

**CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND BUSINESS ASSISTANCE**

**CENTRUL PENTRU EDUCAȚIE ANTREPRENORIALĂ ȘI ASISTENȚĂ ÎN AFACERI**

**(CEDA)**

**REPORT**

***on results of the Tracer Study***

***of graduates of the***

***Professional and Technical Education Institutions of Moldova***

**Chișinău, 2017**

**CONTENTS**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | **Pag.** |

[**SUMMARY** 3](#_Toc472845581)

[**INTRODUCTION** 4](#_Toc472845582)

[**1.** **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY** …………… 6](#_Toc472845583)

[**2. REVIEW OF legislative DOCUMENTS NEEDED TO DEVELOP THE entrepreneurial skills OF STUDENTS**  8](#_Toc472845584)

[**3. ANALYSIS OF GRADUATES questioning RESULTS** 11](#_Toc472845585)

[3.1. Information about respondents 11](#_Toc472845586)

[3.2. Education and training in business 12](#_Toc472845587)

[*Education in vocational-technical institution* 12](#_Toc472845588)

"[*Basics of Entrepreneurship"* *Discipline* 13](#_Toc472845589)

[3.3. Training on entrepreneurshi 16](#_Toc472845590)

[3.4. Obtaining mini-grants 16](#_Toc472845591)

[3.5. Occupancy 17](#_Toc472845592)

[3.6. Entrepreneurial career development 20](#_Toc472845593)

[3.7. Analysis of the certain groups of respondents questioning results 24](#_Toc472845594)

[*Differences by gender* 24](#_Toc472845595)

[*Differences by attending Post-VET trainings* 26](#_Toc472845596)

[*Differences depending on grants obtaining* 26](#_Toc472845597)

[**4. ANALYSIS OF TEACHERs questioning** **RESULTS** 27](#_Toc472845598)

[4.1. Evaluation of "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline 27](#_Toc472845599)

[4.2. Teachers’ satisfaction in relation to their own activity 29](#_Toc472845600)

[**5. ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYERS questioning** **RESULTS** 31](#_Toc472845601)

[5.1. Assessing the preparedness of graduates of vocational-technical institutions 31](#_Toc472845602)

[5.2. Cooperation between the enterprise and the educational institutions. Staffing needs at the enterprise 34](#_Toc472845603)

[**GENERALISED** **CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS** 37](#_Toc472845604)

[**REFERENCES** 45](#_Toc472845605)

**SUMMARY**

# Entrepreneurial education is oriented towards entrepreneurship, which is a key competence for lifelong learning and is mandatory for inclusion into curricula and training at all levels.

Youth involvement in the business sector is one of the most important tasks of development policies of SMEs in European countries, including Moldova. The main policy documents adopted in our country clearly indicated the need to develop and promote education and entrepreneurship, including the form and spirit of entrepreneurial initiative at all levels of education.

It is important to the ensureentrepreneurial skills training at all levels of general and vocational education, including technical vocational education institutions - Professional Schools, Colleges and Centers of Excellence (hereinafter – VET institutions (VET)). This will allow students and graduates’ potential increase, keeping them, as before, the chance to work as an employee. At the same time, new opportunities will be offered - to activate independently (as self-employed) or to set up their own business.

During 2012-2016, there were a series of important measures made in Moldova for entrepreneurship education for VET students, performed within MEEETA project with the financial support of the Liechtenstein Development Service Foundation (LED). After 4 years of the actions implementation, the necessity to evaluate the activity, to analyze the results and efficiency appeared, and to eventually develop a tracer study to mark the VET graduates route, including the MEEETA project beneficiaries.

This study aims the following objectives: (i) analysis of employment/self-employment of the VET graduates; (ii) assess the quality and relevance of studying the subject "Basics of Entrepreneurship"; (iii) identifying the correlation between employment/self-employment of graduates and studying entrepreneurship within the mandatory course of "Basics of Entrepreneurship “or through trainings for business development offered after the VET graduation.

The main results and conclusions of the research are grouped in the following areas:

* Discipline” Basics of Entrepreneurship”.
* Trainings in entrepreneurship.
* Occupation, self-employment, vocational and entrepreneurial carrier of the VET graduates.
* Strengthening cooperation between the VET and the enterprises.

The developed proposals aimed at improving the work:

* Of teachers involved in teaching the subject "Basics of Entrepreneurship”;
* Of VET leaders/managers;
* Of institution geared towards supporting VET activities inclusively;
* Of public administration entities, which regulate issues in education and entrepreneurial activities, including SMEs.

# The research results, conclusions and proposals made could serve as basis for introducing changes on entrepreneurial education, including teaching materials and teaching the discipline "Basics of Entrepreneurship" at vocational schools/colleges. This will allow, first, to improve the quality of this subject teaching in vocational schools, and, at the same time, will contribute to higher levels of entrepreneurial education for young people in Moldova. In this context, cultivating the spirit of initiative in education fills in the lack of major importance in the educational system, namely, entrepreneurial skills training. These are included, along with the initiative, into the key skills of integrity, which means, the societies will have active consumers, familiar with the price formation mechanism, aware of its rights, of a company structure able to develop and administer the personal or family budget, including a small business budget. In a broader context, the research results can play a positive role in entrepreneurial education at various levels, in unlocking the entrepreneurial potential of young people, increasing the number and competitiveness of domestic enterprises, reducing the labor migration and emigration of young people from R. Moldova.

**INTRODUCTION**

Sustainable economic growth in European countries is largely conditioned by the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which in turn presupposes the existence of a business environment that stimulates the development of entrepreneurial potential of different population groups. The document overarching framework of the EU, aimed at supporting SMEs - "Small Business Act" for Europe, one of the measures of support is focused on the need to "foster the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship among young people by introducing entrepreneurship as a key element of the school curricula, particularly in general secondary education, and the need to ensure that these guidelines are taken into account accordingly in the teaching materials "(3).

In Education Code of Moldova (2), one of the nine key skills listed is "entrepreneurial skills and initiative". The Action Plan for the implementation of development strategies of vocational/technical education for the years of 2013-2020 (4) includes a specific objective related to promotion of entrepreneurship courses especially in vocational/technical educational institutions. Also, the development strategy of small and medium enterprises sector for 2012-2020 (5), whereby the government declares the main directions and actions related to supporting the SME sector, one of the objectives outlined is "Developing and promoting education and entrepreneurial culture ".

There is a separate article dedicated to the entrepreneurship education in the law on SMEs, which entered into force in December 2016. Here it stipulates, "Entrepreneurial education is mandatory for inclusion in curricula and training at all levels" (6).

