



In March 2020, INTERVET Western Balkans, kicked off its journey as a pilot project funded by the European Commission with the main objective of supporting the modernization of the VET system in the Western Balkans countries by improving the culture of learning mobility and creating opportunities for learning mobility. Albania is also part of this 3-year inter-regional initiative, which will be coordinated by Uniser, a social cooperative based in Italy that has been offering services for educational mobility since 1998. One of the main strengths of this project is the heterogeneity of the consortium including associations, VET schools and SMEs from 6 regional partners in collaboration with 8 partner countries from the EU Member States.



Why does the implementation of the Intervet Western Balkan plays a key role in the Albanian context?

Before the end of the communist era in 1991, Albania had a well-established Vocational Education and Training (VET) system serving the country's planned economy. At that time, 60% of Albanian youth were oriented towards a vocational pathway. With the transition to a market economy and the following collapse of state enterprises, Vocational Education impact started to radically fade and it lost its previous priority in educational policies. During these years there have been tremendous efforts to rebuild from scratches the Vocational Education system. However, recent data (2018/2019) shows that vocational education still remains less preferred among students, with only 18.3% of students enrolled in VET schools.

https://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/library/crisis_prevention_and_recovery/review-of-albania-s-vet-system-.html

In that framework, the need of VET System promotion, the promotion of mobility culture and raising awareness about the learning potential of mobility opportunities, is more necessary and evident than ever. The massive investment in capacity building activities, the development of human capital through exchanging learning experiences for VET learners and VET staff, as well as preparing local organizations to build competencies to coordinate and implement these activities in autonomy, takes a vital importance that goes beyond the Albanian context. INTERVET Western Balkan can serve as a key promoter to start a long tradition of regional cooperation, similarly to the model of Erasmus.

The future lasting impact INTERVET WB aims to bring in the Balkan region.

To reach the overall objective of improving the quality of VET provision in Western Balkans, INTERVET has set out 4 specific objectives:

- Researching and developing a mobility scheme in the 6 countries of the Western Balkans.
- Improving the key competences and professional skills of learners, helping at the same time their transition to the job market.
- Improving the competences of VET organisations' staff.
- Strengthening the integration and interaction of the different components of the broad VET system.

Through professional competences gained in mobility programmes, the main expected impacts are: higher employability chances for VET learners, better opportunities for female learners and students coming from underprivileged groups and a stronger collaboration in the field of VET between Europe and the enlargement countries.

The future prospects/ goals of INTERVET WB and activities carried out in 2020.



The year 2021 "knocked in" bringing some positive news. Jusuf Rrustaj and Daniel Doçi, two selected VET learners, were the greeting postcards in the beginning of this year. They will be granted with one month of learning mobility in Italy, expected to take place in the summer of this year. In addition to this, in May, is also expected to take place the Job shadowing for selected teachers in Netherlands. <https://youtu.be/7SsvfONRs2s>



Within the framework of the INTERVET project plenty of activities will be implemented:

- 56 PRO-type mobilities of 3 months for recent graduates and apprentices.
 - 360 mobilities of one month for high school VET students.
 - 54 job shadowing experiences for VET teachers and managers in European colleges of excellence.
 - Participation of 36 VET teachers in summer schools.
 - Participation of 72 VET teachers and managers in the Thematic Themes organized by EFVET.
 - 72 mobilities of VET teachers from the Western Balkans to attend the EFVET Thematic Teams;
 - 18 training assignments of Uniser's staff in the Western Balkans.
 - 26 teaching assignments of Uniser's staff
- <https://intervetwb.net/>

It has been almost a year since the Covid 19 pandemic appeared and spread to all corners of the world, leading consequently to border closures and lockdown restrictions. The year we left behind has certainly affected and changed the normal course of many activities foreseen as part of the INTERVET WB project. And yet, adapting to the challenges of the situation, the following activities were successfully completed:

- The first Transnational Meeting as the kick off of INTERVET WB.
- All the activities of the Training Assignments, dedicated to the training of the sending and receiving bodies.
- The first Thematic Team event organized by EfVET.
- The Summer School dedicated to staff and professors of VET schools, both in European and Balkan countries. This summer school was held online during 6-10 July 2020 and it gathered around 30 teachers. Teachers from vocational schools in our country also had the opportunity to participate in this important and very informing event. <https://youtu.be/5N5rfxNXk5g>

<https://intervetwb.net/recent-developments-and-next-steps-intervet-wb-2nd-transnational-meeting/>:

Fatma Memalli

