



INNOVET ALBANIA NEWSLETTER

Let's contribute towards a stronger VET Community!

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We promote skills



Dear Readers,

I have the immense honor to introduce to you the third issue of INNOVET ALBANIA. I am Alma Shkreli and I work as a Vocational Education and Training expert consultant for various development projects, from 14 years now. I started my involvement with Albanian Skills in 2015, just after the first edition's skills competitions. After witnessing in this first edition the amassing energy, creativity and a mindset of risk-taking and innovation in the Albanian youth involved, I decided to invest myself in doing more than just my usual paid job. I worked mainly, as a coordinator for the volunteers, jointly with the initiators of Albanian Skills creating steps, procedures and structures for recruiting and managing volunteers. Indeed, it was sometimes quite challenging but I did also see an opportunity in there to do things the right way, for and with our young people in Albania.

This issue's highlight is innovation in Vocational Education and Training, but not only, in everyday life and business as well. You will have the pleasure to read about creative and courageous young people who took the opportunity during this challenging past year which has given us all a big lesson to be always creative, innovative and taking risks.

From our collective experience from the last year and also from my experience with Albanian Skills, my message to the readers of this issue and to all the young people is that we need to see opportunities in every challenge, and we need to be able to re-invent ourself and our lives all the time.

Stay Innovative!

Alma Shkreli,

Executive board member of Albanian Skills - National Association for Skills Competitions

Rubrics of Innovet Albania - 3rd Issue

This publication was prepared and edited by: Orjeta Ramaj & Fatma Memalli

Vocational Education & Training from the perspective of VET students!

Some words from Alion Emini and Daniel Doçi, students of Technical Electrical VET School "Gjergj Canco", Tirana.

House Kitchen Journey- The competition that gathered together the most important actors of VET.

The competition "House Kitchen", was completed on May of 2020. It was a new initiative, an idea that in the beginning had it's own difficulties. The saying "never say never" took a special meaning on this case..

Interview with the VET student Jusuf Rrustaj, over his robot called Spac.

Anticovid Robot that fights against "the evil" everyday at "Gjergj Canco" VET School in Tirana.

The newest initiative of Albanian Skills! Focus Groups with VET Students in Albania.

The first Focus Group was organised at the end of January, under the thematic of "Innovation in VET according to the Albanian VET students".

One year since the COVID-19 pandemic. An event to reflect over the impact on business, education and everyday life!

From over than one year, the pandemic COVID-19 crisis, is stubbornly sitting on the worldwide reality!

INTERVET WB - Next Steps for 2021!

Short News - Coffee Talk

At the January meeting, we discussed about strengthening the relationship between schools and businesses!

THE NEWEST INITIATIVE OF ALBANIAN SKILLS! FOCUS GROUPS WITH VET STUDENTS IN ALBANIA



It is our strong belief that student status can no longer be seen simply as a passive "receiving" and beneficiary in the overall chain of the education system. They are sometimes steps ahead in these transformational changes of the world due to digitisation of the entire life and therefore they should be seen equally involved and active in the education system as other main contributors, and moreover to be considered as the "centre" of the education system. With the intention of building sustainable network of communication and collaboration between students and young people in the vocational training and education system, Albanian Skills has undertaken the initiative of organizing a series of focus groups, where students themselves will take the role of protagonists to constructively exchange with each other ideas, thoughts, attitudes, concerns and informations.

The very first focus group of this kind was organized at the end of January under the theme "Innovation in VET according to students of vocational schools in Albania". The student participation map was spread in several schools in the country including a number of students from Electrical-Technical School "Gjergj Canco" in Tirana and other students from the Industrial High School "Ali Myftiu" in Elbasan and from Technical Economical High School "Isuf Gjata" in Korça. Students of different backgrounds and profiles came together virtually to evaluate their experiences and discuss in more detail about innovation, teaching, internship opportunities, curricula, infrastructure and social environment in the school environment where they study. At the end of this first focus group, the participants themselves appreciated very much such activity which enabled them to express their opinions freely and without any "fear".

Vocational Education and Training has a long history in our country, marked by chapters of ups and downs. To address a range of different topics that affect the VET community, with the protagonists being the students themselves, stay tuned for the next focus groups!

VET EDUCATION & TRAINING THROUGH VET STUDENTS EYES

Some words from Alion Emini, student of Technical Electrical VET School "Gjergj Canco", Tirana

Vocational education is the key to a successful career in the future!

We all sooner or later have to choose a certain profession, whether we like it or not. Some may be passionate for what they are doing, while others not. But did you know that today all young people have the opportunity to choose in their teenage years what profession they want to have for their future? By one definition, vocational education is the type of education that prepares people (specifically young people) to work in diverse professions, such as in trade, crafts, engineering, or in other professions like accounting, nursing, medicine, architecture, technology and many more.



