsory job placement of graduates according to the obtained professions and trades and in those companies, with whom the agreements have been concluded.

The system of social partnership includes the following elements: subjects, objects, forms, levels and the mechanism of implementation.

One of perspective directions of social partnership is the creation of conditions for the support of the constant dialogue of SSVE with social partners (companies) at the national and regional levels in respect to the change of the structure of professions and qualification and the quantity of trainees.

In the market environment the basic conditions of the partner relations are:

- Availability of the sufficient number of educational institutions;
- Diversity of different forms of ownership and organization of production and labour;
- Modern status of the productive forces on the basis of high technologies;
- Functioning "of the social state", that implements the social policy, oriented at the market, and which does not stand above the community, but serves the citizens and sets "the rules of the game" for the subjects of social partnership and controls their implementation.

Political and legal conditions of the effectively operating system of social partnership can be:

- The developed legislative basis, when freedom of cooperation in the field of training, retraining and improvement of professional skills of workers is guaranteed;
- Commitment of local governments in the satisfaction of the needs of the population in knowledge and vocational training;
- Commitment of businessmen in the training of qualified employees and use of them.

The availability of these conditions creates possibilities to support the productive dialogue between the parties in interest.

Along with the above mentioned objective conditions of the successful operation of SP system in the country, the availability of the developed subjective social and psychological factor is necessary:

- Comprehension and acceptance by employers and businessmen of the necessity of cooperation with educational establishments of SSVE;
- Active involvement of businessmen and employers in the diverse forms of assistance to colleges and their management as the reflection of their understanding that their personal prosperity and success of the firms depend on that.

1. General analysis

1.1. Introduction: general review of social partnership

On the 15th congress of trade unions in 1995, the purpose and tasks of social partnership were recognized as actual for the republic and measures, directed at the development of this type of partnership were scheduled.

The legislative basis, regulating the activity of organizations, that carry out the activity in the field of social partnership, is the Constitution, the Law on “Labour unions and warranties of their activity”, the Law on “Public organizations” and Labour Code of Republic of Uzbekistan, as well international declarations, conventions and agreements in the field of human rights, to which Republic of Uzbekistan has joined during the years of its independence.

The main working body of partnership in Republic of Uzbekistan at the state level is the trilateral commission. The trilateral commission includes representatives of all parties of partnership that is the government, the organization of employers (Chamber of commodity producers and businessmen), trade unions (Federation of trade Unions).

According to standards of ILO, the condition of genuine trilateral cooperation is the independence of the state, employers and workers from each other. However, in Uzbekistan as well as in other countries with transition economy, the implementation of this principle can not be implemented in full, so far. The degree of independence and autonomy of social partners is conditioned by the level of the market economy development.

The trilateral cooperation implies political democracy and market economy. The genuine trilateral cooperation also assumes that the government, employers and workers are three completely separate parties. It means that they should be independent from each other. However, the implementation of this principle is connected with a number of problems of the transition economy. Moreover, the government can not monopolize the decision-making in the field of economic and social policy, otherwise there will be no conditions for trilateral cooperation. On the other hand, such cooperation can not substantially be developed, if the government is restricted to the observatory role and does not participate actively together with other social partners in the solution of problems in these areas.

The first forms of trilateral cooperation in the republic do not now render an essential influence on the major trends of the state economic and social policy.

The relations of social partners with the governmental bodies are created on the basis of the implementation of general purposes of the tripartite cooperation, among which it is possible to select two of them:

- To involve organizations of workers and employers in the development and implementation of the legislation on economic and social problems;
- To involve these organizations in the development and implementation of those aspects of the national economic and social policy, which are not usually reflected in the legislative acts.

However, it is possible to mention, that the informative part of the existing agreements, mainly, duplicates the text of the Labour Code and other legislative acts.

The major task is the perfection of the legislation in the field of social partnership and control over the implementation of the approved legislative acts, compliance of the laws of the republic with the universally recognized international standards and rules.

As a whole, it is possible to say, that in Uzbekistan the legislative and normative documents are developed, which allow to create the basis for the organization and operation of social partnership.

At the state level the main forms of social partnership in SSVE are stipulated in the National training programme and partially in the Provision on “Social partnership in the secondary specialized vocational education of Republic of Uzbekistan”. Normative and legislative support of this process, however, is required. At the regional level and the level of separate educational establishments the major trends of the interaction of SSVE institutions and social partners are also reflected in the above mentioned Provision.

The dominating form of the social dialogue is collective agreements.

Such aspects of social partnership, as training and retraining of specialists are stipulated in the branch agreements only in case of mass dismissal of workers.

In the General agreement, the problems of vocational education and training are not considered.

At present, a number of partnership issues covers social, economic and labour relations and labour conditions.

Besides consultations and negotiations, the trilateral cooperation is sometimes conducted in the form of decision-making process or in the form of the settlement of labour disputes. However, according to the experience of the countries with developed market economy, the trilateral solution of labour disputes implies, that representatives of workers and employers are either members of labour courts or bodies of reconciliation or arbitration together with independent members. In Uzbekistan this form of social partnership has not accepted the final form, so far, and it is still at the stage of development.

1.2. Social partnership in the area of SSVE

During the period of the planned economy, the relationships between vocational training institutions (VTI) and production were built according to the scheme "VTI – a base enterprise". In this case the enterprises received a concrete part of graduates of their partner -- a vocational training institution. The base enterprises created and developed a training base, provided VTI with teachers and engineers, participated in the work of career-guidance of the youth, and were involved in the training process, helped in the organization of living conditions and rest of pupils and employees of VTI.

At all stages of the training process in vocational educational institutions the base enterprises acted as partners, equal in rights, and as interested participants of this process. They, together with vocational training institutions, determined the necessity of building new VTIs built them and refurbished the old buildings at the expense of their funds and equipped training workshops with the equipment and logistics. The larger part of machine tools and equipment was received by vocational educational institutions from their base firms. The existing system was convenient for administrative bodies, enterprises and vocational training. However, this mutual beneficial cooperation usually resulted in poor training quality. To some extent, it was connected with the orientation at the gross indices and with the impossibility of diversification of educational services. Moreover, the poor training quality was also explained by non-obligatory character of relationships between VTI and enterprises that rendered them sponsor assistance. The assistance of the enterprises to vocational educational institutions was of optional and methodically and normatively ungrounded nature, depending largely on historically established subjective relationships between the administration of an enterprise and VTI. All that required the solution of this problem through the development of contractual relations.

Hereinafter, new economic conditions promoted the practice of direct self-supporting agreements, where requirements for concretizing the responsibility of VTI and enterprises, as well as requirements for implementation of their responsibility were stipulated. The situations, when employers refused to hire graduates of vocational training institutions, began to spring up. The problems, related to the quality of their training, emerged. On the basis of direct contractual relations, the enterprises placed orders before vocational training institutions on training of a certain number specialists of certain trades. In this case, the cooperation between enterprises and vocational training institutions corresponded to the business partnership more than to the social one. Business partnership of vocational training institutions with employers placed the

relationships of the parties on a contractual basis. That obliged the enterprises to assist in the improvement of the logistics of workshops, etc. These and other requirements to enterprises and VTI are mirrored in the agreement.

Recently, in accordance with the development of the market relations, agreements on joint cooperation of social partners in personnel training (associate specialists) began to be concluded in the system of secondary specialized vocational education. The parties of these agreements are normally vocational schools, local governments, local labour organizations and labour unions of employers. The plan of mutual activities, directed at training of associate specialists is attached to the agreements. The next step is the creation of the Board of trustees.

However, it is necessary to mention, that similar structures and the mechanism of social partnership, as a rule, are formed in those vocational schools, that participate in the implementation of the international projects on the above mentioned problem.

The legal basis, regulating the activity in the area of SSVE, are the Laws of Republic of Uzbekistan on "Education", on "The national training programme", on "The development of vocational training, improvement of professional skills, retraining of the dismissed workers and unengaged people", on "Labour unions and warranties of their activity", on "Public associations", on "Employment of the population", on Labour Code of Republic of Uzbekistan, other legislative and normative acts, as well as the Provision on "Social partnership in secondary specialized and vocational training of Republic of Uzbekistan." The above mentioned Provision is approved by the Chamber of commodity producers and businessmen, by the Council of the Federation of trade Unions, by the Ministry of labour, by the Ministry of higher, secondary specialized secondary education of Republic of Uzbekistan.

According to the Provision on social partnership in the secondary specialized and vocational training, the control body of social partnership at the republican level is the SSVE Center Coordination Council on social partnership, at the regional level – the Board of SSVE directors, at the local level - Boards of trustees of vocational schools.

The Coordination Council on social partnership consists of the representatives of SSVE Center, Ministry of labour and social protection, Chamber of commodity producers and businessmen of Uzbekistan, public organizations (Federation of trade unions), state organizations and bodies of economic management, etc.

The Board of directors on social partnership consists of directors of vocational schools, representatives of regional labour organizations, Chamber of commodity producers and businessmen, branch trade unions and local governments.

The structure of Board of trustees includes representatives of the organization - founder, business communities, public organizations, funds, sponsors and donors.

Primary goals of Coordination Council:

- Coordination of the activities of educational establishments, employers, public organizations and management bodies in the organization of training, taking into account the labour market demands;
- Development of proposals concerning the revision of the contents of vocational training, possible adjustment of training programmes and curricula, introduction of additional blocks (modules) into educational programmes;
- Estimation of the perspectives of the change of professional and qualification structure of labour forces according to the forecasts of social and economic development of the country, etc.

The primary goals of Board of directors are:

- Involvement in elaboration of development programmes of vocational training in regions;

- Development of proposals on amendments and additions into professional standards of new trades;
- Development of proposals on the change of professional characteristics, educational programmes and curricula, introduction of additional modules into educational programmes, etc.

The primary goals of Board of trustees are:

- Assistance in the development of the material and training bases of educational institutions;
- Assistance in the perfection of the educational process, implementation of new methodical approaches to training;
- Assistance in the organization of social support of pupils and teachers, etc.

In the perspective, in accordance with the growth of the interest in the development of cooperation and better organized associations of employers, new functions (tasks) will be developed along with their redistribution between the parties of social partnership. However, at the present moment, organizational activities, directed at the formation and development of social partnership in the system of SSVE, prevails and not all the above mentioned tasks were implemented.

The main areas (themes) of agreements of cooperation are:

- *organization of industrial training and practice of pupils;
- *Implementation and development of modular system of training of vocational training institutions at enterprises;
- *Probation and improvement of professional skills of teachers;
- *Training, retraining and improvement of professional skills of enterprises' personnel;
- *Implementation of joint programmes, involvement in competitions, fairs, exhibitions, in international projects, etc.

However, at the present moment, "the organization of industrial training and practice of pupils" predominate in the agreements of cooperation between vocational colleges and employers due to the absence of the developed SP relations. Thus, the Kuiluk vocational school in the sphere services (Tashkent) cooperates with 53 employers, mainly, in the direction of the organization of industrial training and practice of their pupils. Moreover, some employers help in equipping the training material base of that college. This college has achieved noticeable success in the development of social partnership at the support of the German-Uzbek project "Support of primary vocational training development." This project was coordinated by the German Society of technical cooperation.

The results of the survey, conducted among the employers by the Institute of SSVE development in 2002, revealed that the main obstacles on the way of SP development in VET could be the following:

1. Poor incomes of companies and enterprises;
2. Unpredictable situation on the labour market;
3. Undeveloped legislative and normative basis of social partnership;
4. Absence of the development funds of vocational training;
5. Absence of the co-ordination of the activities of educational establishments, employers, public organizations and management bodies in SSVE;
6. Absence of essential privileges (in the taxation, etc.) for employers, who invest their money in vocational training.

Thus, the specific features of SP development in educational institutions of SSVE can be the following:

1. Creation and development of social partnership in vocational schools depends, first of all, on the initiative of the management of those schools.

2. The efficiency of social partnership will be achieved in case of constant and operating ties between employers and the system of SSVE.
3. Creation and development of social partnership in SSVE are hampered by the following circumstances:
 - The mechanism of interaction of educational institutions and employers, that can be rational and attractive for employers, is not developed on the republican, regional and local levels of management;
 - The mechanism of interaction of SSVE educational establishments with employers (their representatives) in strengthening contractual relations between the organizations, responsible for training of specialists, and the enterprises, responsible for their rational use, as well as in the process of adapting of training programme of educational institutions to varying qualification requirements of enterprises, requires to be further developed;
 - The mechanism of the growth of economic interest of employers in training of the qualified personnel for their enterprises is not developed;
 - The mechanisms of market regulation of personnel training are insufficiently used.
4. The specific features of SP development in SSVE institutions also depend on the tendencies of employers' demand in qualified personnel. The demand of employers in qualified personnel will be defined by the following tendencies:
 - Implementation of new know-hows by enterprises will require high level of knowledge and professional skills of their workers;
 - Lowering of the role of unskilled labour and the growth of requirement in the workers with qualified skills;
 - The increase in the level of flexibility of industrial processes, that require the necessity of mastering allied trades by workers.

2. Review of the social dialogue development in the following areas of SSVE

Qualification and standards of training

During the development of standards, working groups are created, which include scholars, specialists of educational institutions, enterprises, representatives of social partners. The standards, developed by working groups, are sent to be reviewed by employers, Ministry of labour and social protection and, after taking into account their conclusions and remarks, the finalized version will be considered as completed. In some cases, experts of enterprises are invited to consult on the issues, related to standards. Representatives of social partners usually check the correspondence of the professional characteristics, worked out by the developers, to the parameters of activity types of the worker of a concrete trade on his working place. As a whole, social partners are involved to define the contents of standards according to the following:

- Description of a trade or a professional profile;
- "Results", which should be achieved (expressed in the requirements to estimation and certification);
- Key skills (sometimes called core abilities, core skills or skills of common nature).

New standards undergo expertise, which is carried out with the involvement of the representatives of employers (social partners), teachers of vocational schools, Ministry of labour and social protection, Uzbekgosstandard. The estimation of the designed project of standards is carried out on the basis of the method of reviewing. The main criteria is the correspondence of the contents of standards to the nature of activity types of the worker on the concrete working place, that is selected as a sample.

After the revision of the project of standards, it is subject to approbation in pilot educational institutions. The period of approbation is three years. After that period the finalized version of standards is approved and it is registered.

Social partners are involved at all development stages, including the approbation of standards. At the stage of the development they can be included into working groups. After the project of standards development they are involved in the work on reviewing and estimation of the quality of standards.

Changes in the contents of a standard are introduced by the authorized state management body of SSVE (SSVE Center) at the written appeal of the representatives of employers, SSVE educational institutions and others.

Definition of the needs of training and its planning

During the definition of the contents of standards, the needs of the labour market and the needs of social partners in training are studied. In particular, the nature of activity types of a specialist in developed modern productions is studied. However, the ties with social partners are weak and occasional. Therefore, the study of the working place is not always conducted together with social partners. In such cases the decision is taken after the familiarization with experts' opinion.

In 1999, 100 new standards were developed in connection with the changes of the needs in training in the directions, that cover all economic and social spheres.

Quality assurance and accreditation of vocational training

The board of final examinations includes representatives of enterprises and organizations (social partners), that are basic and the most competent in that area of training. The final examinations are taken in an educational establishment. On the concrete working place the estimation is not done.

In Uzbekistan the independent controlling unit, Center of certification and licensing, functions under the Government of the republic. Its functions include all types of control over the activity of SSVE educational institutions. During the certification process, availability and quality of a training base and equipment, the correspondence of educational curricula and programmes to educational standards, qualifications of teachers, etc. are controlled. The Center has the right to check and to certify without coordinating these issues with the Ministry of education, because it is the service, that is independent from administration education bodies. If during the control of an educational institution the violations of training quality are discovered, then, the educational institution should remove those violations and then undergo the process of certification once again. As a rule, social partners are not involved in this work.