It is important to mention that in the years of 2012-2016 a series of important measures for entrepreneurship education have been made in the professional-technical education system of the country. In particular:

1. The curriculum for "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline was developed and piloted in 15 vocational education institutions and implemented at the national level. A set of educational materials developed, includes: The methodological guide for teachers; Tips for lessons design on "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline and the Specifications for students.
2. The "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline became one of the mandatory in all vocational professional schools.
3. There were Training programs organized for all teachers involved in teaching the course of "Basics of Entrepreneurship".
4. Trainings were organized for graduates of technical vocational education institutions that were interested in developing their business and prepared business plans attractive to investors. Moreover, some training participants were awarded with mini-grants to start their own businesses.

All these actions were undertaken within the MEEETA project, realized with the financial support of the Liechtenstein Development Service Foundation (LED). After 4 years of the actions implementation, the necessity to evaluate the activity, to analyze the results and efficiency appeared, and to eventually develop a tracer study to mark the VET graduates route, including the MEEETA project beneficiaries.

Under the terms of reference, this project aims to achieve the following objectives: (i) analysis of employment/self-employment of the VET graduates; ((ii) assess the quality and relevance of studying the subject "Basics of Entrepreneurship"; (iii) identifying the correlation between employment/self-employment of graduates and studying entrepreneurship within the mandatory course of "Basics of Entrepreneurship “or through trainings for business development offered after the VET graduation.

The specific objectives of the research are the following:

1. To identify employment/self-employment of the VET graduates and to analyze and underline the factors that determine their career or business, of their work results (based on data collected related to their employment activity in the formal or informal sector, duration of the job search after studies, income level, gender differences, the link between employment and training programs, assessment of general conditions in country);
2. To assess the quality and relevance of studying the basics of entrepreneurship including all of persons involved and interested - VET graduates, teachers and employers, given the interest and satisfaction of students, teachers' training, the relevance between the compliance knowledge students/graduates have and needs of enterprises, the existing work standards in, and the overall economic situation as a whole;
3. To develop recommendations for improving the VET graduates employment opportunities/self-employability and increasing their competitiveness on the labor market. To increase the importance and effectiveness of entrepreneurship bases studying in secondary vocational education system.

The study was initiated and organized by the Center for Entrepreneurship Education and Business Assistance (CEDA) within the MEEETA project, funded by the Liechtenstein Development Service Foundation (LED). The study was conducted during October 2016 - January 2017.

The experts selected to implement the study are Elena Aculai PhD in Economics, and Silvia Bicenco, Master in Nonprofit Management

When processing the questionnaires, the staff and PhD students of the National Institute of Economic Research of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova and the Ministry of Economy of Moldova participated: Vlad Boldurat, Alexandra Novac, Lidia Maier, and Natalia Deliu.

1. **METHODOLOGY**

There were different methods and techniques applied in the research. One the main sociological method used was - questioning. There were three groups of respondents surveyed: **(i) VET graduates**; (**ii) teachers who teach the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline;** (**iii) employers, that hire VET graduates**. For that matter, three questionnaire were developed:

The questionnaire №1 - for graduates of vocational-technical education institutions - included 38 questions that have enabled the following tasks:

* the professional traces study of technical vocational education graduates, including the respondents’ entrepreneurial careers development of those who work independently as self-employed or set up their own business.
* "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline evaluation - the Curriculum modules importance, respectively, the acceptability of teaching methods used, the usefulness of entrepreneurial skills obtained and spirit initiative when looking for a job or self-employment or business initiation.
* analysis of the importance of ("post VET") business-trainings and mini-grants obtained to start businesses - characterizing employment status of graduates at the time of the interview, duration and problems related to job search, work experience abroad and/or intention to leave the country in the coming years as migrant labor or immigrant.

The questionnaire for graduates was simple enough to answer, provided the "closed” questions in most of the cases, assuming the respondent will select the proposed answer option.

The questionnaire №2 – was for teachers and included nine questions that allowed obtaining the following targets:

* To assess the effectiveness of teaching the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline, and the quality of the teaching materials developed within the project for teachers and students, including proposals / suggestions for improving the teaching discipline.
* To determine the level of satisfaction from teaching this subject (related to the level of personal preparation, the teaching results, students' attitude, etc.) and satisfaction related to the material resources and the atmosphere created among staff.

The questionnaire for teachers provided more 'opened' questions for respondents on the contrary, so that they can express their opinion openly, without relying solely on the responses indicated in the questionnaire. Such questionnaire model allowed obtaining an „open” data about the results of structured interviews.

The questionnaire №3 – was for employers and included 13 questions, which allowed the following:

* To assess graduates’ professional skills and that an employee must have; to determine the importance of entrepreneurial skills for graduates and their understanding of the way a company should operate in.
* To identify the availability and forms of cooperation between the enterprise managers and VET and to estimate staffing (specialist) needs of the companies at the time of questioning.

VET graduates were the main target group for questioning. At the same time, teachers and employers’ opinion identification offered a deeper analysis of several aspects concerning the graduates’ tracer study.

The number of respondents selected randomly from a list of 569 VET graduates of the last 2 years, answered to the questionnaire 1. Twenty-eight (28) out of the 47 contacted educational institutions presented the list. An additional list of graduates (138 people) was also used that have participated in trainings organized by CEDA. De facto, there were 283 graduates contacted. Not all of them have shown interest in communication. As a result, 90 graduates’ questionnaires were completed and subsequently processed.

There were 14 teachers and 13 employers surveyed and the respective number of questionnaires processed.

The Questioning conducted in November 2016 included two municipalities, Chisinau and Balti, and 25 districts of Moldova in the development regions North, Center, South and Gagauzia.

# **2. REVIEW OF legislative DOCUMENTS and normative methodS of TRAINing STUDENTS’ entrepreneurial skills**

The European Union promotes entrepreneurship as a key factor of competitiveness and stresses the importance of developing an entrepreneurial culture at the European level by encouraging appropriate attitudes and entrepreneurial skills. The Recommendations of the European Parliament and of the Council on basic skills in lifelong learning made in 2006 include entrepreneurship among the eight key competences. The need to improve the capacities of entrepreneurial and innovative citizens is also underlined in three initiatives of the European Strategy 2020 for employment and sustainable economic growth "Innovation Union", "Youth on the Move “and „Agenda for new skills and jobs”.

Studying the bases of entrepreneurship as an important task, has been reflected in a series of policy making documents, laws and normative methods adopted in our country recently – both, in the education system and in the overall economic growth of the Republic of Moldova.

The main document of the education system for teaching students at all levels and cycles is the Education Code of the Republic of Moldova (2). The Code clearly formulates all the key skills and knowledge, attitudes and values that allow the active participation of the individual in social and economic life. The article 11 in particular, paragraph (2), stipulates that education aim at training the following nine key competencies:

a) Communication skills in Romanian;

b) Communication skills in their native language;

c) Communication skills in foreign languages;

d) Skills in math, science and technology;

e) Digital competence;

f) Power of learning to learn;

g) Social and civic competences;

h) Entrepreneurial skills and spirit of initiative;

i) Cultural expression skills and awareness of cultural values.