I have personally chosen to continue my education in the field of Information Technology and Communication, IT Support profile at the Electrical Technical School 'Gjergj Canco'. Since the eighth grade of 9-year school I noticed that I had quite an interest in the field of ICT. I was very intrigued by computers and often took the initiative to study them myself. I watched a lot of videos on YouTube of what others were doing in this job and I started to think that in the future I would like to also study for IT.

Below I want to share some pictures from the professional practices that my school organises in different companies.



Meanwhile, vocational education has gained a lot of popularity in recent years. Seeing that after high-school you have a profession, more than ever, young people are choosing vocational education because of the many advantages:

1. Profession after high school (main reason),
2. Practical in excellent laboratories in schools,
3. Practice in prestigious businesses and companies,
4. Development of professional and life skills.





As a vocational high school student, I would recommend to young people who are in a dilemma whether or not to choose a VET school, DO IT! Vocational education is the key to a successful career in the future. As for my future, I am sure that after finishing this education I will have the opportunity to be employed in many businesses or companies, I will also complete higher studies. I aspire to be a good programmer one day, having a special interest the field of Gaming, and why not a future and successful Game Developer!

Some words from Daniel Doçi, student of Technical Electrical VET School "Gjergj Canco", Tirana

It has been almost 3 years since I made the decision to become part of a VET school and I want to say that it is a decision I have not regretted. Vocational education in Albania has advanced a lot during these years. At first it was like a normal schooling, just with a few extra subjects and an extra year, but over the years many improvements have been made in order to provide a student's future.



Collaborations with business have become much more frequent and competitions are not missing. The quality of the curriculum has been greatly adjusted, but there is still room for improvement. The integration of technology and innovation in schools is moving at a rapid pace, equipping schools with new tools, thus making teaching more complete, but there is also a free space for further improvement. For a student to be able to choose the vocational education with full conviction, he or she must be clearly provided with some paths that indicate vocational education as a very good choice and worth it. For vocational education students is more difficult to achieve studying into the college they desire, compared to the general education students. These are some of the key things that need to be improved in my opinion.

In conclusion, I think vocational education as a whole is a solid option to secure your future!

NEXT STEPS OF INTERVET WB FOR 2021

Intervet Western Balkans will hopefully continue its activity with physical meetings, mobilities, thematic teams, job shadowing and summer school during 2021. Despite the difficulties that have arisen with the pandemic situation, each of the project leaders and implementation partners are doing their best to ensure the continuity of the project as well as its positive impact in the respective countries of Western Balkans. The predicted activities of Intervet WB for 2021 are as follows:

- Second Transnational meeting - June 2021 in Sarajevo
- First round of mobilities for learners - June 2021 in Forli, Italy
- Second call for learner's mobility will be open in May, meanwhile the mobility will take place in September
- Round 2 of Thematic Teams - Dordrecht (May 21 - June 4)
- Round 1 of Job Shadowing - Dordrecht (May 21 - June 4)
- The call for the second round of Job Shadowing will be open in April, meanwhile it will be held in October in Lyon
- Round 2 of Summer School - July 2021 in Seville



INTERVET WB 2021

- | Activity | Month | Location |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------|
| First round of mobilities for learners | June 2021 | Forli, Italy |
| Second Transnational meeting | June 2021 | Sarajevo |
| Round 2 of Thematic Teams | May 21 - June 4 | Dordrecht |
| Round 1 of Job Shadowing | May 21 - June 4 | Dordrecht |
| Round 2 of Summer School | July 2021 | Seville |
| 2nd call for learner's mobility | May; The mobility - September | |
| 2nd call of Job Shadowing | April; The mobility - October | Lyon |

"HOUSE KITCHEN" JOURNEY - THE INNOVATIVE COMPETITION THAT BROUGHT TOGETHER THE MOST IMPORTANT VET ACTORS

Professional practices have a special place in the professional training of our students. It is an early experience, which provides students with practical knowledge in the learning and subject competencies and in the so-called soft competencies. But the difficult period of Covid-19 pandemic lockdown prompted us to try other innovative and untried methods, which had to be adapted to a series of difficulties such as: consulting, accomplishing tasks, professional performance and cooperation in distance. Digital tools and professional skills were the two key things. The Commercial School has a long tradition of organising competitions among students, but this year, when the students could not be in school physically, we had the idea to held competitions from the homes of each student, just as we do with online learning.