Ties of vocational training institutions with enterprises of small and medium business

Ties of vocational training institutions with enterprises of small and medium business are very poor. Only two directions of that interaction can be mentioned:

- Involvement in the development of educational standards (mainly with representatives of civil construction firms);
- Organization of industrial training and practice of pupils.

Creation and management of continuous training system and work in this area (as for occupied, and unemployed citizens)

Only educational institutions, that are granted licenses by a state commission, established by the Government of the republic, are entitled to provide educational services. There are no licensed private educational establishments because training in SSVE is free. This training is financed from the state budget. If social partners decide to provide vocational training services in their structures, they should undergo the process of certification and licensing.

The system of education in Uzbekistan is managed by the Government. Such participants of social partnership, as representatives of local governments (Hokimiyats), are involved in this process at all levels. Employers and public organizations practically do not participate in the management of the system of continuous training.

Such representatives of social partnership, as labour organizations (labour exchange) carry out the work in following directions:

- Assistance in the support of the unemployed, granting them benefits and stipends during vocational training;
- Organization of vocational training and retraining for those who have jobs.

Training, improvement of professional skills and retraining of the dismissed workers and the unoccupied people are organized in the Regional centers on training, retraining, improvement of professional skills and career-guidance of the unoccupied population. If the centers do not have an appropriate educational training base according to the profiles of training, vocational training (retraining) or improvement of professional skills of the people, registered at the labour exchanges as people who search for jobs, are organized in SSVE institutions, through training courses, training subdivisions of enterprises, through the system of professional skills improvement of ministries and departments.

Allocation of finances

Training institutions are financed from the republican and local budgets (hokiyamats), and partially by social partners. They are the resources:

1. Of employers for the targeted training of personnel under the agreements;
2. Of labour organizations for training of the dismissed workers and the unemployed;
3. Allocation on the development of material and technical and training bases of educational institutions.

Conclusions and recommendations:

One of the strategic purposes of the ongoing market reforms in Uzbekistan is the unification of efforts of employers, businessmen and SSVE on the basis of social partnership for their successful implementation.

The degree of SP development acts as an essential component of the modern model of competitive market economy. Its development remains to be at an extremely low level, and as a whole, it has not become a serious factor in the development of SSVE.

Mechanisms of interaction of social partnership on macrolevel are:

- National educational policy, described in the Law on Education, and reflected in the National programme of training of specialists;
- National economic policy, including such elements as finances, credit, tax and investment.

On the macrolevel, agreements of cooperation in the field of training of specialists and satisfaction of the needs of companies in the qualified manpower can be referred to such mechanisms.

The forms of interaction of the parties (subjects of social partnership) are:

- Negotiations on the conclusion of collective and - or personal agreements and contracts;
- Consultations;
- Joint work of the parties in commissions, boards of trustees, committees, funds of training of specialists;
- Control over the implementation of the achieved arrangements (monitoring);
- Regulation of the emerging disputes and claims.

According to the head of the district Chamber of commodity producers and businessmen of Tashkent, there are some negative tendencies in the development of social partnership, which hinder the further development of cooperation. Among these reasons it is possible to mention the following:

- Unstable development of private business;
- Limited financial and credit resources of companies;
- Incorrect taxation of companies, participating in personnel training;
- Absence of the economically justified business development programmes and creation of new jobs on their basis in the majority of regions;
- Businessmen are poorly adapted to the market of educational services;
- Absence of monitoring of the work graduates of SSVE;
- Poor investment activity.

The state policy in the area of co-operation of SSVE and businessmen should be directed, mainly, not at administrative and directive regulation, but at the creation of essential legislative and normative basis of their interaction under the conditions of equal partnership.

The partner relations of SSVE system with employers are possible only under the condition of social orientation at the market economy, when satisfaction of needs of the country in qualified manpower and reduction of unemployment will be treated as the most urgent problems. In other words, one should achieve such a level of social partnership when the interests of educational institutions and companies would be satisfied.

From the point of view of the satisfaction of the needs of the economy in qualified manpower, and the needs of the population in knowledge, it is necessary to actuate the system of social partnership and to develop the contractual system of training for a long-term perspective.

The growth of interest of employers and businessmen can be stimulated by awarding tax and other privileges to physical persons and legal entities, who assist schools in training specialists on the basis of full or partial financing on contractual conditions.

Secondary specialized vocational educational institutions, who have essential training bases and qualified teaching staff on the contractual basis, can accept the people from labour exchanges for their retraining and improvement of their professional skills.

In Uzbekistan legal and normative documents are developed, which allow to create the basis for the organization and operation of social partnership. The major task is to perfect the legislation in the field of social partnership.

The absence of substantial involvement of social partners in SSVE and the interest of employers in this type of cooperation, as a whole, should be mentioned. However, new trends in the development of social cooperation in SSVE were recently observed. Among them it is possible to mention joint work with social partners on:

- * Development of educational standards;

- * Revision of educational programmes and curricula;
- * Definition of the needs in skills, knowledge and job placement of graduates of educational institutions.

Under the developing economic system of the country social partnership is attached one of the leading roles.

The creation of SP mechanism, implementation of new trends of cooperation is the major condition of SSVE development.

In our view, in order to develop social partnership, it is necessary:

- To perfect the legislative and normative basis.
- To stimulate the interest of employers and businessmen in cooperation with SSVE in the field of training of specialists.
- To create conditions in schools for retraining and improvement of professional skills of the people, who are sent there by the services of employment.
- To activate the advertising activity of schools and the work of graduates.
- To reinforce the obligation of establishing contractual relations between employers and SSVE educational institutions on the basis of decisions of local governments (hokiyamats) in order to satisfy the needs of the economy in manpower.
- To solve the problem of the reduction of a certain volume of local taxes, paid by the businessmen, who participate in personnel training, at the local level.
- To strengthen the ties of schools with labour exchanges with the purpose of the promotion of retraining and improvement of professional skills
- Marketing services should study the needs in specialists, should substantiate the portfolio of orders in trades and should define, on their basis, the quota on the reception of the entrants and the quota on the conclusion of contracts (to implement a scheme for each district and to set contacts with labour exchanges and human resources departments of large enterprises, using modems)

Training of specialists in the system of SSVE, in many respects, helps to keep up the competitive tone in the economy, while the cooperation with employers creates a natural social support of the society, that is organized on the market principles.

In order to stimulate the interest of social partners in cooperation with educational institutions of SSVE, it is necessary to upgrade all parts of VET system, simultaneously taking into account those substantial possibilities, which are already available for this purpose now or, with the sufficient probability, can emerge in the near future.

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Social partnership in vocational education and training of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan: comparative review (On the materials of the reports of those countries)

Introduction: general review of social partnership

According to domestic and foreign experience, social partnership (SP) is one of determinative factors of the improvement of the situation on the labour market and, thereby, the determinative factors of slowing down the process of living standards deterioration of a considerable number of the population, and the determinative factors of the improvement of the social climate and stabilization of the economy. Under the contradictory conditions of market relations development, joint cooperation of representatives of different social groups and structures on the basis of the consideration of the interests of each party, promotes the solution of many social problems, including adaptation of the system of vocational training to new social and economic situation.

Recognizing the availability of a large number of common tendencies in the activity of social partners of Central Asian countries, it is necessary to mention some differences and specific features of the development in this sphere. For the review of the most essential characteristics, the reports of these countries are offered according to the sequence of their preparation.

History of social partnership development

The interaction of social partners, formed in the Soviet period by the administrative system, was carried out under the conditions of strict management with an invariable circle of problems and invariable structure of participants (state trade union, employers), aimed at negotiations to be conducted only in the sphere of labour relations. The trilateral commission, which developed a plan of measures, developed partially on the involvement, partially on the classic negotiations, devoted to the issues of wages and working conditions, concluded annual General agreement (national level) or collective agreements (branch level) in the form of appropriate rights and obligations of the parties in interest. This classic form of tripartite cooperation, still exists. However, the modified conditions do not allow to implement, in full, those measures, directed at the coordination and reconciliation of the concerns of the parties.

The cooperation between vocational educational institutions (vocational technical college) and the enterprise during the planned economy was established according to the scheme “a vocational technical school – a base enterprise.” In this case, the enterprises received a concrete number of graduates of a certain vocational educational institution. The base enterprises created and developed an educational training base, assisted in the provision of technical training colleges with engineers and pedagogical staff, participated in the work on career-guidance of the youth and in acquisition of students by an educational institution, helped in the organization of pedagogic work and in the organization of living conditions and rest of students and teachers.

At all stages of the training process in vocational educational institutions, the base enterprises acted as partners, equal in rights, and as the interested participants. They together with the organizations of vocational training defined the necessity of building new vocational schools and built those schools at the expense of their funds, refurbished old buildings and equipped training workshops with equipment and logistics.

The larger part of machine tools and equipment were received by vocational educational institutions from their base enterprises. From the departmental positions, the existing system was convenient for enterprises and vocational training. However, such interaction usually did not influence largely on training quality -- the training quality remained on a low level. To some extent, that situation was generated by the orientation at gross indices and by the impossibility of diversification of educational services. Moreover, the poor training quality could be explained by the non-obligatory nature of relations between vocational schools and their enterprises-sponsors. The help of enterprises to vocational educational institutions was of non-compulsory and methodically and normatively ungrounded nature, depending, in many respects, on subjective ties between the administration of the enterprise and a vocational school. All that required the solution of the problem through the development of contractual relations.

Hereinafter, new economic conditions, under which the requirements in the definition of the responsibility of a vocational school and enterprises, as well as the accuracy of their execution was increased and gave a rise to the practice of direct self-supporting agreements. The situations, when employers refused to hire graduates of vocational educational institutions, began to emerge. There were problems, related to the quality of their training. On the basis of direct contractual ties, the enterprises placed orders for training of a necessary number of specialists by vocational educational institutions. During that period, the cooperation between enterprises and vocational educational institutions corresponded more to business partnership, than to social one. Business partnership with employers placed the relationship of both parties on the contractual basis. That obliged the enterprises to assist in the equipment of workshops, etc. These and other requirements of the enterprise-partner of a vocational school were reflected in the agreements.

The process of deep social and economic transformations of the last decade, ongoing in the former Soviet republics, gave a rise to the development of qualitatively new phenomena: first of all, changes of patterns of ownership, structural modification of economy and formation of the labour market. That exercised an effect not only on the nature of relationships of social partners, but also on their structure and degree of involvement. Thus, the positions of trade unions, main representatives of workers' interest, significantly weakened. The interests of employees are slowly and contradictorily represented. During the development of the private sector of the economy, a large number of enterprises and companies of small business were created. However, they are insufficiently joined in unions of employers and consequently, they cannot participate in the negotiations under the framework of traditional tripartite cooperation. This process flows more successfully in medium and large business, where branch and territorial associations are created and become stronger step-by-step. Considerable changes took place in the real sector and the system vocational training.

Legal basis, regulating the activity of organizations, that carry out their activity in the field of social partnership

The primary value in all republics is attached to the problems of legislative support of social partnership.

In **Kazakhstan** the process of development of new normative and legal basis in this area began in 1992, when the first acts, regulating the activities of social partners, were adopted. The first legal documents were: Law of Republic of Kazakhstan on "Collective agreements", the governmental order "On social partnership in the field of social and labour relations", and standard Provision on "The procedure of the

conclusion of branch tariff agreements". In 1993, three main partners -- the Government, trade unions and enterprises -- adopted a mutual **Declaration on the principles of cooperation**. In 1994, the President of RK approved the Decree on "Social partnership in the area of social, economic and labour relations", which stipulated constant dialogue of the parties through the conclusion of general, branch and regional agreements.

The adoption of the Law on "Social partnership in Republic of Kazakhstan" in 2000 allowed to attach the status of institutional mechanism to the social dialogue of partners. During the last years, Kazakhstan ratified seven basic Conventions of ILO on social partnership. Moreover, the legislative basis has been developed, that regulates the activity of executive bodies, employers and workers, as well as stipulates the responsibility for non-execution of the conditions of collective agreements and contracts.

During the last several years of SP development in Kazakhstan, the problems of VET development, as a whole, were discussed neither in General, nor in branch agreements of trilateral commissions.

The decision of the Government to establish the republican trilateral commission on regulation of social, economic and labour relations in 1994 gave a rise to the formation of social partnership system and development of its legislative support in **Republic of Kyrgyzstan**. It was not developed until 1997, when the General agreement between the Government, trade unions and republican associations of employers was concluded. The conclusion of that agreement on the trilateral basis has confirmed the necessity of the creation and development of SP legal basis.

The legislative basis of the system of collective contractual regulation of social and labour relations in thee republics began to be developed step-by-step only during the last years. In 1998, Laws on "Promotion of employment", on "Labour unions" and Labour Code were adopted; in 2002 the Convention of ILO on collective negotiations was ratified. At the same time, as the experts mentioned, till now there are no laws on collective agreements and contracts, on the procedure of collective labour disputes settlement; there are no laws, regulating the creation and activity of associations of employers and SP organizations. The conventions of ILO on the development of social dialogue are not ratified. Now, the bill draft on "Social partnership" is under consideration of the Parliament.

According to the experts, the social partnership in vocational training of Kyrgyzstan has not been developed properly to present day, and it is still at the stage of coming-to-be .

In **Uzbekistan** the general legal and normative basis, regulating the activity of organizations in the field of social partnership, are the Constitution, Law on "Labour unions and warranties of their activity", Law on "Public organizations", Labour Code, international declarations, conventions and agreements in the field of human rights, to which Republic of Uzbekistan has joined during the years of its independence.

The main acts, regulating the social dialogue in the area of vocational training are Laws on "Education", on "National training programme", on "Formation of vocational training, improvement of professional skills, retraining of the dismissed workers and unoccupied population", on "Labour unions and warranties of their activity", on "Public associations", on "Employment", Labour Code, the Provision on "Social partnership in secondary specialized vocational education of Republic of Uzbekistan". This list of legal documents is the evidence of the availability of legal normative documents in Uzbekistan, which allow to create the basis for the organization and operation of social partnership. *However, according to the experts, the actual task is the perfection of the legislation of social partnership in the area of vocational training.*

So, in all countries the definite legislative basis for the regulation of the relations in the field of social partnership has been developed. Operating in the

sphere of social partnership of three countries, the legislation regulates traditional problems, related to the solution of common social and economic problems, labour relations and labour conditions. Vocational training and retraining of personnel, to present day, has not yet become an independent subject to be included in the normative and legal acts, regulating the trilateral dialogue at the national and local levels.

Structure of organizations, their form and major problems of social partnership

The main parties of social partnership in all three republics are state organizations, trade unions and associations of employers. They are legislatively granted equal rights and possibilities to adjust social and labour contacts and constructive dialogue. According to the standards of ILO, the condition for the development of genuine trilateral cooperation is full independence of these parties from each other. However, as well as in other countries with transition economy, in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, this principle has not yet been implemented in full. The degree of autonomy of social partners is stipulated by the level of market economy development in these republics.

In **Kazakhstan** the main activity, directed at the development and perfection of SP normative and legislative basis, as well as all organizational and technical work is carried out by the Ministry of labour and social protection and its regional offices. Other ministries and departments act as social partners.

Besides the state departments, the most organized party of social partnership is trade unions. Federation of trade unions of Republic of Kazakhstan includes 30 branch and 14 regional associations with the membership of 2.2 million people. Independent trade unions in Kazakhstan function actively, as well. They consist of 4 branch and 6 regional associations with the membership of 300 thousand people. All of them are associations of workers.

As against the trade unions, associations of employers are at the stage of formation, although, there are republican associations of employers in the country. However, in aggregate they represent not more than 5 % -10 % of the employers of the republic.

The relations of social partners with governmental bodies of the central level are not simple. Some ministries and departments actively enter the dialogue with trade unions of workers. Of 30 trade unions, working at a branch level, only 18 have concluded agreements with state organizations. The main reasons of such situation are the absence of special subdivisions, supervising these problems, in the ministries and departments and the poor level of the associability of employers.