Thus, among those nine key skills, stipulated by the education system of Moldova since 2014, the “entrepreneurial skills and initiative” is underlined as separate competence.

The Development Strategy of vocational/technical education for the years 2013-2020, approved by Government Decision in 2013 (4), provides the main directions of the state policy in the development of vocational technical education.

Although the Strategy content does not mention the development of students’ entrepreneurial skills directly, the Action Plan for implementing the Strategy for the years 2013-2017 includes some actions for entrepreneurship education:

* Specific Objective No.3. *Includes the action: To develop and implement new mechanisms for funding the vocational/technical education: funds per student; diversification of funding sources based on public-private partnerships and selling products made by students in the workshops.*
* Specific Objective No.5. *Includes the action: To develop models of continuous training for teachers and school management, such as management courses; financial resource management courses; human resource management courses; business administration courses.*
* Specific Objective No.6*. Includes the action: To promote entrepreneurship courses as well as courses of informational technology; foreign languages (English, Russian); Optional - courses of driving at the vocational/technical education institutions.*

The Development Strategy of the small and medium enterprises for 2012-2020 (5) is the main document that the Government provides directions and the main procedures through, on supporting the SME sector. Some of these actions planned aimed to support special groups of entrepreneurs, primarily: women and young entrepreneurs in rural areas. The Action Plan of the Development Strategy implementation of small and medium enterprise’s sector for 2015-2017, provides a series of actions related to young people support, those who intend to start or already have established a small business. The key actions related to funding and training young people are:

* Improved funding – within the National Youth Economic Empowerment Programme (NYEEP):
  + Action 2.3.1. Credit lines attraction for funding small and medium businesses through the National Youth Economic Empowerment Programme;
  + Action 2.3.2. Business funding under Component II of the National Youth Economic Empowerment Programme.
* Entrepreneurial skills and culture promotion. For instance:
  + Action 3.1.5. Organizing trainings for youth within the National Youth Program.
  + Action 3.1.11. Youth entrepreneurship skills development through trainings, round tables and workshops.

There is no distinguishing among youth supporting activities by educational levels or cycles. It refers to all the institutions of education and training, including the technical vocational education institutions.

Simultaneously with the development and examination of the Education Code and the introduction of the entrepreneurial skills in technical vocational schools within the Development Strategy of vocational/technical education for 2013-2020, there was the National Curriculum developed for the "Basics of Entrepreneurship” discipline (1). The curriculum was developed within the "Entrepreneurship training activity and of employment" project (MEEETA) that was funded by the Liechtenstein Development Service Foundation (LED). Moreover, there have been teaching materials developed in addition to the curriculum for the Basics of Entrepreneurship discipline - a set of handouts for teachers, aiming at increasing the quality of teaching and providing support to students in assimilating new disciplines. The set of handouts included:

* Methodological guide for teachers
* Tips for lessons’ design for "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline
* Specifications for students.

After piloting the curriculum and the set of materials in 15 secondary vocational education institutions of Moldova, all materials were initially approved by the Minister of Education’s order (Nr.861 of August 29, 2013), and eventually by the decision of the National Council for Curriculum (Protocol No .4 - 5/2015, Ministerial Order nr.863 of September 7, 2015).

The approaches outlined in the Curriculum are consistent with the spirit and main legal principals of the Republic of Moldova related to entrepreneurship. The "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline geared towards training students the skills that will allow them to use their professional potential efficiently and to establish and manage successful entrepreneurial activities in the future. In a broader context, these skills should help young people to become more active and creative in any activity that will take place in their personal and social life. There are 120 hours reserved for the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline in the framework plan of secondary technical vocational education.

Currently, the modular curriculum and the course materials (handouts) are the main normative documents necessary for teaching, educating and evaluating entrepreneurial education within the professional technical education schools.

The new law on **small and medium enterprises** (6) was adopted in July of 2016. The Article 16 of this law is totally dedicated to entrepreneurial education. The article emphasizes that entrepreneurial education is oriented towards the entrepreneurship spirit, which is a key competence for lifelong learning and is mandatory for inclusion into curricula and training at all levels.

The law stipulates that the empowered authorities initiate and conduct educational activities to promote entrepreneurship attitudes and behaviors through:

a) Introducing entrepreneurship education at all levels of education, starting with primary education;

b) Initial and continuous training of entrepreneurship education for teachers;

c) The inclusion of entrepreneurship in vocational guidance;

d) Programs providing of initial training to the educational institutions and teachers and dissemination of successful experiences and practices;

e) The integration of entrepreneurship education at all levels and in all areas of training, including those of the non-economic sphere;

f) The direct linking of practical training in specific fields of study with the entrepreneurship objective;

g) Providing experts’ consulting (from enterprises, business associations and NGOs) who can offer training and ongoing support;

h) Conducting national studies on the entrepreneurship education impact and identifying the need the new skills development.

# **3. RESULTS ANALYSIS OF questioning GRADUATES**

3.1. Information about respondents

There were 90 graduates surveyed in the research process. The paragraph below presents the analysis of the sample structure depending on graduates’ sex and age, and their residence place (district/municipality, rural/urban).

The sample analysis by gender demonstrated that young men predominated in this sample - 57.8%; respectively, 42.2% of respondents were young women.

**Figure 1. Respondents distribution by sex, %**

The surveyed graduates’ average age was 22.3 years (mode) = 20).

The sample analysis by graduates’ place of residence reveals that they live in 27 districts and municipalities.

**Таble 1. Distribution of respondents by place of residence - district / municipality, %**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***№*** | ***Place of residence*** | ***%*** | ***№*** | ***Place of residence*** | ***%*** |
|  | mun. Chișinău | 13,3 | 15. | d. Fălești | 3,3 |
|  | mun. Bălți | 8,9 | 16. | d. Glodeni | 2,2 |
|  | d. Anenii Noi | 2,2 | 17. | d. Hâncești | 1,1 |
|  | d. Briceni | 2,2 | 18. | d. Ialoveni | 2,2 |
|  | d. Cahul | 3,3 | 19. | d. Ocnița | 4,4 |
|  | d. Călărași | 1,1 | 20. | d. Orhei | 1,1 |
|  | d. Căușeni | 1,1 | 21. | d. Râșcani | 7,8 |
|  | d. Ciadâr - Lunga | 2,2 | 22. | d. Sângerei | 5,6 |
|  | d. Cimișlia | 2,2 | 23. | d. Șoldănești | 2,2 |
|  | d. Comrat | 7,8 | 24. | d. Soroca | 3,3 |
|  | d. Criuleni | 1,1 | 25. | d. Strășeni | 2,2 |
|  | r. Dondușeni | 5,6 | 26. | d. Telenești | 1,1 |
|  | d. Drochia | 8,9 | 27. | d. Ungheni | 1,1 |
|  | d. Edineț | 2,2 |  |  |  |

Analyzing the sample structure depending on graduates’ residency in rural versus urban areas, it is worth mentioning here that the relative majority of respondents (55.6%) reside in rural areas and, respectively, 44.4% - in urban areas.

