



Exploring the Business Model and Organizational Innovation of Vocational Schools: A Case Study of Development Units

Sidita Dibra

University of Tirana, Faculty of Economy

Abstract

Since 2015, the Skills for Jobs (S4J) project, funded by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and implemented by Swisscontact, has been actively promoting private sector engagement in skills development. The primary objective of the project is to support ten public Vocational Education and Training (VET) providers in innovating their offerings, delivery methods, and organizational practices through close collaboration with the private sector. To facilitate this partnership with the private sector, Development Units (DUs) were introduced at the VET provider level. These DUs perform various functions, including labor market intelligence, curricula development, business relations, continuous professional development, marketing, and career development. Their purpose is to ensure that the newly introduced functions align with the strategic objectives of the VET providers, provide technical support to staff members involved, and coordinate and steer the implementation activities.

This research employs a comparative case study approach to shed light on the preconditions and multilevel effects of DUs as organizational innovation. The research design draws upon theoretical frameworks such as business models, organizational design, organizational innovation, VET governance, and private sector engagement. In addition to examining S4J project documents and evaluation reports, in-depth interviews with key informants are conducted. The analysis of these interviews utilizes a hierarchy of codes to evaluate the multi-level effects of DUs on the transformation of VET providers, ranging from the individual to the provider and system levels.

Keywords: organisational innovation; vocational education, business model, VET governance, private sector engagement