The dominating form of the social dialogue at the republican and branch levels is trilateral agreements, and at the level of enterprises, organizations, establishments - collective agreements.

The problems of the development of commodity market and business, employment of the population, labour protection, combat of poverty and unemployment, protection of home labour market, wage, social and economic warranties of the citizens, and social protection of the most vulnerable stratum of the population were defined as the priority directions of negotiations during the last years.

The republican trilateral commission of **Kyrgyzstan** has been granted the authorities to develop and to implement the main principles of social and economic policy and to regulate labour relations, to consider the preparation and acceptance of proposals, coordinated with all parties and under the projects of national laws, and main normative and legal acts in the sphere of labour and social problems, as well as in the part of interaction with similar commissions at branch and regional levels. With the

purpose of the regulation of the relations between the government, organizations of employers and trade unions in the sphere of development and implementation of the state policy, directed at the promotion of employment, the Trilateral Council was created in 1998, which was obliged to carry out its activity, irrespective of the involvement of its representatives in political parties, associations and public currents.

The trilateral cooperation was developed step-by-step at the district level. In 2002, 25 branch (ministries branch trade unions and associations of employers) and 5 regional agreements (regional state administrations, regional councils of trade unions, local unions of employers) on social and labour relations for 2002-2003 were concluded between executive bodies, local governments, employers and trade unions. More than 60 agreements were concluded at the district level between urban, district administrations, farmers, businessmen and trade unions. 78 % of operating enterprises, who have trade unions, concluded collective agreements.

In those collective agreements and contracts, *the obligations of employers, related to pay rise, training and retraining of personnel at the expense of the enterprises' resources, privileges and compensations of the workers, whose level exceeds the standards, set by the current legislation, are stipulated.*

The main working body of partnership in **Republic of Uzbekistan** at the state level is also the trilateral commission, which includes the same representatives of the main parties of partnership, such as the Government, organizations of employers (Chamber of commodity producers and businessmen), trade unions (Federation of trade Unions). The relations of social partners with governmental bodies are created on the basis of the implementation of general purposes of tripartite cooperation. The informative part of the existing agreements, mainly, duplicates the text of the Labour Code and other acts. The practice displays, that the first forms of trilateral cooperation in the republic do not exercise any essential influence on the directions of the current economic and social policy of the republic.

Comparing the situation in three countries, it is possible to mention, that besides common traditional forms and patterns of social partnership, there are some differences in the contents of agreements and obligations, concluded at different levels. So, in Kazakhstan all of them are oriented at the market, in the greater degree; in Kyrgyzstan the emphasis is made on the employment of the population; in Uzbekistan - on the legislative activity.

Social partnership in the area of SSVE

Under the current conditions, the area of social partnership has not undergone any cardinal changes. Developing predominantly on the centralized paths, the system of vocational training has got in such a social and economic environment, which, till now, has not formed its requirements and obligations in relation to vocational training, so far. The Government still plays a dominating role in VET system, while social and economic changes have influenced the contents and pattern of social partnership only in a minor degree. It is caused by a number of reasons, related, mainly, to the situation of the transition period.

The main potential participants of social partnership in the field of vocational training are:

- State organizations
- Regional organizations of ministries, such as services of employment and VET organizations;
- VET institutions
- Employers
- Trade unions

- Public associations

Not all parties of social partnership in VET exhibit any interest in cooperation in order to solve the emerging problems of vocational training, on the one hand, and to satisfy the needs of enterprises in qualified personnel, on the other hand.

The most active participants of social partnership are **organizations of vocational training**, which created their associations for the promotion of their interests at different levels.

Lately, **organizations of employers** have begun to comprehend the necessity of their unification in order to keep up and to develop their business and to provide their enterprises with qualified personnel. The majority of the organizations of employers are in the process of formation and they are engaged mostly in the solution of the problems, related to their survival under complicated economic conditions. Thereof, they are the least interested party of social partnership in the area of vocational training.

Trade unions (both territorial, and branch) undertake definite activities to return their positions, that they lost during the first years of reforms, as well as to perform the role of a social partner, who represents the interests of the occupied population. At the same time, they do not yet play a noticeable role in the formation and development of social partnership in the field of vocational training.

Public organizations and population, schoolchildren and students, their parents, participants of different training and retraining courses are interested in the development of social partnership in the sphere of vocational training as consumers. They require social protection from educational services of low quality, however they are also insufficiently unified in organizations, that can represent their interests.

Thus, two parties are potentially ready for the social dialogue: state organizations, who are responsible for the state of vocational training, and VET organizations. Other partners feel a need in interaction, but there are no sufficient resources and mechanisms.

Main obstacles on the way of social partnership development in the area of vocational education and training

According to the experts, who participated in the preparation of the reports, the most appreciable obstacles on the way of creation and development of effective social partnership are the following factors:

- Absence of SP development strategy and concept in the area of vocational education and training.
- Insufficiently developed legislative and normative basis.
- Low activity of state organizations in the solution of this problem and low level of their communications on this problem.
- Unstable development of private business, limited financial and credit resources of companies.
- Poor involvement of employers, as main participants of social partnership in the area of vocational education and training. The undeveloped institutional basis, unavailability to influence substantially on the labour market and to express the interests of employers in the field of personnel training. Businessmen are not ready to get adapted to the market of educational services
- Absence of the system of privileges for the enterprises, cooperating with organizations of vocational training; the incorrect taxation of the companies, participating in personnel training.
- Negative influence of economic factors (shortage of financial, material and human resources, in particular, in rural areas and small cities).

- Redundancy of proposals of different specialist on the labour market (it is more favorable for the employer to hire the trained specialist than to invest in training and to waste time on partner cooperation).
- Domination of commercial interests of a number of educational institutions which do not bear responsibility for training of certainly useless specialists or inadequate quality of training.
- Inertness and poor ability of educational institutions to register demands of employers, absence of adjusted and continuous communication with the services, occupied in the employment promotion.
- Poor activity of the population, who wait for the solution of their problems from above and do not exhibit any initiatives to change the existing situation.
- Absence of the mechanism of interaction of educational institutions with employers, that can be rational and attractive to employers, at republican, regional and local levels;
- Absence of the economically justified development programmes of business and creation of new jobs on their basis in the majority of regions;
- Absence of monitoring of the work of VET graduates;
- Poor investment activity.

Conclusions and recommendations

Social partnership, operating in Central Asian countries, covers, mainly, the sphere of social and labour relations in the field of wages and labour protection. Vocational training of specialists in compliance with the needs of the labour market is one of the major problems to be discussed by social partners at all levels. Now, these problems are realized not only by educational institutions, but also by employers, state organizations, the population, first of all, by parents and students.

In these countries all legislative and institutional prerequisites for substantial development of social partnership in VET have been, practically, worked out, such as: legislative and normative basis, associations of employers, educational institutions, specialized state structures, etc. Its necessity is dictated by the needs in job placement of graduates of educational institutions, by their acquisition of knowledge and skills, that are very essential on the labour market, by the forecast of the needs in specialists, support of VET development.

At the same time, social partnership in the field of vocational training is still insufficiently formed and it is on the formation stage. Its poor development can be explained by the fact that the partners are not ready to interact and by the absence of the qualified management of this problem.

The information about the labour market, including data on internal labour migration, becomes, more often, an important source for the direction of collective and personal efforts on creation of the potential of job placement.

The employers and trade unions require the information about professional structure of available manpower and about possible changes in demand for professional skills in order to define the directions of investments, as well as to take decisions concerning training and retraining of personnel during collective negotiations and when signing collective agreements and contracts.

Public services of employment together with other departments require the information for the formation of employment policy, for rendering of assistance in creation of new jobs, for compilation of personnel training and retraining programmes. Moreover, such information is essential for the organization of monitoring of the situation on the labour market and the adequate effect on the changes.

List of participants of the international regional workshop
**«Social partnership as basis for improving the interaction between VET schools
and enterprises»**

Almaty, Kurmangazy street, 40, House of Friendship, conference room.

September, 9-10, 2002

№№	Organisation	Name
1	Ministry of education and science of RK	Nagzhan Rakhimzhanova – Deputy director of the Department of primary and secondary vocational education
2	Ministry of labour and social protection of RK	Dana Shaidildinova – Director of the Department of labour and employment
3		Alma Salykbaeva – Head of sector of the social partnership
4	CEREQ	Mr. Bentabet- expert
5	Franch Embassy	Ms. Marie Dumoulin
6	Lycee Professionnel et CFA Hotelier Belliard	Mr. J.Preslier
7		Mr. J. Lamarque
8		Ms. M. Morett
9	European Training Foundation	Ms. C. Morel – Programme Manager
10	Delegation of the European Commission in Kazakhstan	Ms. M Michaud – Programme officer
11	UNESCO Cluster Office in Kazakhstan	Aigul Khalafova – specialist on education programme
12	Internatioanl Labour organisation	Умиржанов Талгат – национальный корреспондент
13	Uzbekistan	Shukhrat Rashidov – assistant NOB of UZB
14		Djavlan Yakubov – head of sector on socio-economical issues of the VET Department , Institute for Development of Secondary Specialised Vocational Education
15		Olga Pokhabova – leading expert of the VET Department
16		Soibjon Aliev – Deputy Head of Demography, Labour Market and Employment Department, Ministry of Labour
17	Kyrgyzstan	Anar Beishembaeva – team leader of NOB
18		L. Turova – methodologist of the Republican Research- methodical Centre
19		A. Tugelova – director of the restaurant “Akvilon-premier”
20		S.Dzhamankulova – director of VET lyceum # 10
21	Department of small	Serik Turzhanov – director

22	business, Akimat (Administration) of Almaty city	Alia Tursumuratova – deputy director
23	Confederation of Employers of RK	Nadzhat Kadyrov – Deputy executive director
24	Association of the producers of machine equipment of RK	Pavel Beklemishev - president
25	Oblast committee of trade unions of RK	Mikhail Kopylov – Executive director
26	Almaty Association of entrepreneurs	Munavara Paltasheva - director
27		Svetlana Nauruzbaeva – head of education sector
28	Kazakh Academy of Education	Askarbek Kussainov - president
29		
30	Institute of professional education	Kumisbek Ustemirov = director
31	Confectionary factory “Rakhat”	Sholpan Dauletova – director on personnel, chairperson of Counsel of the Directors
32	Department of Education, Akimat of Almaty city	Vera Tsin – head of VET sector
33	VET lyceum № 1	Marat Abdukhalikov – director
34	Restaurant “Dostyk”	Tatiana Belova - director
35	VET school № 1	Iskak Nurmukhambetov - director
36	Association of enterprises of the furniture and wood-working industry	Evgeny Bessonov - president
37	VET school № 18	Issa Samsaev - director
38	LTD “ Smak” (food industry)	Elena Popkova – manager
39	Association of the enterprises for light industry	Lubov Khudova – executive director
40	Department of labour, employment and social protection, Akimat of Almaty city	Anastasia Kurasova – deputy director
41		Tlaxhan Azizova – head of sector
42	Republican Institute for up-grading qualification for staff in educational system	Berikzhan Almukhambetov – director
43	College of new technologies	Victor Ezau - director
44	College of construction and management	Zhantleu Aziskhanov - director
45	National Observatory	Shaizada Tasbulatova
		Valentina Belosludtseva

Appendix 8.

Involvement of social partners in vocational education and training: a partnership that needs to be strengthened

Claire Morel, European Training Foundation

1. Why is social partnership important?

Social partnership is an important feature of vocational education and training systems in the European Union. It has not been an easy goal to achieve, and has been the result of persistent discussions, disputes and even conflicts. In the NIS, there is no tradition of social partnership in vocational education and training. That is why the European Training Foundation and the National Observatory of Kazakhstan have decided to organise this seminar, to raise awareness on the need to strengthen the role of social partners in defining and monitoring vocational education and training systems. Involving social partners in vocational education and training helps the system to become more flexible and to react faster to the changing needs of the labour market. It raises the quality of vocational education and training, as well as its relevance to the labour market needs.

Social partners have an important role to play in initial vocational education, as well as in continuing education and training. However, according to the concept of **lifelong learning**, the current fragmentation between initial and continuing education should be overcome. The acquisition of knowledge, skills and competence is a continuous process of development – from "cradle to grave", which requires additional resources from the employers, and the establishment of a stronger partnership. The isolated development of sub-systems risks creating obstacles to the relevance of skills, transparency of qualifications, and overlapping of responsibilities.

Social partnership is also an important tool to promote the employability and personal development of individuals and can support social cohesion as a factor of economic development.

2. The experience in Central and Eastern Europe

The European Training Foundation organised a series of seminars and studies on the role of social partners in vocational education and training in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, with a view to their future accession to the European Union. The results of this work is of interest to the NIS because it clearly appears that in those countries as well, social dialogue is often unstructured and unplanned. A consolidated framework of institutions is often missing.

In all countries, **tripartite committees** with advisory functions were set up, representing public authorities, employers and employees. Employment policy, including active labour market measures is also managed in a tripartite way. However, vocational education and training is not their priority and is sometimes not even a subject for discussion. This could be due to a lack of professionally trained personnel in this area, or of real understanding of the role and importance of social partners. Social partners only have an **advisory** role with limited impact on the decision-making process. In Eastern countries where social partnership is well developed, technical commissions including social partners have been set up to deal with curricula, qualifications and educational standards.

In Central and Eastern Europe, co-operation between the worlds of education and labour is often initiated by training institutions and their governing bodies such as Ministries of Education. **Trade unions** are still weak, face severe financial problems and

do not see vocational education and training as their priority. Their influence tends to be limited to companies which are still under state control. They are often more interested in acquiring democratic skills, in collective bargaining on work conditions and salaries than in education and training. However, in the future, they will have to ensure that their members receive proper training and education, thus reducing the risks of unemployment. Employers' and employees' representatives are only starting to feel their role in the preparation of a quality work force. In general, **employers' organisations** are more aware of their responsibilities than employees' organisations. One reason for the limited involvement of employees in vocational education and training, is that many enterprises do not have trade unions. There is a low level of organisation among employees. Social dialogue at SME level is also difficult because small enterprises have no motivation to become members of employers' organisations. This is also true for enterprises with high levels of foreign investment.

In most countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the role of social partners is more oriented towards **continuing training** (towards their own employees), although there is a growing interest at government level to get them more actively involved in the area of initial education as well. This could be linked to the new concept of lifelong learning, according to which there should be no fragmentation between initial and continuing training, between formal and informal learning.

However, the absence of a structured framework for continuing vocational training reduces the possibilities to address in a comprehensive way the issues of access to lifelong learning.

In Central and Eastern Europe, industrial confederations representing large enterprises are becoming more and more interested in vocational education and training because they are faced with large enterprise restructuring and experiencing severe competition. Retraining is an important aspect of their restructuring strategy.

3. Training for enterprise development

Through its network of National Observatories, the European Training Foundation has implemented a project in Central Asia entitled "Training for Enterprise Development". The results showed that the vast majority of employers had no interest nor incentive to train their own staff, and that employees themselves were not motivated to develop their skills and competences. Employers do not see human resources development as a tool to develop their enterprise. Links between enterprises and training institutions are under-developed, although many employers complained about the insufficient skills' level of the young graduates. Although employers' organisations could be a powerful instrument to convince enterprises to invest in their staff, they are not involved in the issues of human resources development, and are under-represented. Currently less than 5% of Central Asian enterprises are members of employers' associations. The National Observatories can provide you with more information on the results of this project.

A key message of the lifelong learning policy of the European Union is that investing in human resources development is investing for the future, keeping in mind the needs of the individuals (employability and personal development) and the priorities of the enterprises (competitiveness).