**Figure 2. Distribution of respondents by place of residence - city/village, %**

3.2. Business education and training

***Education in vocational-technical institution***

All the respondents come from 14 localities – in Chisinau and Balti municipalities, and in 12more districts. Most schools are located in the district of Donduseni (23.3%), (20.0%) are in Balti and (17.8%) are in Chisinau, (10.0%) are in the district of Comrat and (8.9%) are in d. Râşcani.

**Таble 2. The VET location (district/municipality)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| ***Nr.*** | **District/municipality** | ***%*** |
|  | mun. Chișinău | 17,8 |
|  | mun. Balti | 20,0 |
|  | d. Cahul | 1,1 |
|  | d. Cimișlia | 1,1 |
|  | d. Comrat | 10,0 |
|  | d. Dondușeni | 23,3 |
|  | d. Drochia | 4,4 |
|  | d. Edineț | 2,2 |
|  | d. Ialoveni | 3,3 |
|  | d. Ocnița | 1,1 |
|  | d. Râșcani | 8,9 |
|  | d. Sângerei | 2,2 |
|  | d. Soroca | 3,3 |
|  | d. Telenești | 1,1 |

VET graduates studied different competences (specialties): mainly in the agriculture domain, then cooking and bar tendering, mechanics and electricians, tailors, accountants, builders, ICT, etc.

**Table 3. Graduates’ Competence (specialty)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***№*** | ***Competence*** | ***%*** |
|  | Agriculture, Forestry, Beekeeping | 22,2 |
|  | Cooking, Pastry chef, Barman | 16,4 |
|  | Mechanic, Electrician, Locksmith | 14,2 |
|  | Informatics, Computer Operator | 13,9 |
|  | Tailor, [Sewer](http://hallo.ro/search.do?l=ro&d=en&query=sewer) | 8,3 |
|  | Milk, bakery, wine technology, etc. | 5,9 |
|  | Accountant, Cashier | 5,9 |
|  | Construction, Plater, Plasterer, Carpenter | 5,9 |
|  | Hairdresser | 5,8 |
|  | Other | 1,5 |
|  | Total | 100,0 |

Graduates have appreciated the level of professional skills training quite high. Over 3/4 of respondents (77.7%) indicated a high level of education (64.5%) and (13.3%) appreciated it as a very high level; 22.2% indicated an average level; none of the respondents indicated a lower level of professional skills training.

**Figure 3. How do you assess the level of professional skills training**

**at the educational institution? %**

The vast majority of respondents (94.4%) mentioned they like the profession obtained at the VET.

**Figure 4. Do you like the profession/craft obtained? %**

The average score the students have graduated with from educational institution was 8.5 points.

***The "Basics of Entrepreneurship" Discipline***

Among those 90 respondents, 81 people, or 90% of graduates surveyed, have studied the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline.

**Figure 5. Have you studied the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline? %**

VET graduates had the opportunity to appreciate the importance of each of the five (5) modules of "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline for personal career. Overall, the importance of all modules was considered sufficiently high. A "great importance" was indicated from 67.9% to 91.2% of respondents, depending on the module rated. Relatively high percentage of respondents indicated the "great importance" of modules: "**5**. Business Planning "(91.2%) and "**3**. Financing and entrepreneurial activity records "(82.5%). The module "**2**. Elements of management and risk management " got lower share of those who indicated its "great importance", yet 1.2% of the respondents appreciated this module as having a "little importance".

**Table 4.** **Appreciate the importance of modules of the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline for your personal career, %**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***The main discipline modules*** | ***Great importance*** | ***Medium importance*** | ***Little importance*** |
| 1. Entrepreneurship - a career option | 78,7 | 21,3 | - |
| 2. Elements of management and risk management | 67,9 | 30,9 | 1,2 |
| 3. Financing and entrepreneurial activity records | 82,5 | 17,5 | - |
| 4. Business marketing | 78,7 | 21,3 | - |
| 5. Business planning | 91,2 | 8,8 | - |

Respondents also assessed the teaching methods as being acceptable and interesting. The questionnaire offered the totality of methods recommended by teaching materials. Overall, from 43.2% to 75.6% of graduates reported that teaching methods were acceptable and interesting to a high degree. A relatively higher proportion of respondents highly appreciated such method as *SWOT analysis* (75.6%) *Open discussion on a particular topic* (66.2%) and *Projects presentation in "Power Point"* (65.4%). With a lower degree of interest and acceptance was appreciated the method of *Questionnaire*, though by a slightly lower share of respondents (from 1.3% to 8.6%). Relatively few respondents mentioned that they like *Interactive methods/games* (high grade - 43.2%; lower grade - 8.6%) and *Lesson with feedback* (high grade - 48.1%; grade lower - 5 1%).

**Table 5. To what extent the teaching methods were acceptable and interesting? %**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***The main methods*** | ***High*** | ***Medium*** | ***Lower grade*** |
| 1. SWOT Analysis | 75,6 | 20,7 | 3,7 |
| 1. Free discussion on a particular topic | 66,2 | 32,5 | 1,3 |
| 1. Projects presentation in "Power Point" | 65,4 | 32,1 | 2,5 |
| 1. Group Activity | 59,2 | 38,3 | 2,5 |
| 1. Reading material during the lesson and jointly analyze | 56,8 | 39,5 | 3,7 |
| 1. Graphical methods | 51,2 | 46,3 | 2,5 |
| 1. Brainstorming | 50,0 | 47,5 | 2,5 |
| 1. Lesson with feedback | 48,1 | 46,8 | 5,1 |
| 1. Interactive methods/games | 43,2 | 48,2 | 8,6 |

Overall, practically all (98.8%) of the respondents rated highly the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline: (47.6%) of the respondents indicated that the discipline is interesting, and (51.2%) or the respondents mentioned it was very interesting.

**Figure 6. Overall, was the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline interesting for you or not? %**

According to respondents, the discipline was *"significantly useful"* for most of them, meaning the knowledge acquired will help them to *search for employment, relationships with employers, creating their own business.* Some respondents indicated that "significantly useful" knowledge can be used *to start their own businesses*, or to answer the following questions: *To understand how to initiate their own business* (91.4% ); *To understand how to develop a business plan* (90.1%); *To understand how to manage the funds* (85.2%).