In May 2020, we organized the "House Kitchen" competition. It was a new initiative, an idea that was challenging at first, as the students themselves felt insecure. Here, the quote "Never say never" took a special meaning. All this journey required a great commitment from all the participating actors. We even connected with a local television station to present the student competition. Each teacher and culinary instructors instructed online the selected students, which were the representatives of the 11th grade. It was a close and extraordinary collaboration in pandemic times between teachers themselves, students, the business representatives and the media. 10 students participated with each other for more than a month. It was impressive when the competition started and the students had real emotions because they were live, on a TV show moderated by Deni Llanaj, while we as teachers and their friends were encouraging them. They became protagonists for several weeks until the final day of the competition, which was organised in our school under strict anti-Covid measures. There were 4 finalists, paired two by two, and they finalised their works in the modern kitchen of our school. The winner of the first place was the student Rozelja Kuka and the trophy received from this competition enabled her a job contract at the Resort "Mandarina".



It should be emphasized the help and dedication of the business with the representation of Mr. Aldo Mehmeti, the talented culinary master, who judged and encouraged the students throughout their performance and the great encouragement and help given by the parents and families of students. When we want to achieve something different, desire, passion and dedication are sufficient, and then the paths to achieve what we are aiming for are definitely found. So, was it with us. An experience that will remain in our memory for a long time..

Written by Shpresa Gjergji/Project Coordinator of the Development Unit at "Shkollën Tregtare" VET School, Vlorë

SPAC - THE ANTICOID ROBOT THAT EVERY MORNING FIGHTS "THE EVIL" ON "GJERGJ CANCO" VET SCHOOL

Interview with Jusuf Rustaj, VET student/ INTERVET WB Winner of Student's Mobility in Italy



Hello Yusuf! How are you?

Let's start with a brief introduction of yourself?

Hello! My name is Jusuf Rustaj, I am 17 years old and I am currently studying ICT at the vocational high school 'Gjergj Canco' in Tirana.

How did your passion for technology start and develop?

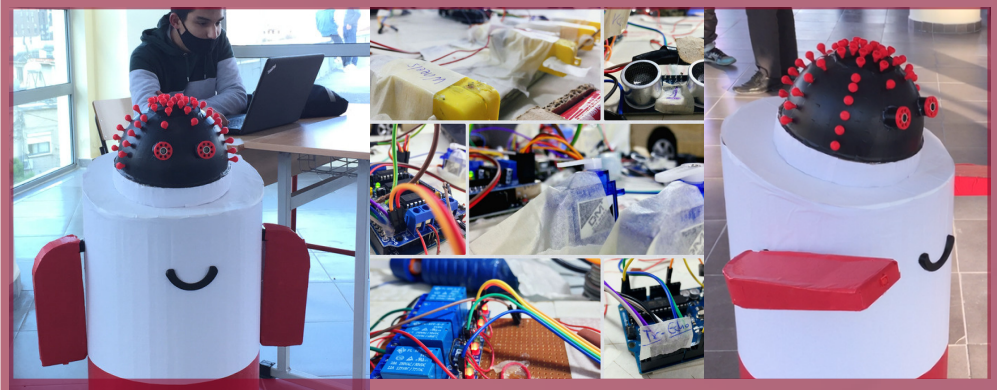
Since I was a child, I was very attracted to the world of Informatics and Technology. I disassembled the equipment I was playing to study what was under the plastic of our toys and how their circuits, gears and mechanisms worked. Growing up I learned to expand my knowledge through a variety of resources. Thus, little by little, I developed my knowledge in the field of technology and information. At the age of 10, my first laptop was my teacher who helped me explore the field of Software and Hardware.

How did you decide to study in vocational education?

After I finished my middle school education, I was in a very big dilemma of what school to go to. I really wanted to study in a school where there was seriousness, dedication and a lot of teaching practices but as we know quality has its cost, and I dreamed of a private school as I thought I would be offered better alternatives but the economic opportunities did not promise me something like that. While researching with my parents, we found the vocational school: "GJERGJ CANCO" here in Tirana.

From the first year I started learning the basics of robotics and programming. I built some mini robotic projects, experimenting with them and showing them to school teachers. So over time I began to learn more and more in the field of robotics and thinking about different ideas on how we can create technological tools that help society to solve everyday problems. I started to build simple robots, but that perform their function and are totally usable. One of those robots is my robot, which I called "SPAC".

Now we believe that the time has come to talk about SPAC, the famous ANTI-COVID robot?



I can talk about SPAC with a lot of desire! And no, it's not the SPAC you think !! Smart Protection Anti-Covid is a robot that performs the function of SPAC and fights evil but dealing with the element of a microbiological level: "CORONAVIRUS".

-SPAC, is a robot designed to disinfect large environments by moving autonomously.