4. Social partnership at local level

When social partners have an interest for training at central level, very often, there is a lack of interest at sectoral, local or enterprise level, although social partners can have a great impact in defining policies at local levels. Employers are usually more

eager to invest in their local environment, especially SMEs. Labour market monitoring systems also need to have their roots at local or even enterprise level.

In Central and Eastern Europe, social partnership is under-developed at sectoral, regional and enterprise level. In the best cases, local authorities have organised local tripartite committees that study employment problems, training of the unemployed, as well as demand for specific professions. Several countries have indicated that the best involvement of social partners in vocational education and training was reached at local level through co-operation between individual schools and enterprises. However this was often the result of individual initiatives rather than support through the system.

Employers are interested in the development of in-company training that could allow young graduates to better integrate theoretical and practical training in enterprises, and increase their employability. However work-related initial training is under-developed, as a consequence of the absence of a system of incentives to motivate enterprises to be involved in initial training, and the lack of a system of quality assurance with involvement of social partners.

Practical training needs to be supervised and structured. This is why vocational schools should create partnerships with local employers, based on mutual benefit, that could increase the quality of in-company training, and the learning process in general. Employers could feed in the training process, define their needs in order to obtain better trained workers, while vocational schools could for example use their equipment for practical training and place their students. However, very often, vocational schools lack information on local enterprises, and their skills' needs. On the other hand, employers are usually not able to foresee the type of skills they will need in the next 2-3 years. The European Training Foundation has published a handbook for professional schools, which explains how to establish a "win-win" situation with local employers.

As far as possible, social partnership at regional and local level should be based on regional development policies, and follow local development strategies.

The problem of financing is mentioned in all the studies prepared by Central and Eastern European countries, together with the need to introduce financial incentives and subsidies for employers active in training.

5. Conclusion

The European Training Foundation and the National Observatories of Central Asia hope that this seminar will be a new step in the creation of a "training culture". We hope that it will increase awareness on the need to involve social partners at central and local levels in order to increase the quality of the Central Asian labour force. Putting in place a legal framework is an important but not sufficient condition to guarantee effective social dialogue. Increasing the commitment and motivation of social partners is an equally important prerequisite. On the other hand, the governments still have to do more to encourage the autonomous social dialogue.



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Social Partnership in Vocational Training in Europe

Elyes Bentabet
Doctor of Economic Statistics
Expert in Research
Center for Vocational Qualification Research (Cereq)
Marseille, July 2002

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

In my introduction I'd like to deal with the next two points: the first is related to the changes that took place in the system of vocational training in the Central and Eastern European countries. According to a research carried out by CEDEFOP, in most of these countries during the last decade trilateral approach has been outlined: a tendency to entrust issues of vocational training to trilateral national bodies, authorized with a number of competencies, from consultations up to taking decisions, even if a social dialogue in the field of vocational training takes quite a variety of forms depending on the country. All this is rather positive because vocational training reflects a context and social, economic, political and cultural traditions of the nation. What is the situation like here, in this wonderful country...Kazakhstan? Later we shall come back to this, at your permission...

The second point concerns the Cereq activities - the Vocational Qualifications Research Center. The comparative analysis of the vocational training systems takes an important part in its activities. The Center competence in conducting expertise in this sphere formed initially due to bilateral and multilateral comparative analysis, allowed it to be completely involved in the works implemented within the European Community and to extend in this way the geographical limits of the training systems that covered previously only large European countries such as Germany and England. Cereq was assigned, in particular, to participate in the first and second European statistical surveys conducted in 1993 and 1999 under the EUROSTAT auspices on continuous vocational training at enterprises. We may state that the vocational training and population employment issues are inscribed into the notion of "globalization", in other words, we speak here about the phenomenon that has embraced the whole world.

Nevertheless, during the last twenty years a certain labour market evolution observed not only in France, encourages economists to thoroughly look over the complex relations of the training system and the labour market.

Firstly, evolution of the competition conditions related to the “mondialization” phenomenon penetrates into all the enterprises and is manifested in tough demands for labour force competitiveness and other demands required by stockholders. This results in production costs reduction and strengthens attention to the customers and users needs.

Improvement of the delivered services quality characterized by strengthening uncertainty of the commodity turnover conditions and market unpredictability, forces enterprises to a higher internal reaction, to a more fixed attention to production quality and innovations. Human resources quality oftener comes forward as a competitiveness factor.

If a similar tendency first touches upon large enterprises, most presented at the international market, it is related to ever-growing number of medium and small enterprises. This necessity of permanent correction of the situation and bringing it to compliance with the demands of the market economy forecasts mobilization of the most various vocational qualifications and their rapid renovation in order to escape obsolescence in the nearest future. So, it is necessary to regulate the tension emerging between the demands to get adapted to the urgent needs and the vocational level development in the mid-term and long-term perspective.

Secondly, one of the main characteristics of the employment crisis in France is the fact that it falls down on the extreme age groups – people that got primary vocational training and pre-pension age people, while in other countries (for example, Germany and Japan) the victims of this situation are other social groups: women and immigrants. In other words, regulation in France sets an aim to provide protection for the middle-age group at the cost of other age groups.

In this situation the training state policy carried out since the beginning of the eighties puts the aim to increase the average level of training. To vary primary vocational training proposals and take measures promoting employment of vulnerable population with low personal potential. Gradual studying of the employment problems showed that they can be partially settled through vocational training. Alongside with this, decrease of job placement perspectives in the labor market significantly reduced continuous training expediency and brought to increase of vocational training demands.

Today vocational training is estimated in France and in the majority of western countries as a tool to increase labour production, to adapt labour force to implement new technologies, to counteract unemployment and at the same time to retain socially homogeneous society.

Nevertheless, vocational training that became, due to unemployment growth, one of the most important elements of the employment policy, is not the only element. In the continuous vocational training course in France three main directions might be singled out that continue to inspire today’s political figures.

The first direction is aimed at continuous vocational training developed as an instrument of social progress allowing to give “another chance” to everybody, including the persons who had not received a full primary vocational training, another opportunity to try oneself in this or other field.

In France, with implementation of continuous vocational training system, the tendency dominates to change vocational training into a means of adapting vocational qualifications to permanent, rapidly executed technical and technological changes. Continuous vocational training becomes the main condition of the enterprises competitiveness, but not a simple tool of workers social development.

Growing unemployment brought to changing vocational training to an efficient youth and jobless employment tool.

1. Comparative analysis of the primary vocational training in Europe and social partners role.

In overwhelming majority of training systems in the European countries a united concept has been worked out, according to which studying at school is compulsory for children under the age 15/16, except Italy, where school education reforms for children from 14 to 16 years old was not adopted.

This term of school training established by law is purely theoretical though, merely because the majority of students in all the observed countries step beyond the line of compulsory school education continuing their studies (at educational institutions with full day or part day training).

Note 1 :

French training system presentation

In France school education is compulsory for children of six years old. The system of education is under the control of the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Science, it consists of three stages distributed to the following cycles :

- The first stage corresponds to preschool and primary education, children acquire it at preschool institutions (kindergartens) and primary schools. This stage differentiates various primary and fundamental knowledge cycles and the followed cycle of more profound knowledge. The first stage specialized education is performed, in particular, under the guidance of the Labour and Social Protection Ministry.
- The second stage (secondary education) is carried out at colleges (the first cycle) and lyceums (the second cycle of general education and technological: studying goes in lyceums; the vocational training second cycle is done at vocational lyceums). The first cycle corresponds to junior grades of the secondary educational institution (from the sixth to the third grades), and the second cycle corresponds to the high school within the secondary educational institution (the second, the first and the graduate). Since 1995-1996 the sixth grade is the cycle of observation and adapting to the secondary education, the fifth and the fourth grades are the cycle of the acquired knowledge extension and the third grade is the orientation cycle. From now on after graduating from the third grade education provides access to all education types for all. As for the adapted secondary educational institutions, they admit the first stage primary specialized education graduates.
- Higher education can be obtained at lyceums, colleges, some specialized schools and universities.

1.1.Profiles of vocational training after graduation from compulsory education.

In all European countries secondary educational institutions offer pupils two directions: general secondary education (aimed at further education and receiving higher education) and vocational training (aimed at acquiring vocational qualification).

Let us note also existence of “the technological direction”, that may be similar to general secondary education, particularly when it is aimed at continuing training at higher educational institutions: for example training for bachelor’s degree in France, Technical Institutes in Italy, “Havo” in the Netherlands...

According to the number of students, represented in each of these directions it is possible to distinguish three categories of the countries:

- Countries with dominating general education: Belgium, Spain, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal and Great Britain;
- Countries with even distribution of general and vocational education: Finland – with insignificant prevalence of vocational training, France and Norway. Italy can be referred to these countries, though general education takes predominant position here;
- Countries with dominating vocational training: Germany, Austria, Denmark, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.

The place of practical training in primary vocational training

The place of practical training in the primary vocational training system to graduate specialists of different profiles allows to judge how enterprises are involved in vocational training of youth.

The main direction in Germany, Austria, Denmark and Switzerland

Practical training in these countries is considered to be important, after completion a graduate is presented an official document, a state diploma, practical training is a subject of consecutive reforms, aimed to adapt its graduates to new professions. However, vocational training within secondary school programs is an important alternative as it is to practical training in Austria and Switzerland and it is more spread in Denmark.

Various forms in other countries

If in 13 compared countries the primary vocational training can be obtained within secondary full day or part day school programs, practical training, nevertheless, firmly settled in the majority of them; moreover, practical training is directed to development and/or vocational training modernization. According to institutionalization and/or practical training level, three groups of countries can be identified:

Institutionalized way of acquiring professions: Netherlands, France, Luxembourg and, from recent time, Norway and Ireland

- In Netherlands vocational training, approved by legislation takes the second place after secondary school education. From recent times it gives an opportunity to get the same certificates and diplomas that are issued by appropriate educational institutions. It has been developing and now young people and employed adults have access to it..
- In France diplomas issued by the Ministry of National Education, can be received either after graduating from educational institutions or vocational training schools. Certain measures undertaken some ten years ago are aimed to encourage its development at all the levels of training, including higher education.

- In Luxembourg, the so called “accompanying” vocational training which is supervised by the educational system was borrowed from the German model. It takes the central position in training traditional handicrafts and specialties and in the further training to be master trainer, required to start a private enterprise.
- In Norway, practical training was recently introduced in primary vocational training and in secondary school curriculum, Gradually it should cover all young people who would like to get vocational training.
- In Ireland, vocational training reformed in 1993, became the subject of state regulation concerning education as well as certification and financing.

Note 2 :

The main characteristics of the primary vocational training in France

- a) - Treelike structure: the system of primary vocational training in France is presented in a treelike structure, which has one common trunk with branches gradually dispersing in different directions. The first level of this structure is finishing the fifth grade, two other important levels are finishing the third grade and graduation from secondary school, followed by a bachelor degree, necessary to continue university education. There are two ways of getting diplomas: through school education and vocational training.
- b) - The levels logic : the levels logic is characterized by a minimal number of training years, necessary for getting a diploma within primary vocational training programme. In the 60s a qualification net was worked out that was used particularly for planning professional training forecast:
Levels I and II : diploma graduates from lyceums and engineering schools ;
Level III : Bachelor graduates + 2 years (DUT – Diploma of a technological educational institution,
 BTS – diploma of a high grade technical specialist,
 DEUG – Diploma of a two-year university course);
Level IV : graduation from the second long training cycle and refusal/reluctance to continue training, without reaching Level III;
Level V graduation from a short vocational training cycle and refusal/reluctance to continue the second long training cycle, failing to reach a graduate grade;
Level V bis:: finishing the third grade and the second short cycle, not reaching the graduate grade;
Level VI : finishing the first cycle of the second level (the sixth, fifth and fourth grades) and one-year pre-vocational training.

This net undergoes criticism in two aspects: the first points out its obsolescence, since it does not take into consideration the transformations of the last thirty years; the second aspect points out its absolute inflexibility and segmentation, which are the result of its utilization. However, there are no suggestions to replace it.

- c) - Educational institutions and their types,

There are three directions :

Educational institutions, where students study to get Bachelor's degree and continue University education;

Educational technological institutions, where students study to get Bachelor's degree in Technology, to get diploma to start immediate labour activity or to continue a short University cycle (BTS or DUT) ;

Educational institutions with vocational training that issue the following diplomas – certificate of vocational qualification (CAP), vocational training diploma (BEP) and vocational bachelorship. So, the graduates of these educational institutions get a direct opportunity to be employed at qualification levels.

These three educational institution types present a problem in the French vocational training system, namely, absence of a true vocational training. The tendency in our country separates and keeps vocational training away from the vocational sphere, absorbing it in its own educational structure.

Tradition having no legislative basis: England, Italy, Greece and Portugal.

- In Italy, vocational practical training impresses with figures: 426 000 young people have taken it. Nevertheless, it is not a good way of acquiring a profession, it was not adopted in full by the legislation. Moreover, the number of students is reducing. A project of a reform is supposed to strengthen the theoretical part of vocational training and to work out certificate documents approving practical training.
- In Great Britain, traditional vocational training is less than 200 000 pupils in 1994 instead of 320 000 ten years before, it will be gradually replaced by “modernized vocational training”, that will meet new qualification standards NVQ, not yet accepted in wide public.
- In Portugal, vocational practical training calls a lively interest, but it refers to the sector of non-formal training. A modern and more formal concept of vocational training does not interest many people.
- In Greece, in spite of the efforts in the middle of the eighties to make vocational practical training more formal, the number of pupils choosing it is considerably less than those in technical and vocational lyceums.

Low proportion in Belgium, Finland, Sweden, practically absent in Spain.

- In Belgium, there are various forms of vocational practical training, but not many people are interested in it; most of the certificates given after finishing training were not recognized officially. It is obvious that various statuses of vocational practical training that combine training with labor, make the system non-transparent
- In Finland, attempts were taken in 1993 to develop vocational practical training and make it accessible for adult population, but it has little interest among young people, enterprises do not participate in primary vocational training.
- In Sweden, the educational system is based on the school model of education, the vocational practical training exists since recently and so far does not cause much

trust, it is aimed mainly at young people who have some difficulties with school education.

- In Spain, there is non-formal vocational training, the importance of which can hardly be overestimated, but there is no formal vocational training as it is.

Note 3 :

Comparison of vocational training in France and Germany

Comparison of these systems identifies their noticeable difference, in Germany the sector of the vocational training is dominating over general secondary education: vocational training in Germany is the main and most popular kind of education, while in France it is less significant. In Germany it covers all the middle strata of the population. So, the wish to enter vocational educational institutions became a norm for the majority of the population that had received primary and secondary school education. Vocational educational institutions of different profiles accept 65% young people of one age group, representing all social categories with some predominance of children from workers' and clerks' families.

Vocational training in Germany is obtained practically in all vocational educational institutions, it is alternate training, it combines training in the state vocational school and labor activities at the enterprise. This kind of vocational training attracts most of the young people today.

On federal level Commissions including representatives of the Government, experts and social partners work out the contents of vocational training. Curriculums are determined at the level of each Land, then they are coordinated at the federal level. Students study at the enterprises on the contract basis the average training period is three-and-a-half years. The students are paid for their job, it is mentioned in the collective labour contract.

After finishing vocational training a student takes tests and gets a diploma recognized by the government, it gives him a right to get a position of a qualified worker or clerk depending on the received specialty.

The mentioned above dual system of vocational training is accessible for the graduates of general schools, irrespective of their level. It should be noted that the level of the graduate is a selective criterion the meaning of which depends on the chosen profession, kind of activities and the size of the enterprise.

Recently several kinds of alternate vocational training were introduced into the educational system, which have the status of school education. Since recently, an agreement about vocational practical training, one of the measures promoting employment, became an indispensable term of continuous vocational training.

1.2 The role of the government bodies and social partners in establishment and recognition of primary vocational training in Europe on the contract basis.