A relatively lower share of surveyed graduates indicated as being *"significantly useful"* acquisition of knowledge for *job searching* (55.0%). In addition, a very small (insignificant) share of surveyed graduates found the discipline as unnecessary (from 0 to 5.0%), depending on the question form the questionnaire.

**Table 6. Please indicate how useful was the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline when**

**answering the following questions: %**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Questions*** | *Significantly useful* | *Insignificantly useful* | *Not useful* |
| To understand how to initiate the own business | 91,4 | 8,6 | - |
| To understand how to develop a business plan | 90,1 | 8,7 | 1,2 |
| To understand how to manage funds in own business | 85,2 | 14,8 | - |
| To understand what taxes to pay | 80,0 | 17,5 | 2,5 |
| To discuss the contract conditions with the employer | 80,0 | 18,7 | 1,3 |
| To understand the difference between the gross and the net wage | 76,2 | 22,5 | 1,3 |
| To earn money thought the profession obtained | 73,7 | 23,8 | 2,5 |
| When searching for a job | 55,0 | 40,0 | 5,0 |

Graduates had also the opportunity to express their views on improving the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline. Thus, 1/3 of all respondents’ responses indicated, "All is well". The following improvements were proposed relatively frequent:

* To emphasis more on practical activities, including organizing lessons/discussions with entrepreneurs.
* To pay more attention to the new teaching methods, such as simulation of entrepreneurial activities, working in groups, or case studies, using the success stories of former students.

Some respondents indicated the rationality:

* To attract more skilled teachers.
* To carry separate courses in Romanian and Russian.
* To organize seminars for young entrepreneurs.

## **3.3. Entrepreneurship Trainings**

Out of the whole sample of respondents, **74** (82.2%) have participated in business training courses organized for graduates of vocational schools.

80.8% of VET graduates, who participated in such training, appreciated its importance for their own career. Assessing the trainings generally, (32.9%) of the respondents indicated its *high importance* and (47.9%) of the respondents found the training *importance very high*. Only 2.7% said the trainings have *little importance*.

The importance of certain training topics vary significantly. The *Business-planning* topic got a "high importance" for the relative majority of respondents. *Marketing and market research* was of a "high importance" for (63.4%) of respondents; *Business idea development* for (58.0%); *Financial management* for (56.8%). Relatively fewer respondents appreciated the importance of the subject *Product description, and the technological process* (37.8%).

When the respondents participating in training were asked to indicate how the entrepreneurship trainings could be improved, almost half of them responded, there is no need to change anything. However, a few of the proposals were submitted:

* Increase the length of teaching the course, including a relatively larger number of themes related to business plan analysis as well as issues related accounting. These are the most common proposals.
* Improve teaching methods, with greater emphasis on practical activities; More frequent application of the „Teamwork” method, and other methods aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills.

**Table 7. Evaluate the importance of trainings for your future career, %**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***The training topics*** | ***Very high importance*** | ***High importance*** | ***Medium importance*** | ***Low importance*** |
| Business idea development | 58,0 | 31,1 | 9,5 | 1,4 |
| Business planning. Marketing and market research | 63,4 | 28,4 | 6,8 | 1,4 |
| Product description, the and the technological process | 37,8 | 43,2 | 14,9 | 4,1 |
| Management and staff | 45,9 | 43,3 | 8,1 | 2,7 |
| Financial management | 56,8 | 29,7 | 10,8 | 2,7 |
| The overall training evaluation | 47,9 | 32,9 | 16,5 | 2,7 |

## **3.4. Mini-grants Obtaining**

Twenty-seven (27) people (30%) of all the respondents, obtained mini-grants for their business development. When asked to what extent the grant obtained was needed to set up a business, almost three quarters of respondents (73.1%) indicated - *to a large extent*.

**Figure 7. To what extent the grant obtained was needed to set up a business? %**

25.9% of respondents indicated the direct link between the business establishment and getting the grant. 63.0% said that they would still have set up a business, even without obtaining the grant.

**Figure 8. Would you start a business, without obtaining the grant? %**

Respondents rated the procedure for grants obtaining as quite clear and understandable. 88.9% of respondents indicated that.

**Figure 9. Do you consider, the procedure for grants obtaining was quite clear and understandable? %**

## **3.5. Occupancy**

When job searching, VET graduates were faced with different problems. The most frequent ones were the following: *a very low level of remuneration proposed* (30.5%); *entrepreneurs are not interested to hire staff without work experience* (27.1%); *great competition on the labor market* (17.6%); *not enough knowledge on how to look for a job* (10.0%).

**Table 8. What problems have you encountered when seeking an employment/business establishment? %**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Problems*** | ***%*** |
| A very small salary proposed | 30,5 |
| Employers prefer to hire more experienced workers | 27,1 |
| High competition among specialists of my domain | 17,6 |
| There was no info about how can find a place for employment | 10,0 |
| My qualifications did not satisfy the employer | 6,2 |
| Other | 8,6 |
| Total | 100,0 |

The average time of a job search was 2.2 months.

Almost half (47.6%) of respondents indicated that they are employed in private companies. Simultaneously, a sufficiently large share of respondents (39%) indicated that they initiated their own business. Out of those, 32.9% set up a business and are self-employed, yet, 6.1% - set up a business and hire employees. However, some of the graduates indicated that they work simultaneously as employees and set up their own business. Only 4.9% of respondents are unemployed.

**Table 9. What do you do now? %**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Employment*** | ***%*** |
| I am employed (employee) | 47,6 |
| I set up a business, and am self-employed | 32,9 |
| I set up a business and hire employees | 6,1 |
| I'm unemployed | 4,9 |
| Other | 8,5 |
| Total | 100,0 |

The findings of the study demonstrate that more than a half of the VET graduates (51.2%) have a job that does not correspond to the profile of studies of the educational institution. Only 45.2% of respondents have a job corresponding to the profession studied.

**Figure 10. Activity profile corresponds to the profile of studies of the education institution? %**

Assessing the labor market, almost half of respondents (49.4%) believe there are no jobs for everyone who wants to work in Moldova. A slightly smaller proportion of respondents have an opposite view: there are enough jobs for everyone who wants to work in country (43.5% of respondents).

**Figure 11. Are there enough jobs for everyone who wants to work in Moldova? %**

Most respondents indicated the high importance of professional skills (58.8%). Entrepreneurial skills and initiative were also highly appreciated by 55.3% of respondents.

**Table 10. To what extent the obtained competences help in activity/business?**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Skills acquired*** | ***To high extent*** | ***To low extent*** | ***Hard to answer*** |
| Professional skills obtained at the educational institution | 58,8 | 34,1 | 7,1 |
| Entrepreneurial skills obtained at the educational institution | 55,3 | 34,1 | 10,6 |

2/3 of respondents (68.2%) need additional knowledge for the personal career development; and only 19.3% did not require new skills.