- It is equipped with a spraying system which takes the disinfectant out of the tank and removes it sprayed from its wings.
- The arms are designed to move at an angle of 0 to 180 degrees, starting from the bottom - up, in order to cover a wide disinfection surface.
- He has several sensors positioned on: his eyes, body, located left, right and behind him.
- The robot works with rechargeable batteries, which allow it enough time to perform all the disinfection of the environment.
- The key point of this robot is the software. A software built with different algorithms which make the robot as autonomous as possible.

Autonomous means that the device is capable of moving without commanding a person with any remote control, but being commanded by software. From the first moment the robot turns on in a new environment, it starts scanning the territory where it will move. This process is done only once at the beginning, in such a way that the robot creates a virtual map with the scanned environment, storing it in its memory. Once the scan is complete, the robot already knows where it is based on the virtual map it has created and the sensors it has. These sensors are capable of measuring distance from wall to wall. It is then up to the robot algorithm to perform the calculations and make it possible for the robot to move in the middle of the corridor. In this way he removes the disinfectant from his arms and this is why I built this robot. Turn on automatically at 6 o'clock in the morning and start disinfecting the whole school! he whole process takes only an hour, considering here that our school has 4 floors, where the robot has to go to each class. At 7 o'clock the robot has already completed the disinfection and returns to its place.

T SPAC during its work, does not need any assistance from man. The only thing the robot needs assistance with is filling the disinfectant bottles when emptied, and also once every three months a check for potential problems. SPAC is a school-sponsored robot, and I am very grateful to everyone who supported me. A heartfelt thank you goes to all my teachers who helped me when I needed it. And in particular, a big thank you, to our director Mrs. HEDIJE GJONI, who seeing my desire to develop my knowledge, allowed me to use the 3D laboratory that the school has and offered me further support. Until my next project I wish you all the best and goodbye!

ONE YEAR SINCE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC! AN EVENT TO REFLECT OVER THE IMPACT ON BUSINESS, EDUCATION AND EVERYDAY LIFE!

Written by Albanian Skills Team

For more than a year, the COVID-19 pandemic crisis has been stubbornly "sitting cross-legged" in the world's reality, highlighting and deepening the existing multifaceted problems, and on the other hand putting humanity in front of new challenges. In some way, the normal flow of our daily lives has changed radically, while among the most affected sectors are certainly the field of education and the business world. To address and discuss broadly the impact of this pandemic on all these three dimensions, Albanian Skills organized an online event with this very current topic "The Impact of Covid-19 in Business, Education & Everyday life". The panelists were Viola Shahini, Assistant Professor in Italy and PHP candidate, Amarilda Canameti, ACA banking professional at NatWest Group and Ingrid Kau, SAP SD Consultant at Crystal System.

Viola brought into discussion the experience of the education system in Italy during the pandemic, the situation of online teaching and learning, discussing the ongoing problems and difficulties encountered. Meanwhile Amarilda, focused more specifically on the impact of the pandemic on the business world, offering a "two-way view" on thriving businesses and businesses facing a deep survival crisis. Among other things, Amarilda also placed a special emphasis on the skills of the future. Artificial Intelligence, Information Technology, Data Analysis and Climate Change/Sustainability still promises to offer a lot! The event ended with Ingrid Kau, who shared her personal experience in the field of IT and programming.

This event once again brought to our attention the fact that the impact of this pandemic reflects above all the necessity and the constant human need for change, innovation and modernisation in order to overcome and prevent similar crises.

SHORT NEWS - COFFEE TALK

Coffee Talk is established as a monthly tradition that aims to further strengthen the VET community in Albania. The themes of this event are different every month and highlight both the problems and the innovative approaches or cases that should be an inspiration for the development of vocational education in Albania. In the scope of the development, these cases are also very valuable for the employment of young people who complete VET education. At the February meeting, we talked about the collaboration between VET Institutions, exchanging ideas and experiences in order to be better prepared and more efficient in everyday work with VET. Ms. Julita Bimbli, the director of of the Vocational School "Fan. S. Noli" in Korçë, and at the same time a strong contributor at Coffee Talk Events, shared with the participants their experience on collaborating with VET schools and institutions, and how did it affect their afterwards job with students, projects and learning processes. Their case was valuable for all the other schools that participated, some of which expressed their wish to exchange contacts and information points, in order to further develop the collaboration between VET Community. Furthermore it was a great experience for VET students and parents, as well as supporters of vocational education, to know more about joint projects between schools, exchange of experiences among VET Institutions in Albania etc, thus we invite you to follow us on social media networks and become part of our monthly meetings!

Follow us on social media - AlbanianSkills