Comparative researches conducted on the international scale identified a set of decisions accepted in different European countries concerning distribution of different responsibilities between the government, trade unions, enterprises and physical entities. The responsibilities are distributed in compliance with the meaning that is given at the stage of primary education to general education, which is not recognized anywhere on the contract basis, and to vocational training. France laid practice, experimenting and legislative basis one upon the other, this made the system somewhat bulky, non-transparent and complicated in managing it. Different diagnosticians find applied efforts satisfactory and the system to be used better.

1.2.1 - Definition of the primary vocational training contents (except higher education)

From the very start we should underline that decentralization of the government's activities and transition of its authorities, old and new ones, concerning vocational training system management can be observed in the majority of the researched countries. It is difficult to determine the role and participation of each subject in definition of the vocational training contents and working out certificate documentation, and in some countries this resulted in "re-centralization" for the purpose of making the delivered certificate documents unified which implies more involvement of the national partners – the government itself or its branches (England, Spain, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal and in some degree Italy). The solution of this issue is important because the forms of the certificates, delivered by the system of primary vocational training and the area within which they will be officially recognized on the contract basis will depend on it. Several existing configurations can be identified:

Working out national standards by trilateral bodies (Government, employers and trade unions)

In the majority of the countries – Germany, Austria, Denmark, Spain, France, Ireland, Norway, Netherlands, Sweden – the bodies of state management in cooperation with the social partners establish national vocational and educational standards, but the forms of these trilateral organizations vary depending on the role that each of the participants play. Involvement of social partners in working out the vocational training system is so much the higher the more is developed combination of school education with labour at the enterprise in the country (dual system).

Thus:

- In Germany, organizations of the employers and trade unions act as the main performers of the process and the government bodies fulfill technical expertise and award a quality badge.
- In Austria, a model of "social partnership" implies instances coordinating the activities, and also accepting decisions through trilateral body at the national level and in the decentralized way. The social partners play an important role in establishment, implementation and carrying out control over the vocational practical training.
- In Denmark, trilateral method of vocational training management provides social partners with a function of management (working out educational standards, determining the examination contents and awarding diplomas) and accomplishment of its control.

- In Netherlands for a long time two subsystems coexisted coordinating their methods of receiving national certificates: through school education or through vocational training. A political solution was adopted to bring closer and, moreover, integrate the mentioned subsystems, in 1996 a unified structure of national vocational qualifications was worked out with enlisted qualifications and appropriate diplomas.

But:

- In France, the government plays an important role in determining national standards, but the social partners (employers and trade unions) participate in working out the diplomas on absolutely equal basis.
- In Ireland, the government, the main subject of the system of vocational training, determines the policy of education and vocational training, in close interaction with social partners. Establishing of two new levels for certification and national recognition or validation of vocational training is aimed to consolidate this method of coordinated management.
- In Norway, the government plays the central role in determining the contents of vocational training, it is explained by dispersion and small sizes of the enterprises. However, the representatives of different professions participate in the discussions according to long ago established procedures.
- In Sweden, the government takes a paramount position in the field of vocational training, many intermediate organizations are involved in the state management and reforms are carried out to raise the prestige of vocational training in order to bring it closer to the production system, this all increased the share of social partners in establishing new educational standards.

And finally:

- In Spain, the system of social interaction (General council of vocational training, State school council) established several years ago, attracts government bodies and social partners to participate in its work.
- In Greece, the unified system of official recognition or validation of vocational training is growing, the bodies dealing with these issues (OEKK and OAED) meet the criteria of trilateral structure.

Participation of the government bodies and/or employers' organizations.

In England and Sweden, national standards for primary vocational training are worked out commonly by two partners: the government bodies and employers' associations.

- In England, in the process of establishing the system of national qualifications a notion of National Vocational Qualifications (NVO) was introduced. The vocational qualifications that were enlisted in NVQ are apart from vocational training, that could help to obtain them; very little place is given to civil workers' trade unions.
- In Sweden, there are different structures, some of them admit trade unions, but the main partners of the government bodies are vocational associations representing employers or vocational corporations.

Coexistence of national, regional and local certifications

In Italy and Belgium, there is a distinct difference between state diplomas, that are under full control of the central government bodies (they are given after finishing state vocational Institutes in Italy and state lyceums in Belgium) and a lot of certificates of regional statute (mainly in Italy, CEDEFOP registered more than 5000 certificates of all kinds), that did not receive national recognition. Concerning these two countries it should be noted that there is practically no information about participation of social partners in determining the certification system.

The main role of the government bodies

- In Finland, the government plays the central role in the vocational training policy and in working out the given diplomas. In this work social partners have a secondary role.
- In Portugal, official non-recognition of the vocational training system is due to the fact that social partners are not involved, the government carries out the new education policy.

In the end it should be noted that essential certification has been carried out on the European level in order to coordinate different national systems, to make their principles and methods more transparent. The aim of the carried out work is to establish the system of equivalent qualifications on the legislative basis, that are awarded by different diplomas within European economic area. Two different methods of describing diplomas came as a result of this work: the first method is for the diplomas of higher education, according to this method such a diploma gets a certain number of credit units (called ECTS) depending on the curriculum hours for the course. The second method is for vocational certifications from level V to level III, within the program "Qualifications transparency", it takes into consideration various forms of vocational training system in different countries, it recommends to describe qualification of the obtained profession and vocational competence, students will be able to get this qualification after they finish the course.

1.2.2 - Recognition of the primary vocational training on the contract basis.

In collective labor contracts the vocational diplomas comply with the qualification levels, they are not sufficiently provided with documents, due to poor experience in conducting collective negotiations; besides, the existing standards are complicated for interpretation and application. Having in mind the present information, the following distribution can be offered according to categories:

Insufficient recognition of the primary vocational training on the contract basis.

Vocational education systems are on different stages of development in different countries – recession in England and weak development or only appearance in Portugal, Italy and Spain –in all these four countries there is no conventional conformity between professional education and professions classification.

- In England, compulsory collective negotiations were cancelled in the end of the seventies, collective labor agreements are made on a voluntary basis. A small number of the collective labor agreements serve as a connection between profession classifications and vocational training. Collective negotiations go at the enterprises level.
- In Portugal, corporate traditions and a weak dynamics to autonomy mark vocational interaction. Vocational training has a very weak legislative basis.
- In Italy, the certificates are not recognized enough because they are too many and because there is no social interaction between partners, due to deep mentality differences between the Northern and Southern regions of the country.
- In Spain, so far there is no interrelation between certification and qualification recognized by collective labor agreements. The function fulfilled by a worker prevails over his qualification: the law on the workers status reads that a civil worker occupying a certain position over two months has a right to claim for a qualification corresponding to this position. Nevertheless, a social dialogue between the partners is renewed and developing, recently a book of qualifications was worked out and a catalogue of diplomas delivered by vocational training institutions.

Variety of primary vocational training recognition forms on the contract basis

In many European countries the relation between vocational training and vocational qualification is established, but recognition forms of this relation are quite diverse.

In the first group of countries, the relation vocational training/qualification is so much the closer, the higher is the prestige and social significance of the technical specialties and crafts, the higher is participation of social partners in social regulation, the higher is enterprises involvement in vocational training:

- In Denmark, there is actual recognition of the qualifications after finishing vocational training, it is based on close interaction between the bodies that are working out vocational standard, and bodies recognizing them through collective labor contracts.
- In Austria, the certificates given after finishing vocational practical training or an equivalent secondary school are recognized in the classification nets of the collective labor contracts.
- In Switzerland, the relation between qualification received through vocational training (certificates of vocational qualification) and the work fulfilled is reflected in collective labor contracts, it is very strong and is considered even "tough".
- In Germany, classification nets of the collective labor contracts make references to the qualification level necessary for taking a job or a position, but it is often mixed with the level that is given after finishing the dual vocational training (combination of training and work), "necessary for taking a position as a qualified worker or a clerk".
- In Netherlands, the qualifications given after finishing school vocational institutions are identical to the qualifications obtained after finishing vocational practical training. Social partners and government bodies at the level of the national branch bodies worked out the structure in 1996. Nevertheless, only quite few collective labor contracts make references to this structure (except, for example, printing production).

The second group includes countries in which the system of social interaction already exists or is at the stage of emerging, that they start establishing formal relations between the levels of vocational training and the structure of specialties in collective labor contracts:

- In France, diplomas of vocational training and specialties classifications are often considered in perspective in collective labor contracts (in 90% of branches) , but depending on the branch the approach is different. Besides, the experience shows that different enterprises put this differently into practice.
- In Finland, the relation between the vocational training diploma and classification was established in the collective labor contracts for secondary vocational training, corresponding to basic qualification (worker/civil worker).
- In Ireland, recently institutionalized new levels of social interaction have an intention, besides working out and establishing the national certification system and the system of its confirmation, to present themselves as the structure at the level of which social partners will discuss issues of qualifications recognition. Moreover, the certificates about practical training are recognized at the labour market.

2. Vocational training of the adult population in Europe.

Nowadays, in the context of globalization and informatization of economy it became a commonplace to underline the extreme importance of the highly qualified workforce availability at the labor market. For each individual the perspective of employment and salary level more and more depend on the training level. Formation of the human capital/human resources is the factor determining and providing success of the enterprises and national economy. Though it is not easy to check their interrelations. The mentioned above allows to conclude that the policy directed to the development of vocational training is the main part of the global strategy aimed at increasing universal welfare.

The level of the workforce qualification and vocational competence are the result of various forms of vocational training. Qualitative primary vocational education is the fundamental base for further employment, but vocational training and re-training continue through the whole labour life. That is why national qualification development systems should estimate their activities from the point of efficiency of their work that helps to fulfill the task.

Diversity of vocational training forms in Europe

International experience shows that apriori, intensity of continuous vocational education and training systems is an element favorable for competitiveness, this allows to state that France together with Northern Europe countries and Great Britain take a leading position among other European countries, it is obvious that the statement adopted in 1970 allowed it to take this position. Indeed, in France in the sixties the “culture” of vocational training and staff re-training at the enterprises was low and even declining. The low level of vocational training for young people can explain a special position of Great Britain, this is compensated by vocational training at the enterprises.

Nevertheless, this rather favorable situation is not even among the enterprises due to their size. This structural disproportion is less obvious in the countries of Northern Europe, particularly in Denmark and in Germany. Good development of closely disposed support services of small and medium enterprises in these countries (in Denmark) and homogeneous social and legal regulations correlating qualification and vocational training promote this. In France the problem is inadequate accessibility of continuous vocational training for workers: sharp reduction of free vocational training, necessary for “social advancement”, reduction of individual leave in order to get

vocational training. In Scandinavian countries enterprises are well involved in vocational training and vocational training is accessible for each person, there is a long-term tradition of continuous vocational training and a wide spectrum of educational services. Educational services meant for young people are accessible for the adult population too who get an opportunity to take vocational training during non-working time (free time).

Irrespective of such diversity, governments reached political consensus on rendering support to vocational training and the majority of European countries took direct or indirect measures to influence vocational training system for workers. Government participation in development of educational services can be manifested in different ways: excluding all kinds of costs out of tax imposed base related to staff training; compulsory deductions to finance re-training and re-qualification courses of the workers; measures of legislative character, indirectly influencing vocational training, for example, working out the law "On chances equality." Consideration and detailed estimation of various state measures to involve enterprises in vocational training system development are not the subject of the present research, moreover, we do not have sufficient information at our disposal. We shall limit to a short observation of the policy conducted in this sphere.

One of the effective means is to establish a context that would get enterprises interested in financing vocational training and improving qualification of its staff workers, but not compulsory and legislative methods of influence. An adequate policy should induce employers and workers to apply maximum of efforts to vocational training development and particularly provide wide information among the population, to make easier the recognition procedures of the vocational qualifications acquired after finishing training, and provide more flexible conditions for using new vocational qualifications, skills and habits and implementing them into practice. Quite obvious that a more purposeful impact of the government is necessary so that vocational training equally covered different categories of workers and enterprises.

Most of the countries adopted a system of immediate and complete exclusion of staff training and re-training costs out of the enterprise tax imposing base. In compliance with the Tax legislation, the vocational training cost can be assimilated with the costs but not with the depreciated capital investments, with cleared off investments that reduce the cost of vocational training in relation to the cost of physical capital. Nevertheless, the book-accounting rules can bring to complete unwillingness to make investments to vocational training, since in the balance accounts of the enterprises do not reflect the fact or reflect very weakly, that high competitiveness of the enterprise is reached thanks to increased qualification of the human resources. In some countries people get certain tax preferences in vocational training expenses, without complete exclusion of these expenses from the tax imposed base.

To stimulate vocational training of some civil workers categories certain financial measures were taken. The Netherlands State budget for 1997 envisaged a significant tax reduction for vocational training expenses in small and medium enterprises and for the enterprises that pay for vocational re-training of the workers over forty years old..

In some countries (France, Belgium and Denmark) the civil workers have the right for paid holiday to take vocational re-training and improve qualification. It is an interesting fact that the civil worker himself decides whether he uses this right or not. The initiative in taking the decision comes from the civil worker but not from the employer, and this can be estimated as a deficiency, because the vocational training course chosen by the clerk may not answer the needs of the enterprise. In Belgium such kind of a right is granted to full day workers. In Denmark the vocational training holiday introduced in the middle of the nineties has a great success with the people, but it should be noted that it

was introduced as a means of fighting with unemployment that became a serious problem in Denmark since the end of the eighties and not for stimulating development of vocational training. As a rule leaving for re-training holiday and improving qualification touches first of all most competent and educated civil workers.

In other countries according to the law enterprises assign a certain sum for financing vocational training from their wages fund; the enterprises that do not fulfill this requirement should transfer a corresponding sum to the state. France is the first country in the structure of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development that adopted this resolution in 1971. The size of the sum deducted to enterprises for financing vocational training changed several times and now it makes 1,5% of the wages fund. The adopted resolution is applied to enterprises numbering about ten workers.

The taxes that finance vocational training, increased the volume of specialty vocational training and stimulated enterprises to plan and arrange staff vocational training. Nevertheless, the experience shows that the taxes mentioned above do not stimulate small and medium enterprises, they prefer to pay the required taxes than to participate in financing educational events.

These taxes do not distribute vocational training evenly among different categories of civil workers because training programs and services are mainly used by more educated and highly qualified categories of the workers, just like in the countries where this tax was not introduced.

In Denmark and Netherlands education funds were established, they are managed within collective contracts on a par basis; the fund assets get state subsidies.

The educational system in Denmark is more centralized and vocational training is provided by state educational institutions (AMU), who are also in charge of vocational training for the workers and the unemployed. The proposed programs meet the demands of the educational standards in certain sectors of industry and local labor market demands.

The programs supporting continuous vocational training of the workers were established also at the European community level, under the European Social Fund to facilitate adaptation of the workers to technological changes and transformations of production systems. One of these programs called ADAPT, is to reveal the demands and potential capacities of small business enterprises. It should be underlined that these programs and their financing lies with the member-countries of the European Community. The data at our disposal show that these programs promoted vocational training development in the countries that enjoyed a greater share of the European Community financial support, for example, Ireland, Portugal and Greece.

In compliance with the above, the researchers try to determine the investments potential economic impact on human resources development and emphasize great importance of continuous vocational training, including enterprise training (at the working place). We quote two conclusions here:

As a rule, in countries with high level of secondary education and in countries with high share of GDP, that allows developing scientific researches and experimental-constructive work and use high technologies, in such countries the workers have a higher accessibility to vocational training. Vocational training involves large strata of the population and is evenly distributed among people of different age groups and different educational levels. These observations bring to the idea that enterprises use high technologies and it is vocational training development that can promote growth of the workers' qualification,

The second result of observations that might interest the bodies taking decisions is that high correlation established between the level of people's education and actions for vocational training development to overcome the deficit in qualified human

resources, points out that the strategy to improve the quality of school education can raise interest to continuous vocational training, even in the long-term perspective. One of the key characteristics of the economic systems with intensively developing educational services market is that it evenly covers all the categories of workers, this is why investments to vocational training of the workers, who as a rule have low accessibility to it, and a set of events in this line present a great interest.