**Figure 12. Do you need additional knowledge for personal career development? %**

Embodying the knowledge they need, respondents indicated the following:

* To study in more detail some activity directions, primarily accounting, marketing, entrepreneurship etc.
* To pay special attention to practical activities and explain in detail each step.
* To learn more of normative acts and materials related to the activity chosen.

Graduates deemed possible to obtain such knowledge through specialized courses, higher education achievement, through the master classes, or own experience accumulation process.

Most of the respondents (66.3%) have never worked outside the country. At the same time, 1/3 of respondents (33.7%) have already worked abroad.

**Figure 13. Have you ever worked abroad? %**

Among those who already have work experience abroad, more than a half worked in Russia (56.7%) and 10.0% of respondents worked in Romania and 10.0% more in Turkey. A small number of respondents also worked in the Czech Republic, Italy, Germany, USA and Ukraine.

**Table 11. In what country have you worked abroad? %**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Country*** | ***%*** |
| 1. Russian Federation | 56,7 |
| 1. Romania | 10,0 |
| 1. Turkey | 10,0 |
| 1. Czech Republic | 6,7 |
| 1. Italy | 6,7 |
| 1. Germany | 3,3 |
| 1. USA | 3,3 |
| 1. Ukraine | 3,3 |
| Total | 100,0 |

The average number of months of work abroad was 10.7 months.

Being abroad, 80.8% of respondents have not worked the profession/specialty obtained.

Regarding the graduates’ plans on labor migration or emigration, most of them are not planning to go abroad for work (55.8%) or to emigrate (61.6%). However, about 1/5 are thinking about leaving to another country: 22.1% - for work and 18.6% - in order to emigrate.

**Table 12. If you have not worked abroad, please indicate if whether you plan to or not? %**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Plans related to labor migration and emigration.*** | ***Yes*** | ***No*** | ***Hard to answer*** |
| Are you planning to work abroad? | 22,1 | 55,8 | 22,1 |
| Are you planning to emigrate? | 18,6 | 61,6 | 19,8 |

## **3.6. Developing entrepreneurial career**

Thirty-five (35) people (39%) of all the respondents have set up their own business or became self-employed.

VET graduates indicated that different individuals and/or other factors have encouraged them to set up their own business. Most frequently among such people (42.0%) were family, close relatives. Every fifth respondent (20.0% of the sample) stated that teachers from the educational institution have encouraged them to establish a business. Examples of people in the entourage, who already have a business (16.0%), were also the highlights.

**Таble 13. Who have encouraged you to set up own business? %**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Source of encouragement to set up a business*** | ***%*** |
| Family, close relatives | 42,0 |
| Teachers from the educational institution | 20,0 |
| Examples of people in the entourage, who already have a business | 16,0 |
| Friends, neighbors | 8,0 |
| Success stories, read from the literature, Internet | 8,0 |
| Other | 6,0 |
| Total | 100,0 |

2/3 of the respondents (66.7%) indicated that it was not easy for them to start a business.

**Figure 14. Was it easy to start up a business? %**

The "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline had significantly influenced the students’ decision of starting their own business, which 78.8% of respondents indicated. For 15.2% of students the discipline did not have any major effect: the influence was insignificant for (6.1%) of the respondents, and had no effect at all for (9.0%).

**Figure 15. The "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline’s influence on the decision**

**to set up a business? %**

The businesses established by graduates, are not registered in most cases (77.4%).

**Figure 16. Is the business officially registered? %**

Explaining the reasons why they have not registered their businesses, young entrepreneurs mentioned first, the high rates of tax or turnover; small profit/income, which makes official business registration unprofitable. This could be observed directly or indirectly in most of the responses. Among other reasons for informal entrepreneurial activity, there were lack of space or agricultural land mentioned (for registering a farm), and the seasonality of several activities. Only one respondent mentioned the lack of financial resources for business registration.

The other 22.6% of respondents mentioned they registered their companies officially as a legal type of LLC or small agricultural farm (AF), or they are the holders of the entrepreneurial patent.

**Figure 17. If your business is officially registered, what type is it? %**

Estimating their business efficiency, most graduates – businesspersons (71.8%) mentioned, the income from their business provides them the living to some extent. Only 9.4% of respondents confessed, their business provides them totally, while 18.8% of them cannot even partially maintain their life expenses from the income they make of the business carried.

**Figure 18. Do your business revenues provide you the living? %**

Graduates owning an enterprise were asked the question, what prevents them the most from developing their own businesses? Most often, they mentioned the lack of financial resources. Other obstacles include: shortage of qualified personnel; general economic situation in the country; small domestic market and high competition; lack of experience; business problems, limited access to resources (lack of equipment, premises, expensive raw materials), as well as adverse conditions within the business environment, business-related legislation, taxation high rates, local government activity.

Analyzing the perspective for business/personal career development within one (1) year and five (5) years period, a relatively high percentage of respondents mentioned the intention to develop/expand their own businesses. About 48.6% of respondents see perspective for themselves within 1 year, and even more respondents (60.6%) rely on the perspective of increasing their business within 5-year period.

40.0% of graduates surveyed expect business maintaining on the same level within one (1) year, and a smaller share of respondents (33.3%) expect the business maintaining in more than five years.

Only 5.7% of respondents see the possibility of closing their own business within 1 year. In addition, the same percentage of respondents (5.7%) are planning to go abroad for job search or to emigrate.

**Таble 14. What are the perspectives for your business/personal career development within 1 and 5 years? %**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Career perspectives*** | ***in 1 year*** | ***in 5 years*** |
| Business development/expansion | 48,6 | 60,6 |
| Maintaining the business at same level | 40,0 | 33,3 |
| Closing the business and looking for a job as an employee | 5,7 | - |
| Labor migration or emigration | 5,7 | 6,1 |

The respondents expressed their need for support. First, the need of financial resources was mentioned (37.5%). The need of information was underlined to a smaller extent, (20, 0%), but also quite important; (15.8%) asked for consulting; and (13.3%) for training.

**Таble 15. What kind of support do you need to develop your career successfully? %**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Type of support*** | ***%*** |
| Financial resources | 37,5 |
| Information | 20,0 |
| Consulting | 15,8 |
| Training | 13,3 |
| Space | 10,8 |
| Other | 2,6 |
| Total | 100,0 |

The majority of the respondents (66.7%) do not know about the existence of organizations that can provide such support.