Note 4:

The second Trans-European survey on continuous vocational training – EUROSTAT (CVTS 2)

The second all-European survey on continuous vocational training was financed by enterprises, to whose staff it had been offered, concerns the year of 1999. In fact, vocational training services, not financed by the enterprises were not included here. This survey should not be considered here as a means of comparison of continuous vocational training policy, conducted by different countries of the European Community, but as a description method of how to involve European enterprises into the system of individual vocational training. Standardized questionnaires were sent to private enterprises having more than ten people on the staff (except agricultural sector and medical enterprises). Member-countries of the European Community plus candidate countries became survey participants. All in all enterprises of twenty-five countries took part in the public opinion poll.

In this survey “continuous vocational training was presented by various methods and kinds of educational services for persons working at the enterprises on the contract basis and completely or partially financed by the enterprises”.

“Courses and training periods, organized within continuous vocational training are an instrument to improve professional competence and are carried out beyond the enterprises, for example, in the educational institutions or in the study centers, there teaching and training are carried out by lecturers, assistant professors, instructors; the terms of the courses and training periods are determined beforehand by the managers”. It should be noted that they can be conducted both beyond the enterprises and at the enterprises.

3. The role and participation of social partners in the system of vocational training in France.

Social partners Involvement in the regulation of the vocational training system in France are its advantage. Social partners Involvement is one of the conditions promoting consolidation of the vocational training system in the system of labour relations and in the human resources management policy, conducted at the level of enterprises and branches. Participation of the social partners plays the main role in improvement and legitimization of the vocational training certificates and diplomas.

In France social partners participate in taking resolutions in the vocational training system (3.1), in elaboration and modification of the diplomas given by this system (3.2) and in evaluation (3.3).

3.1 - Participation of the social partners in the vocational training system

In France social partners are provided with multiple authorities in vocational training at the level of management (both at the level of the employers' unions and at the level of trade unions). They fulfill control of vocational training at the enterprises, determine the policy of promotion certain social strata (young people, the unemployed), determine branch and territory policy within negotiation processes at different levels, fulfill management of the parity authorized funds to attract means for vocational training (Organismes Paritaires Collecteurs Agrées – OPSA), work out professional and educational standards.

This active position of the social partners in the sphere of vocational training contrasts with the contents of their debates, when vocational training and qualifications problems practically are not touched. This is testified by the formal character of the discussions concerning vocational training problems and also by the contents of the Enterprises Committee meeting protocols. Many employers consider vocational training a prerogative of the enterprises, they have a negative attitude to social partnership and very unwillingly admit interference of social partners into this sphere.

As for continuous vocational training as it is (Formation Professionnelle Continue – FPC), it had been established thirty years ago on the ground of basic educational and legal normatives, determined by the Law on Vocational training, adopted in 1971. These normatives worked out within the social dialogue on the inter-professional level, determine different strata of social interaction both at the level of branches and enterprises.

3.1.1 – Inter-professional level

Legal base development of the continuous vocational training system went in compliance with the logic of laws and statements borrowed from the contracts signed within social partnership. For example, adoption of the 1971 law is bound up with a serious social and political event (social riots in May 1968), that made social partners take seats round the table of negotiations and discuss the problems of vocational training. Inter-branch negotiations resulted in signing the Contract in 1971 with participation of practically all -social partners, on the basis of which The Government and the Parliament worked out a law regulation adopted in July 1971.

This last procedure endows all French workers with the right to continuous vocational training, the right written in the Labor Code alongside with the right to Labor.

This chronology allows the government to add new solutions to the complex of events worked out by social partners and implement the law into life on legislative base. This historical digression is necessary for understanding the specificity of the policy in the field of social partnership at the inter-professional level. Without playing the role of social partners, the Government and the Parliament participate in the social dialogue through recognition of the most important achievements in collective negotiations on the legislative base. Observing evolution of the social partnership legislative base after adopting the 1971 Law, significant stages of the continuous vocational training system (that took place in 1984 and 1991) were worked out in the spirit of this very process.

At the following stages of working out the legislative base, social partners' participation in the national VET policy development is carried out through various trilateral consultative bodies (government – employers – trade unions) or through quadrilateral bodies (including regions to the social dialogue). They are engaged in working out the normative documentation, discuss the question of involving the government into the sphere of continuous vocational training, ways of financing it, and providing an appropriate social orientation in the regional policy.

Table 1: Chronology of laws related to continuing VET

Agreement of July, 9, 1970	Law of July, 16, 1971	Identification of principles of “continuing vocational education”. Entering into force of compulsory participation of employers in vocational education.
Agreement of July, 9, 1976	Law of July, 17, 1978	Review of classification of activities in the VET system and regulation of stagier’ payment
Agreement of September, 21, 1982 Agreement of June, 30, 1983	Law of December, 30, 1982	Recurring assertion of a demand on individual leave for obtaining vocational education; introduction of compulsory deduction of means for this purpose.
Agreement of October, 26, 1983	Law of February, 24, 1984 Law of July, 9, 1984 Law of December, 29, 1984	Development of dual vocational education and; introduction of compulsory deduction of means for this purpose.
Agreement of July, 3, 1991	Law of December, 31, 1991	Introduction of compulsory deduction of means in favour of enterprises with less than 10 employees; introduction of the right for «assessing the level of professional competence» for all employees.
Five Year Law of December, 20, 1993 (point 74)	Agreement of July, 5, 1994 Decree of October, 28, 1994 Agreement of July, 26, 1995	Structural reconstruction of the system of authorized parity institutions with the aim of raising funds
Five Year Law of December, 20, 1993 (point 64)	Agreement of July, 5, 1994	Making the conditions of professional skills upgrade consistent with enterprise based vocational education and training; reform of VET financing system.
Five Year Law of December, 20, 1993 (points 49, 50, 51)		VET management d in regions: for the activities carried out within the framework of VET, beginning with July, 1 st , 1994; for the activities carried out within the pre-professional training beginning with December, 31, 1998
Law of May, 6, 1996		Reform of VET financing system.

3.1.2 - Sectoral/Professional level

This level is the second significant in the development of social partnership between employers and workers. While at the previous level the social dialogue was oriented towards primarily the development and modification of legislative norms, here it comprises also the third direction linked to management which will be in more detail considered later (See point 3.1.4.).

During the last years vocational education and training has become the second theme for discussion, after wages, within the framework of collective negotiations. Since 1994 collective negotiations and signed agreements pay a special attention to the issue of managing VET funds in each sector based on the parity principle, enterprise participation in funding VET, development of vocational education, contracts for integration of population in dual training, as well as development of professional qualification standards for each sector (CQP) (3.2.3).

3.1.3 – Enterprise level

At this level as well as at the previous one negotiations are conducted on the VET normative-legislative base and its management..

Involvement of enterprises in the negotiation process concerning VET

At the enterprise level collective agreements are concluded less than at the sectoral level. The principal, most common themes refer to wages, labour conditions, work places, their classification and rights of Trade Unions. However VET issues are increasingly touched upon in the collective agreements, as soon as it is closely linked to the regulation of employment, and is the main instrument for the development of professional competence and acquiring profession. The majority of agreements have been signed in industrial enterprises with the number of employees exceeding 500 workers.

Initially these agreements were related to mainly enterprise based training up to development of professional baccalaureate (1985). It included the periods of training at the enterprises, which were considered as full value educational stages ending with qualification assessment which was taken into account in issuing diplomas. This training facilitated the change of relationship between the training and industrial systems. In particular, this resulted in signing the agreement between enterprises and educational institutions specifying aims and objectives as well as the type of interaction between teachers, trainees and enterprise governing bodies. Such a type of dual training is acceptable for CAP and BEP diplomas.

Social partners have the right to directly influence the dual training. In 2000 around 440 000 new contracts were signed on dual training.

Enterprise based vocational training is expanding increasingly covering various groups of population, facilitating obtaining new occupations. However in the field of training traditional occupations – specialists of hotel and restaurant business, catering – there are some difficulties related to the conditions of life and work which might hamper training in these occupations and make recruitment for these sectors more complicated. No doubt that contracts on dual training are attractive for young people, but its

difference from enterprise based training is fading away: they are often used after the completion of initial VET, combination of these two types of contracts provide continuity and consistency of VET.

Social partnership in VET funded by employers.

In cases when an employer himself identifies the amount of funds allocated for training of his employees, instead, in line with the legislation, at the enterprises there should be established an information-consultancy body consisting of representatives of workers to negotiate and settle issues between employers and workers. Therefore in the enterprises with 50 and more workers it is obligatory that the Steering Committee expresses its opinion concerning the programme of vocational training implemented during the previous year, as well as of the educational Project planned for the next year. In the enterprises with more than 200 workers there should be established a Commission on vocational training.

In the cases if an unexpected event can affect the future of a company an employer must inform the workers through the Steering Committee to identify the enterprise VET policy in the new context.

Table 2: Main factors of dual training of staff

	Contract on getting qualification	Contract on enterprise based vocational training
The objective of the contract	Enable getting a professional qualification supported by a recognized diploma or certificate	Getting a diploma or officially approved CAP certificate certifying one's professional qualification of level III or IV.
Type of the contract	Contract for a defined duration which is established by a Prefect	Contract for a defined duration
Group of population	Non-qualified youth at the age from 16 to 25	Youth at the age from 16 to 25, and as an exclusion, elder than 15
Duration	From 6 months to two years and more	From one year to three years.
Required training	Minimum 25 per cent of time foreseen by the contract	Training is organized in training centers, minimum training time - 400 hours per year.
Steering Committee	Yes	
Wages	From 30 to 75 per cent of the average monthly wage for the profession – annually reconsidered and depending on the age of the trainee and duration of the contract.	From 25 to 78 per cent of the average monthly wage for the profession and depending on the age of the trainee and duration of the contract.

The situation in enterprise based training is still uncertain: located on the border between the traditional school education and vocational education and training, it has not yet become equivalent to the German dual training. One of the reasons – it is carried out in small enterprises and companies. At present enterprise based training has a special place in the French system of education: at a time it is integrated with primary education, then it is included in VET. Like other contracts on dual training the contract on enterprise based training combines theoretical training with work at an enterprise based on the contract between the enterprise and trainee.

Usually even when the consent of the representatives of employees is not a prerequisite for carrying out enterprise based training it is clear that the consent is the aim which employers would like to achieve and this fact makes the Steering Committee a real force. Very often there are negotiations between employers and the Steering Committee which end by signing agreements on carrying out professional training in contingency should the enterprise experience difficulties.

3.1.4 – Managing authorized parity funds (Organisme Paritaire Collecteur Agréé - OPCA)

Special mediatory institutions were established in France to provide support to enterprises in identifying needs in concrete VET related occupations, financing training programmes. Initially it was assumed that efficiency of VET depended on the level of involvement of workers in management through Trade Unions associations who could increase their involvement in the decision making process. However very soon after the signing the 1970 agreement and adoption of the Law of 1971 numerous employers' associations established their own training structures. This was an evidence of the hostility of the leadership of enterprises towards any organizations who might interfere in developing VET programmes.

The Five year Law of 1993 and recent inter-professional and professional negotiations introduced deep changes in the work of Parity Funds. At the level of regions and sectors the State through Parity Funds which are authorised to raise funds for the VET system commissioned the social partners to operate the funds received from the compulsory deductions from enterprises (they make up 1,5 % of the total wages). At the initial stage the State sets up a code of rules which determine the nature and role of the mentioned above funds; at the further stages it controls its financial activity. These Parity Funds - collectors of financial means - on behalf of member enterprises administer the raised funds and act as information-consultancy body for enterprises. In order to make their activity more transparent and efficient the State and social partners have introduced the following rules :

- Limitation and reduction of the number of such funds (100 instead of the existing 255), setting up of the minimum level of attracted funds – not less than 15 mln. Euro for professional institutions;
- Retain one fund for a sector and setting up one fund in each region to manage dual training and training programmes;
- Retain regional funds to manage individual leaves.

Although the situation with Parity Funds still remains unstable the following positive factors can be identified:

At the moment Parity Funds manage to attract around 1.4 bln. Euro into the VET system earmarked for enterprise based training in the enterprises with more than 10 employees (13,5 % of their total taxes), and this has a growing tendency for the small and medium enterprises. To this amount should be added 168 mln. Euro dedicated to training in enterprises with less than 10 employees. Apart from funds raised within the framework of support of vocational programmes parity funds possess also other funds amounting 1,83 bln. Euro giving in total 3,2 bln. Euro, of which 40% are provided through deductions from enterprises (in addition to vocational training).

Involvement of enterprises in financing vocational training is increasing: the number of enterprises with 10 employees and more who contribute in funding continuing vocational training increased since 1977 from 56 000 to 147 423 in 1998; in 1998 the funds raised by parity funds enabled over 8 mln. workers to have access to vocational training. In 1998 the number of enterprises with less than 10 employees who made deductions to parity funds for the development of continuing vocational training made up 999 047, and around 3,5 mln. workers were able to receive training and retraining.

Despite these indicators which demonstrate the quantitative evolution of the VET system, there are still many questions concerning the real redistribution of funds and they remain open. In theory any enterprise which allocated at least one Euro has the right to lay claims for participation of their workers in vocational training. In fact the parity funds use for training workers in enterprises with 10 and more employees only the funds which were not used by December, 31. Big national enterprises which authorized one of parity funds to administer their vocational training programme would hardly agree that the deducted amount of several mln. franks will be used to cover the expenses of other competitor companies for training its workers. The system of mutual distribution of funds is integrated with combination of training and work because the amount of deductions is limited and do not cover trainees' wages. As for financing vocational training for small enterprises (with less than 10 employees) their deductions are so small (around 45 Euro per worker) that they cannot compete.

On the other hand, reorganization of measures for collecting funds for the development of vocational education led to the revision of the two basic principles of the French system: paritarism and mutual distribution. Social partners who had so far greater autonomy in managing training funds experience a pressure from the State who would like to rationalize the existing structures.

It should be noted that the System of decrees developed after the adoption of 1993 Five Year Plan, didn't enable representatives of workers influence the policy of enterprises; as a consequence access to vocational education is not equal for everybody and the time allocated for vocational training is increasingly reduced. These facts prove that paritarism has little added value.

Finally despite the consistent reforms there is no transparency in forming and using training funds. Distribution of funds is very uneven regarding VET centers. Training funds occasionally have a quality assurance system to provide that enterprises and trainees receive quality training services. In many sectors the funds are managed using the logic of "clerks serving through windows". They don't have a clear strategy for developing continuing vocational education and training and providing employability of youth. Many enterprises allocate their deductions to parity funds, however not receiving any consultancy or training services for their employees; and only selected ones who are well aware of the hair-splitting of the system can benefit from it.

Nevertheless there are some important factors that characterize the new system. We mean paritarism in various sectors where so far practically it was not existent and the capacity of Trade Unions to develop their own expertise at the regional level, where traditionally they were poorly represented. There are planned activities aimed at improving the quality of educational services provided by enterprises and, in particular, to small and medium enterprises who need external support and information through the information-consultancy services, financial support to initiate and organize continuing vocational education and training. And, finally, the new system is expected to result in a more active and transparent management of the big amounts of money transferred to the authorized parity funds by enterprises.

3.2 – Procedure of development and modification of VET diplomas and certificates.

A few words about the semantic evolution related to the term - certification; it is not new, during the last years it was commonly used to name various vocational education diplomas and certificates. Apart from that this term has a generic nature, the interest to it can be explained by the fact that it means both the process of validation (knowledge and/or competence) as well as the result of this process (attestation – diploma or certificate issued upon completion of the training process). The notion of diploma was always associated with academic knowledge acquired in the system of formal education and therefore with vocational education, while certification is closer to the professional competence, qualification; it can be obtained through various ways (formal education, professional experience, social experience) which are listed in the European references in the headings related to formal and non-formal education.