**Figure 19. Do you know the organizations that can provide such support? %**

The following organizations mentioned by respondents:

* CEDA (Centre for Entrepreneurial Education and Business Support);
* ODIMM (Organization for Development of Small and Medium Enterprises);
* IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development);
* AFA (Association of Business Women of Moldova);
* Business Center from Ceadâr –Lunga;
* ANARM (National Association of Beekeepers of Moldova);
* Evenda (Organization of training in management and business development);
* ACED (Agricultural Competitiveness and Enterprise Development Project);
* Business Incubator;
* AIPA (Payments and Intervention Agency for Agriculture);
* Financial institutions.

## **3.7. Results Analysis of the certain groups of respondents questioning**

A deeper analysis of the survey results through cross-correlation tables of two variables (cross tabulation from SPSS) allowed to identify and to compare respondents' answers with reference to the following groups:

1. The gender of respondents (men and women);

2. Depending on participation, respectively, non-participation in further trainings (post-VET);

3. Depending on the obtaining, respectively, failure to obtain the mini-grants for business development.

**The results presented below are focused only on those responses that identified relative differences, more than 3% within the groups analyzed.**

***Differences by gender***

A deeper analysis of respondents' answers of male and female sex allowed identifying a number of differences in their survey results. A group of female respondents was chosen as a core group, given that women typically need greater support in starting a business.

According to the survey results of female respondents, they indicated relatively frequent that:

* Women assessed the level of professional skills taught at the educational institution with *very high* indicator (50.0%, to the group average indicator of 42.2%). The male respondents most commonly assessed this indicator as *Medium* (75.0%, to the group average indicator of 57.8%).
* Overall, the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline was *very interesting* to the female respondents (47.6%, to the average group indicator = 39.0%). Male respondents more frequently appreciated the discipline as *interesting* (69.2%, to the average group indicator = 61.0%)
* The majority of women *evaluated highly* and appreciated the teaching methods of the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline as being acceptable and interesting. Unlike men, who used features of *average grade* or *lower grade* of appreciation. However, the girls (unlike boys) practically did not mention the *lower level* at all when assessing the teaching methods of the discipline.
* A greater number of women (44.1%) mentioned the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline as *significantly useful* to answer the question - how the profession obtained allows you to earn money (compared to the average indicator = 40.0 %).
* Entrepreneurship trainings have a *great significance* for women (48.6% compared to the average indicator = 39.7%). In addition, the female respondents found a *great importance* (44.1%) in the topic of human resources management (compared to the average indicator = 39.2%).
* Businesses initiated by women are *registered officially* almost two (2) times more often (42.9%, compared to the average indicator = 22.6%). Male respondents answered more frequently that businesses *are not registered* (83.3% compared to the average indicator = 77.4%).
* Business revenues *fully provide* the living to 66.7% of women respondents (compared to the average indicator = 25.0%). The vast majority of male respondents (82.6%) answered this question with - *To some extent* (compared with the average indicator = 75.0%).

Female graduates indicated relatively rare in the questionnaires that:

* Professional skills obtained at the educational institution, *greatly help* them in their work/business (36.0%, to the average indicator = 40.0%).
* Their current activity profile *corresponds* to their study profile at the educational institution (36.8%, to the average indicator = 40.5%).
* They once *worked abroad* (30.0%, to the average group indicator = 41.6%). Among respondents who have worked abroad relatively rarely, female respondents had *contracts signed* (20.0%, to the average group indicator = 26.9%). They worked relatively frequent in such countries as Romania, Italy and Turkey. The average duration of work abroad for girls was 3.5 months (boys - 12.7 months).
* Plan to *work abroad* (36.8%, to the average group indicator = 43.0%)
* Would *still have initiated a business*, even if *not obtained the grant* (5.9%, to the average group indicator = 22.2%). Male respondents answered relatively frequent, they would still have opened a business, even if had not obtained the grant (94.1%, to the average group indicator = 77.8%).

When comparing the differences between female and male respondents' answers, it is necessary to mention the following:

* The average VET graduation score, of female respondents was 8,8 which is higher than the male respondents’ (8.3).
* Analyzing the problems that graduates faced when seeking an employment/business establishment, female respondents mentioned relatively frequent the *employer’s dissatisfaction with their qualification* (53.8%), and relatively rare - *there was no information on how to find employment* - 23.8% (the average indicator of the group = 40.7%). The male respondents answered absolutely the opposite: the main problem indicated the most frequently was - *there was no information on how to find employment* - 76.2%; and relatively rare that - *qualification did not satisfy the employer* - 46.2% (the average indicator of the group = 59.3%).
* Assessing the employment during the interview, female respondents indicated relatively frequent they work as employees (53.1%, of all the girls’ respondents and 44.0% of boys of all the male respondents). Male Respondents have indicated frequently, they have set up their own business (48.0%), including 40.0% that work as)). Only 25.0% of female respondents have set up a business, and 21.9% of which are self-employed.
* When indicating who had encouraged them to set up their own business, female respondents relatively frequent used the option of success stories, read in literature, Internet (50.0%) and (40.0%) mentioned teachers of educational institution (the average group indicator = 24.1%). Male respondents usually mentioned friends, neighbors (100%, to the average group indicator = 75.9%).
* When answering the question regarding the needed support for graduates who own a business, female respondents mentioned relatively frequent, they *need training* (62.5%) and *information* (50.0%), the average indicator group = 34.9%. In addition, male respondents usually mentioned the need of *financial resources* firstly (71.1%) and the space (69.2%), the average indicator in the group = 65.1%.

***Differences by attending Post-VET trainings***

A deeper analysis of the responses of those who participated and respectively, who did not participate in further entrepreneurship trainings, allowed to identify a number of differences in the results of their surveys.

VET graduates who participated in additional entrepreneurship training sessions, mentioned relatively frequent that:

* The entrepreneurial competences obtained at the educational institution, helped them considerable in business activity (95.7%, to the group average indicator of 83.5%). Almost equally similar to – the entrepreneurial competences obtained during trainings (96.2%, to the group average indicator of 84.7%)
* The "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline significantly influenced their decision to establish a business (100.0%, to the average indicator group = 93.9%)
* They set up a business (being self-employed or employing staff). Thus, all the respondents who have set up their own business, attended entrepreneurship trainings previously (100% on average indicator on the group = 82.9%). They need spaces - 92.3%; relatively fewer have indicated that they need training and information 75% -79.2%, the average indicator being of 84.1%.
* They know about the existence of organizations that can offer support (100%, average group indicator of 84.1%).
* They have previously worked abroad - 86.7%, the average indicator in the group of 82.0%. More specific, they worked more often in such countries as Romania, Czech Republic, Italy, USA (100%, on average indicator of the group = 85.7%)
* They plan relatively less to go to work abroad (68.4%, to the group average indicator of 82.6%).
* They plan relatively less to emigrate (76.0%, to the group average indicator of 82.6%)
* There are jobs existing in Moldova for everyone who wants to work (94.6%, to the average indicator of 82.4% per group).