The wide audience does not see the difference between the system of professional certification and diplomas issued by the State upon completion of primary or further education. However at present despite the predominance of state diplomas (by their quantity and number of graduates) certificates issued at the sectoral level or by Chambers of commerce and private VET institutions are compatible and compete with the diplomas of the state format. The procedure of state recognition will help to provide equal legal status to the issued certificates.

3.2.1 – Development of diplomas of completion state educational institutions in France

Here we'll discuss mainly the process of developing diplomas and certificates issued correspondingly by the Ministry of education and Ministry of employment and solidarity. The first ones – confirm the completion of education and end with initial attestation; the second – the result of further attestation for employed and economically active population.

The necessity for centralizing the certification procedure in the education system emerged soon after the World War the Second. In 1946 were established National Consultative Commissions for VET issues. In the process of development they were replaced in two years by National Consultative Professional Commissions with a broader area of activity. In 1951 there was established inter-professional Consultative Commission to coordinate the activity of National Consultative Professional Commissions.

Representatives of the Ministry of education who are in charge of developing diplomas of the state format are members of the Professional Consultative Commissions which exist since 1972, though functioning according to the principles established in 1948. These compulsory consultative bodies are a mechanism through which social partners participate in the process of developing VET diplomas.

There are Professional Consultative Commissions under the three ministries:

Ministry of education: 17 commissions, some of them consist of sub-commissions;

Ministry of employment and solidarity: four commissions which deal with the following sectors: Construction and Public Works, Hospitality and Service sector, Metallurgy and Chemical Industry.

Ministry of agriculture: one commission dealing with all issues in this field.

As for the Ministry for youth and sport affairs – a commission has been established recently.

The composition of various Professional Consultative Commissions is approximately similar. The composition of the Commissions is reconsidered regularly to confirm or change the candidatures of the representatives and his\her substitute depending. The mentioned instances consist of representatives of four partners – employers, government, workers, competent specialists. Employers and workers propose their candidates for the position of a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, and representatives of the government are nominated members of the Secretariat.

Nomination to the mentioned positions is given special importance, and Professional Consultative Commissions demand that the nominated persons should execute their tasks in a due way. The decisions adopted by the commission have the juridical force once they are voted for by the majority of the members, and representation of all sides provides that they are valid.

Professional Consultative Commissions make proposals to a relevant Minister who further promulgates it. The final decision is publicized in the “Official Journal”. This procedure ensures that the content of the certificate is approved at a senior level of authority. For diplomas and certificates issued by ministries the official approval is made on two levels – a relevant ministry and the so called Technical Commission for approval of certificates and diplomas.

3.2.2 – Procedures of official recognition of certificates and diplomas

The majority of certificates issued both by state and private VET institutions subordinated to the Ministries of Labour, Defense, Agriculture or Professional Associations (except for diplomas issued by the Ministry of Education and certificates of issuing the qualification of an engineer – they are recognized) are subject to recognition - we mean VET institutions.

The procedure of official recognition of the certificates issued by the mentioned institutions has been introduced in the beginning of 70s. The certificates and similar documents confirming the completion of vocational training are classified, on the one hand, by levels, and on the other hand, by occupations, groups of occupations or specialisms. In 1972 a Technical Commission for confirmation of certificates and diplomas was established under the inter-professional Committee on VET, social promotion and employment. This made it possible to link official recognition of issued documents on completion of vocational education with a complex of measures aimed at developing continuing vocational education and training. Certificates of primary vocational education are also subject to official recognition. The majority of ministries issuing diplomas and certificates prefer to go through the procedure of official recognition (Ministries of Agriculture, Youth affairs and sport, Employment and solidarity, Defense, Health). Classification of certificates issued by them is similar to the classification of diplomas issued by the Ministry of education, which have a special

status and are recognized immediately as well as diploma of an engineer which are considered by the Commission for issuing engineer qualifications).

The decisions adopted are entered into the “List of officially approved certificates and diplomas on completion of VET institutions” which is sealed by Prime Minister. The diplomas and certificates issued by the institutions subordinated to the Ministry of education are entered into the list directly without any special decisions.

It should be noted that the procedure of official recognition does not substitute the legislative and normative base necessary for developing diplomas. However this procedure creates a specific eroded legislation which is used by those who would like to act under the “state roof”. To have access to the procedure of official recognition a VET institution must satisfy only one requirement: to the moment of request for having the diplomas recognized it should have trained three generations of graduates. After the institution has passed the procedure the diplomas are considered to be officially recognized.

3.2.3 – Sectoral certificates on professional qualification (CQP)

The term «Sectoral certificate on professional qualification (CQP) does not have a clear definition which can be found in normative and legislative documents and could be applied to the totality of occupational sectors or areas of vocational education. The sectors were involved in developing educational and professional standards in 1986, when National Parity Commissions on Employment were given an opportunity to participate in the process of certification, mainly through the decree on Qualification Contracts. These contracts were a part of activities aimed at strengthening employability of population and were supposed to end by attestation of trainees.

The idea of diversifying the ways for obtaining diplomas came into being in the middle of 80s due to the increase of youth unemployment and development of dual training. State authorities and employers approach the content and ways of official recognition of dual training, which enables young people to combine training with work and obtain professional qualification which they would not be able to do in formal education, in a different way. State authorities are more inclined to increase and diversify ways of obtaining diplomas. The employers, acknowledging that the diplomas are not sufficient, proposed new ways which would lead to a more specialized certification, developed and controlled on the level of occupation and valid for a certain duration and managed to persuade the State authorities. Its implementation will also facilitate the increase of the prestige of Parity Commissions on Employment who are authorized to develop the assessment principles of the level of training and professional competence acquired by young people in the process of training and of validation of professional qualification.

The first sectoral certificates on professional qualification were developed in metallurgy in 1987 and in car service sector in 1988.

Note 5:

National Parity Commissions on Employment (CPNE)

The role of National Parity Commissions on Employment has been defined in the National inter-occupational (inter-sectoral) agreement signed in February, 10, 1969. The National inter-sectoral agreement of July, 3, 1991 clarifies and complements its tasks. The proportion of representatives of Trade Unions and associations of employers of the

given sector in the National Parity Commissions on Employment is equal. In France there are over 300 such Commissions, they function in a different way, especially in the field of certification.

Their main function – facilitate the development of VET policy within the framework of social partnership. They are practically independent in the development, modification and cancellation of sectoral certificates.

They have a role of information-consultancy services on issues of employment, conduct labour market surveys in the given sector, facilitate exchange of information between the member–organisations of the Commission on employment in the given sector and monitor changes, prepare annual reports.

They can be involved in the decision making when employees are dismissed for economic reasons; they must be informed in cases when for economic reasons 10 and more workers are dismissed, they must also be informed and participate in the development of social programmes. They are also involved in activities on job placement of young people upon completion of vocational training, and other activities assisting professional integration of young people in the process of entering the labour market, in particular, within the framework of the Agreement of July, 3, 1991.

National Parity Commissions on Employment must be involved in the study of the logistical base of vocational training, raise funds through to facilitate its efficient use and development. To fulfill this they have the right to formulate and submit relevant proposals and comments.

National Parity Commissions on Employment are also authorized to consider the ways for implementation of activities determined by occupational sectors and aimed at developing primary VET, recruiting trainees and students, teachers and consultants on professional guidance.

National Parity Commissions on Employment have an important role in realization of contracts (agreements) on professional integration, combining training and work in the enterprise, as well as identifying priorities in providing individual leaves for vocational training.

So far they have been established in approximately 40 occupational sectors. First sectoral certificates on professional qualification in metallurgy are based on a decree, which describes the job specification, qualification requirements set to the workers who are employed in this occupation, and examination procedure necessary for the attestation of the required qualification, with no reference to the education and training process.

The sectoral certificates on professional qualifications, in distinction to the state diplomas, are intended for the recognition of definite, often very specific for concrete occupational area, qualification; occasionally the issuing of sectoral certificates makes it possible to fill in the shortage in the occupations in which training is not carried out in the state training sector, and develop occupational standards for these occupations to have them ready by the time of their official recognition.

The analysis of the content of these sectoral certificates show that they intended for various groups of population: (young people who have signed a contract on obtaining a qualification, for retraining employed population); the structure of these certificates also varies: from certificates the content of which is very similar to diplomas

to the certificates that are very specific for a specific enterprise (local certificates) or specially designed original certificates issued within the framework of continuing education.

It should be noted that the development of occupational and educational standards in France has always been a sensitive issue for VET institutions. In principle, an enterprise which invests in vocational education and training, expects that it would be repaid (rewarded). That's why employers are not motivated to increase workers' competence which might result in their job mobility. Studying the training programmes of big enterprises one can see that they do not totally exclude certification. It is foreseen, in particular, in retraining workers. It can serve as an element strengthening workers' professional motivation, and in big companies it is a good reference point helping to assess the mobility of the work force. The certification system is used occasionally (according to the survey conducted by the Research Centre for vocational qualifications and the National Institute for statistics and economic studies -Céreq/Insee - it is around 6 %). The total number of certificates and diplomas issued annually in the VET system in France is around 240 000 (or 1 % of the employed population).

It should be noted that the mechanism of the certification accepted for the diplomas of the state format and officially recognized certificates, is not appropriate for continuing VET: the correspondence between VET standards and the actual training often is implicit, and this necessitates the extension of the duration of training as there is no mechanism of recognition of prior learning. Therefore it causes additional costs and psychological discomfort for the trainees.

The international experience of certification (the so called NVQ in Great Britain), EU appeal to make this process transparent, expected adoption of the law on validation of vocational skills – all this strongly affects all activities carried out at present in the field of “certification– à la française”.

Whatever decision is taken the problem of official recognition of vocational education and training, and the qualification acquired in various economic sectors, in the external labour market, which is characterized by high mobility of the work force and absence of clear cut borders remains the biggest challenge of the continuing vocational education and training.

In France there is no necessity to develop a national qualification system like in many other countries – it has already been done. However the system lacks consistency and clarity.

3.3 – Participation of social partners in assessing vocational qualifications

In the process of qualification examinations the decision on issuing a diploma is made by a group of judges consisting of teachers and representatives of qualified specialists. The number of the latter depends on the diploma issued. According to the regulation their number may vary from one person in the commission for “DUT” – *diploma on completion of technological institutions* - to one-third of the examination commission for professional baccalaureate. As for “BEP” and “CAP” – in the commission there should be teachers and equal proportion of employers and highly qualified specialists in the relevant occupational area, and the commission should be chaired by Adviser on technical issues. Usually, depending on an occupation, the quantitative composition of the Commission is made up according to the regulation.

Note 6 :

Certificates of vocational training (NVQs) -

Since 1986 in UK considerable ongoing changes have occurred in the field of certification of professional competence. Introduction of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and its implementation in the already existing system of certification has brought into existence a new system which at present consists of two components.

a) Traditional certificates (the so called VQs – Vocational Qualifications) are developed and managed by autonomous bodies - «Awarding Bodies». They have the status of associations and are non-commercial. There are around 125 such bodies and they develop professional certification standards and modify them to provide their compatibility with the new national certification standards.

b) Setting up of the system of national certificates which is carried out under state control and is approximately coincides in time with the introduction of NVQs. It consists of three elements:

- Certificates of general education, General Certificate of Secondary Education, Advance/Advanced Supplementary levels which open access to higher university education;
- Certificates of general-vocational education, General Vocational Qualifications – GNVQs;
- Certificates of vocational training - NVQs.

At present there are 840 NVQs and approximately 1800 other traditional certificates, of which over 17 000 VQs have gone through the procedure of official recognition funded by the government. This number does not include NVQ framework and 14 occupations attested through GNVQs.

Since 1997 and beginning with the establishment of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the development of all these state VET certification standards is coordinated by two bodies: QCA and Department for education and employment (DfEE).

Certificates on vocational qualifications – NVQs- are developed based on the national vocational standards and facilitate the development of an overall system of qualifications in various occupations NVQ framework). Apart from the Department for education and employment (DfEE) and Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the system is administered by two other organisations: «Standard Setting Body» and «Awarding Body».

«Standard Setting Body» deals with the development of vocational standards for various sectors of economy or for individual officially recognized occupations. In the majority of cases this function is carried out by sectoral educational institutions, the so called «National Training Organisations» (NTOs), which are autonomous bodies dominated by employers and their activity covers a definite economic sector or occupational groups. At present there are 80 such organizations. “Standard Setting Bodies” identify, determine and modify qualification standards on recognised occupations. Certificates on national vocational qualifications - NVQs – are based on these standards and the criteria set by state bodies – Qualification and Curriculum Authority - QCA.

4. Efficiency of social partners' involvement in the work of consultative commissions and examining bodies

To understand how social partners are involved in the activity of the mentioned above bodies it is necessary to touch upon the main difficulties and problems they face at the various stages of work related to their competence:

- The consultative stage which results in making a decision on the necessity of a diploma.
- The stage of actual development of educational standards which the given diploma should match to.
- The stage when various diplomas should be brought into line with each other.
- The stage of issuing a diploma

4.1 The consultative stage when the necessity of a diploma is considered

The initiatives of representatives of occupational sectors who raise the issue of the necessity to adapt the certification system to the existing context (renewal and modification of the existing ones or development of new diplomas and certificate) are not streamlined. More often they are initiated by sectoral entrepreneurship associations or even by associations of employers and industrialists. There are occasional cases when both sides address the secretariat of professional consultative commissions on this issue; however they are very rare which proves the absence of social interaction on these issues at the level of National Parity Commissions on Employment.

Numerous requests for creation of new diplomas result in resistance on the part of state authorities and delay conduct of first studies which might help to compare the arguments presented by seekers of diplomas with the available objective data obtained from state authorities. Such an approach to the requests received is due to the concern raised by the following issues.

These issues can be split into two categories: first related to the production sphere, for example, specificities of the new qualification in relation to the already existing in the given sector, and perspectives of its recognition by the sector which submitted the request. We can say that this is the reflection of the ongoing serious debates advocated by some groups. The key message is that the strategy should be aimed at the reduction of the number of diplomas and reconsider their content to provide better preparation of youth to the future work, increasing their mobility. Their opponents insist that to strengthen employability of young people measures should be targeted to provide their narrow specialization which enables the graduates to find a job in the concrete labour market sector.

The second category is linked to the sphere of education, in particular, the necessity of continuity and consistency of the school education or managing the streaming of trainees faced by education administrators.

The necessity to improve the procedure of considering the spontaneous requests for creating of new diplomas initiated by social partners, increasing transparency of their discussion, agreeing on the schedule for submitting the draft diploma for the consideration of professional consultative commissions (PCC), is evident. These are PCCs who make the final decision on the expediency of developing a new diploma provided that the decision is approved by all members of the Commission. Another way is conducting consultation with experts who are in charge of implementing the "dossier",

representatives of social partners who are members of the professional consultative commissions and other officials representing the sector who are nominated by the commission. No doubt, this way needs to be further systematized to identify the status of the new qualification in the list of occupations for its recognition.

4.2 The stage of actual development of educational standards which the given diploma should match to.

As a rule, upon adoption of the positive decision on the expediency of the new diploma by the Professional Consultative Commission the social partners – members of the Commission, participate together with working groups in the development of educational standards for the new diploma. The process is chaired by an inspector of the Ministry of education who has the role of a “translator”; sometimes these working groups face problems arising from the necessity to mobilize representatives of Trade Unions for a long time, while representatives of employers' organizations willingly participate in this work, especially if the request is initiated by themselves. However the most difficult mission is to involve the specialists who are the highest authority in the relevant field to ensure that they contribute efficiently in developing job specification and development of the new occupational standard. In some cases their absence can be substituted by the consultation process when the working groups submit the result of their work for judgment of professionals; however this cannot be in any case an equal substitution to the actual involvement of professionals in the work group as experts and authorized representatives of workers and employers.

4.3 The stage when various diplomas should be brought into line with each other.

At the moment the issue of bringing various certification systems into line with each other is even more acute than in the past because there is a necessity to provide access to vocational education for young people. The issue of correlating is a concern for administrative authorities in charge of compiling a Reference Book on national qualification standards. In our opinion in the area where social partners are involved in the process of institutionalizing new specific VET documents they should advocate the development of such a Reference Book in Professional Consultative Commissions. Availability of this Reference Book will enable social partners in the future to carry out the consistent work on the study of certification standards prior to requesting the relevant ministries about the creation and development of new diplomas. It assumes the introduction of team work within each body and interaction between members of Commission delegated by institutions who are in charge of qualification and certification qualification standards (National Parity Commissions on Employment), Parity Funds, Professional Consultancy Commissions, etc).

4.4 The stage of issuing a diploma

No matter of what educational authority is authorized to create and develop a VET diploma at the phase of conducting qualification examinations the regulation foresees the involvement of “professionals” in the examination commission to assess the knowledge and skills of candidates related to the occupation, their professional competence, as well as in the commission which makes a decision on issuing a diploma.

However it should be noted that this requirement is not fulfilled. In order to improve the situation special measures should be taken to ensure that professional from

employers' organizations and Trade Unions are involved in the work of the Commission. Such close contacts and interaction of all stakeholders would stipulate for increase of the prestige and social value of the diplomas obtained.

Conclusion

Recently around forty social partners, members of the group "Education and vocational training" publicized on the European level a "complex of activities" approved by the European Confederation of Trade Unions on February, 28, 2002. Four priority areas in the field of VET which are carried out based on the principle of lifelong learning, were identified. These are identification and accurate forecast of labour market needs in specific occupations, recognition and legalisation of these occupations, provision of information and consultancy services and career guidance, as well as resource mobilization necessary for continuing up-grading of skills and competence. Social partners in Europe treat this initiative as a "push forward" to viewing human resource development by both enterprises and workers as a prerequisite for the benefit of both sides. According to the opinion of social partners, along with the social dialogue "success of this initiative depends" on the readiness of enterprises, workers, the State and local authorities for interaction. The latter two should facilitate the development of VET to provide competitiveness and social integrity of population. Employers should view vocational training and retraining of their workers as "the way to strengthen efficient functioning of their enterprises", while for workers this is "the way to manage their career".

We can mention some innovations within the framework of the VET system in France. Among them the validation of actual professional skills and knowledge which have been acquired in the process of labour experience. This means that there are serious changes launched in certification. From now on we can speak about the institutionalising of the two certification systems - the state run and parity ones - which would put an end to the procedure of official recognition of diplomas.

As a result of the reform there will be a unified procedure of developing diplomas. The present order of adopting decisions by the Professional Consultative Commissions will be disseminated to all ministries involved in certification. Along with vocational it will deal also with general education.

Besides, the approach to solving the problem through the formation of basic normative documents related to occupations and assessment of qualifications, which are known as qualification standards, is spreading widely and becoming a subject for methodological researches. In the overall perspective the activities on forming occupational standards are aimed at accentuating job specification, which are supposed to make the basis of requirements set to vocational education. This approach is a serious change in the VET system in France where the situation was vice versa: academic education and subject training were the core which determined all the other aspects, in other words, professional training was viewed as application of the theoretical knowledge.

Summarising I would like to stress the validation of prior learning – the knowledge and skills acquired through job experience. It is common sense that professional qualification is acquired in the process of the whole life through job experience and training. In France these professional qualifications are not recognized and not legalized. Moreover, a limited number of validated qualifications developed in enterprises due to the new forms of managing VET qualifications, have not become transferable, i.e. they could not be applied to other professional areas.

In 1992 employed and unemployed population were given an opportunity to have validated their professional skills and knowledge provided that they have minimum five years of job experience as employees or entrepreneurs to be released from one or several examinations necessary to obtain a VET diploma. These measures initiated by primarily Ministry of education and were in force till 2000, for a long time remained confidential. The result of this initiative was far from the expected effect (from 5 000 to 6 000 diplomas issued per year. This was caused by various reasons: weakness and insufficient career guidance which is crucial for the recognition of professional skills and knowledge, lack of employers' interest and therefore difficulty for workers to prove their level of skills. Inconsistency of the methodology of developing and approving diplomas which is based on input oriented and based on the logic that a diploma is a result of completion of a training course or training cycle was also another reason of the failure. At present various ministries do their best to facilitate access to obtaining diplomas and certificates using this route.

Development and strengthening the validation system – official confirmation of the available professional skills and knowledge – does not mean that diplomas should be issued to everybody and everyone. This is first of all a tool which enables a person to understand and have a clear picture of his professional level, make up his individual project and choose his own educational route. This refers to the people who have hired job, as well as those who have a different status – independent workers of various professions, activists and founders of numerous associations, volunteers, persons who have their own or family business.

The recent law on social modernization adopted by the government will facilitate further development of the validation mechanism of professional competence and spread it to many other occupations. As soon as the new mechanism of validating professional competence enables candidates to obtain diplomas without passing through formal system of vocational education.

Dear ladies and gentlemen, the reforms undertaken in order to make structural changes in the VET system in France and Europe, are far from being finished. Nevertheless we can say that they will be implemented with active involvement of social partners. One more sensitive issue which has not yet been solved refers to representation of Trade Unions, but this is a topic for another debate ...

Results of the questioning of employers conducted within the framework of National Observatory project in conjunction with European Training Foundation and UNESCO Cluster Office, Almaty
“Social partnership in vocational education and training”
December, 2001 – December 2002.

The questioning was conducted according to the methodology used in the process of the project «Labour market analysis in Kazakhstan» (1999) and tested before in the North-West of Russia and Sweden. The main idea of the approach is collection of information through questioning heads of enterprises and further analysis of data by the following issues:

- Staff composition and turnover
- Professional-qualification requirements of employers and evaluation of the importance of functional-personal qualities of specialists
- Assessment of the need in the interaction of enterprises and VET institutions
- Analysis of curricula and training programmes and recommendations for their modification

In 1999 95 questionnaires were filled in, including 60 in the “cook” occupation and 35 – in “confectioner” occupation. Questioning covered enterprises specializing in the field of catering who had good relations with VET schools № 18, Almaty and VET lyceum № 6 (these were mainly private enterprises - 96%). The main objective of the questioning was to develop proposals to the modification of curricula and training programmes in line with employers’ requirements and such recommendations were developed. Their practical implementation made it possible not only to improve the content and training methods in line with employers expressed needs, but also to strengthen cooperation and identify measures towards further development of social partnership in VET. One of such measures was the decision to conduct periodical (not less than once in two-three years) monitoring of the changes in the area covered by the questioning.

The specificity of the questioning conducted in November-December 2002 in Almaty was, first, in the extension of the profile of specialisms by including the construction and furniture production sectors (VET school № 10), hotel and restaurant business (VET lyceum № 2), and, second, in the conducting for the second time of questioning employers from the catering sector (VET school № 18), and, thirdly, in involving a sectoral employers’ association (furniture and wood processing industry) and Almaty association of entrepreneurs.

The objectives of the present question were determined by the content of the project “Social partnership in vocational education and training” and therefore were intended to cover not only study of employers’ needs in terms of quantity and quality of specialists of a certain profile required, but also in the development and strengthening of mutual and long-term relations between the VET institutions and enterprises. In this regard it was of principal importance for VET schools № 2 and № 10 to launch implementation of the methodology and results of questioning, whereas for VET school # 18 – to conduct a comparative analysis of the results of the first and second questioning and introduce new relevant modifications in the

content and methods of training cooks, as well as in the plans of cooperation with employers.

The total number of questionnaires filled in was 75, including: VET school № 18 - 40 questionnaires, VET schools № 10 – 20, VET lyceum № 2 – 15. As it was the case in the 1999 year questioning the majority of enterprises covered were private ones – over 95%.

The analysis of questioning conducted for the first time by VET school № 2 and VET lyceum № 10 using the mentioned methodology, made it possible to identify the following, very important for their future development facts, tendencies and specificities in the occupations.

1. The average number of staff in the wood processing and furniture production enterprises covered (70%) is between 15 to 50 people. A similar number of hotels and restaurants have staff varying from 30 to 200 people due to the fact that during the last years a tendency to increasing the number of staff, reduction of staff turnover and increasing quality provisions in such enterprises is being observed.
2. At present the most needed are joiners-machine operators and joiners of furniture production (more than 60% of responses), which reflects also in their higher wages. In 2003 there is expected an increase of the need in masters of furniture assembling, managers in project calculation who in addition have good computer skills and joiners who can operate imported machines.
In hotel and restaurant business the most wanted are and would be in 2003 waiters, cooks and barmen.
3. Professional retraining and skills up-grade of workers initiated by administration is carried out on a more regular basis in restaurant and hotel business (around 50% of responses), which is, as has been mentioned, is developing and renewed rapidly.
In the wood processing and furniture production enterprises surveyed this indicator is less than 40%. More likely, such a situation is determined by a lack of resources for conducting retraining and skills up-grade.
4. Assessment of the importance of the majority of operations is expressed in the necessity of having full understanding of the technical process, relevant knowledge and skills. Along with professional skills the employers have emphasized the necessity of such personal abilities like:
 - Readiness for mastering new technologies and advertising own enterprise
 - Will to work with better quality and use efficient experience
 - Organizational (managerial) abilities
 - Enterprising skills
 - Ability to communicate with others
 - Decency (honesty)
 - Ability to plan work time, etc.
5. Over 80% of employers questioned underlined the importance of direct links with VET institutions.
6. The following recommendations on modifying the curricula and training programmes were made:
 - Include study of graphic and design programmes
 - Improve the quality of training foreign languages
 - Increase the number of hours for special disciplines and practical application of modern equipment and technologies, and in doing this work in close contact with employers

- Organize practical work of trainees not in the one, but in several enterprises with differing levels of development.

At present the mentioned VET institutions are in the process of developing and making decisions towards the implementation of these and some other recommendations of employers in the organization of the training process in the second semester. To discuss the results of questioning and requirements set by employers to the quality of training VET school № 10 has organized a round table discussion. The participants – teachers, graduates, representatives of the enterprises surveyed, Almaty city Department of education, Auezov raion Akimat, mass media – discussed the most acute problems of establishing closer links between the VET school and enterprises, and agreed that such meetings should be organized on amore regular basis.

Summarising, we can say, that in the situation when long-term forecast of labour force need and supply in Almaty, questioning of enterprises conducted by VET schools № 2 and № 10, enabled them to orient themselves both in the quality and quality aspects of needs in training specialists these schools are in charge of.

Very interesting and useful were the results obtained by the ET school № 18, who conducted the questioning of employers for the second time. It should be noted that the conclusions based on the analysis of 1999 made the basis of the plan of joint activities between the VET school and enterprises. Its implementation to a considerable extent predetermined the content and organization of activities of the VET school during the last years. As soon as a detailed analysis of the results of questioning was made in the report on the project “Labour market analysis in Kazakhstan” further is given only a brief summary of the comparative analysis of the two studies with n interval of three years.

1. Due to the stable development of small and medium business in the field of catering has observably decreased the number of enterprises with less than 15 workers and increased their number where 15-49 workers are employed (a similar tendency is pointed out by VET lyceum № 2). Considerably increase the number of enterprises where the number of personnel was not reduced, but was constantly increasing ir remained with no changes.
2. As well as three years ago the most wanted occupations are cooks, waiters and confectioners. According to the data from the second questioning, in catering has increased a need in kitchen workers. Preservation of such a level of demand is accompanied by a considerable increase of the salary of the mentioned categories of specialists – on the average from 8000 to 12000 Kzt, and this positively affects the factor of sustaining VET school #18 specialists in the enterprise.
3. Compared to 1999, considerably has increased the number enterprises where regular professional retraining of staff is organized (from 52 % to 59 %). There is a reason to say that this tendency will continue and the school can plan its involvement in retraining and skills up-grade of their personnel.
4. In the characteristic of requirements set to the operations, around 85 % of employers mentioned the 4 and 5 criteria of assessment which require an excellent execution of the operation. This indicator is considerably higher than the requirement formulated in the questionnaires at the first stage.
5. Compared to the list of equipment recommended by employers in 1999, the similar list has been extended in 2002 due to the inclusion of such modern technical appliances, like toster, barbecue grille, convectormat, slicer, etc.

6. In evaluating functional qualities of specialists, the number of employers who consider the availability of full value vocational education, obtained not in short-term courses, but in VET schools, has also increased. Having underlined this, 12% of enterprises are ready to pay for training needed specialists. It is worthy to note that in the recommendations to the content of curricula and training programmes heads of enterprises managed to express their proposals and comments in a more concrete, precise and professional way. An important place in the recommendation is given to the necessity of improving the knowledge of calculation and accounting, culture of behavior and communication of specialists, fulfillment of sanitary requirements. Among the personal qualities - both in the first and second questioning – the priority is given to willing to work with high quality, the second – willing to learn from others' experience and time management. Summarising, we can underline, that in 2002 quality work and developed time management skills have become the principal requirements set to VET graduates by employers.
7. Interest to the joint development of curricula and training programmes has been expressed by the 35% of questioned, which is by 5% bigger than three years ago. The necessity of direct links with the VET school is recognized by 90% of enterprises, in 1999 – 72%. In this the absolute majority of respondents consider the most efficient form of meetings to discuss important joint activities to be seminars and round tables.

It is obvious that obtaining such information facilitates adequate informational provision of the activity of VET schools, identify labour market needs and requirements to training specialists. The main result of the consistent analytical work is that VET school graduates are highly demanded, heads of successful enterprises are happy to recruit them, and VET graduates have a good chance to continue their education in higher educational institutions in the country and abroad.

Another important result – establishment of a sustainable and effective system of business relationship with enterprises as a form of new social partnership which is to the benefit to both sides. Employers have an opportunity in reality to participate in managing the quality of training specialists; VET institutions – can timely and flexibly react to the dynamic changes on the labour market, increasingly improve their own tactics and strategy, making their activity closer to the world standards and provide the sustainable development of their organizations.

For the “Social partnership in vocational education and training” project' experts the results of this work are very important too for the following reasons:

- The sustainability, efficiency and perspectiveness of the model of social partnership proposed, which assumes the development of “bottom-up” – supported by government - and “top-down” – initiated by VET institutions - cooperation between the VET system and enterprises, was proved in practice;
- The precedent of the experience of enterprise survey aimed at analyzing employers needs and requirements to VET graduates based on the data of a single VET school became a visible and persuading example for making it possible and conducting a similar work in other VET institutions, i.e. its transferability. It is also important to underline that their activity was supported by the established working groups of the Expert Council - a

special body of social partnership set up under the Almaty Akimat within the framework of the present project.

- A new and significant moment in the development of social partnership was the involvement of sectoral and regional associations of employers. This fact is an evidence of the interest to getting analytical information and the need in developing business relations not only from the VET institutions, but also from their social partners. Participation of the associations creates favourable ground for the continuation of the work and strengthening their cooperation with VET institutions on the national level.
- It's a pity that we cannot state the availability of such an interest from the Trade Unions. Though the experience of other countries demonstrates that the process of social cooperation with the participation of such a powerful organization might become even stronger and versatile. The fact that the majority of trade unions are centered on narrow, sector specific issues at present does not help them to become stable and reliable VET partners. However the participation of the leadership of the oblast committee of trade unions in the mentioned above Expert Council and project gives ground to hope for their more active involvement in protecting the rights of VET institutions and workers.
- The analysis made in VET school #18 has shown that the most optimum and acceptable variant is conducting of employers' questioning once in three years as it enables to monitor and fix the most meaningful changes on the labour market and take them into account in content and methodology of the training process.