***Differences depending on grant obtaining***

A deeper analysis of respondents' answers those that obtained and respectively, who have not received the mini-grants for business development, allowed to identify the following differences in the results of their surveys:

Respondents, who received the mini-grants for business development, have indicated relatively frequent that:

* They set up their own business, moreover, they hire employees (100%) and (70.4%) established a business and are self-employed (the average group indicator being of 32.9%).
* Among the factors that have encouraged them to set up their own business, the relatively more important were (on average group indicator = 75.9%):
  + *Success stories, read from the literature, from the Internet (100%)*
  + *Examples of people who have a business in an entourage (87.5%)*
  + *Family, close relatives (81.0%)*
* They need a space (50.0%) and information (45.8%) - the average indicator of the group = 41.3%.
* They know about the existence of organizations that can provide support to SMEs (52.4% to the group average indicator of 39.7%)

# **4. RESULTS ANALYSIS OF TEACHERs’ questioning**

There were 14 VET teachers of the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline surveyed in the research

## **4.1. Evaluation of the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline**

All teachers surveyed (100%) stated that the introduction of "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline into the VET’s agenda was reasonable. The curriculum has been *appreciated highly* by 78.6% of teachers. The content of teaching materials and of the main modules of the discipline was appreciated by respondents at a high and medium level. The assessment results of the main modules of the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline were the following:

• Business Marketing (92.9% of respondents - the highest level)

• Business Planning (85.7%, respectively)

• Elements of management and risk management (78.6%),

• Entrepreneurship - a career option (57.1%),

• Financing and entrepreneurial activity records (42.9%).

**Таble 16. How do you appreciate the curriculum and the main modules of the**

**"Basics of Entrepreneurship” discipline? %**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Main materials*** | ***High level*** | ***Medium level*** | ***Low level*** |
| Curriculum | 78,6 | 21,4 | - |
| Main modules/topics of discipline |  |  |  |
| 1. Entrepreneurship - a career option | 57,1 | 42,9 | - |
| 2. Elements of management and risk management | 78,6 | 21,4 | - |
| 3. Financing and entrepreneurial activity records | 42,9 | 57,1 | - |
| 4. Business marketing | 92,9 | 7,1 | - |
| 5. Business planning | 85,7 | 14,3 | - |

The teachers generally appreciated the set of teaching materials on *a high level* (78.6%) and on a *medium* level (21.4%). Methodological guide for teachers and specification for students were assessed *highly* (by 85.7%) and the suggestions for lessons design by (78.6%).

**Таble 17. How do you evaluate the teaching materials prepared for this discipline? %**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Didactic materials*** | ***High level*** | ***Medium level*** | ***Low level*** |
| The overall evaluation of materials,  Including the: | 78,6 | 21,4 | - |
| *Guidelines for teachers* | 85,7 | 14,3 | - |
| *Specification for students* | 85,7 | 14,3 | - |
| *Tips for lessons design* | 78,6 | 21,4 | - |

The teachers were asked to suggest the improvements of the teaching materials they use. The main proposals on improving the teaching materials set (Methodological guide for teachers, Suggestions for lessons design, Specification for students) refer to the need of revising the module „Financing and entrepreneurial activity records”. It has to do, first with simplifying or exclusion of some topics related to accounting, bookkeeping, and balance sheets.

Some teachers’ proposals referred to:

* Introduction into the teaching materials of more concrete approaches on "Entrepreneurship - a career option," including the examples of success stories.
* Introduction into the discipline of the topics related to product and service quality compliance in Moldova to European standards, as well as other aspects of the market for European integration.

The teachers were also asked, what problems have they faced when teaching the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline? The following issues related to problems were indicated:

* Some topics are too complicated for students, primarily those related to accounting terms (balance sheet, financial accounts), as well as pricing, revenues, expenditures and organizational-legal forms.
* Some shortcomings in structuring of the teaching process were mentioned, and in particular:
  + A limited time to study the course;
  + The number of hours (lessons) in the educational plan is smaller than in the curriculum, which forces the teachers to combine several topics;
* Some teachers do not have sufficient pedagogical knowledge related to application of different modern teaching methods, particularly for students’ evaluation, for using practical examples on this topic, for increasing student interest to the discipline.
* Equipping with all the necessary tools for this discipline is insufficient - there is a lack of manuals, specifications for students.

When asked what kind of support do teachers need to improve the teaching this subject, the answers led to three groups of supportive measures:

1) Developing the material base, and especially:

* Provision of computers and proper furniture for the creation of specialized classrooms.
* Provision of didactic materials, primarily for students - manuals (that contain practical examples on the topic, both national and international), specifications, etc.

2) Improving the informational support, in order to solve the practical problems of initiating businesses (legislation package necessary, accounting documents for business activity, methods of business planning), including those for educational institutions. There was a way of informational support suggested by initiating an information portal.

3) Organizing training and seminars with experts, focused on:

* Improving the discipline teaching methods primarily related to the accounting accounts; updated tax rates information, presentation of case studies and concrete examples.
* [Acquaintance](http://hallo.ro/search.do?l=ro&d=en&query=acquaintance) with teaching methods related hours/class design.
* Intensifying the practical orientation classes, including enterprises involvement in cooperation with vocational schools.

The teachers were asked to share their opinion regarding the organization of the entrepreneurial activity within the educational institution – if students produce and commercialize the products/services according to the educational institution’s profile will it lead to different results, both positive and negative. Most of the respondents mentioned, *increasing the attractiveness of the educational institution* among the possible positive results (85.7% indicated that the outcome would be manifested mostly) as well as *strengthening the students’ entrepreneurial skills* (50.0%). Only 35.7% of respondents mentioned *strengthening the students’* *professional skills* and 30.8% - *additional income for the people involved*. 46.2% of teachers have found such a result (*additional revenue*) to be difficult to appreciate.

There were none of negative results considered as significant: none of the respondents indicated that *larger problems could arise* because of the additional tasks, or undesirable *conflicts among the staff* due to additional funds income. Although, again, the likelihood of the last scenario is not clear enough to all the respondents (42.9% of respondents found it *difficult to answer*).

Thus, here we can make an important conclusion: a sufficient number of teachers does not have a clear understanding of the benefits and constraints of introducing the entrepreneurship education to the institution: nearly half of the respondents (46.2%) found some questions difficult to answer.

**Таble 18. To what extent the organization of entrepreneurial activity within the educational institution – production and commercialization of products/services by students, according to the educational institution’s profile, will lead to the following results? %**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Expectations*** | ***Largely*** | ***To some extent*** | ***To a lesser extent*** | ***Hard to answer*** |
| 1. Increase the attractiveness of the educational institution | 85,7 | 14,3 | - | - |
| 1. Strengthening the students’ entrepreneurial skills | 50,0 | 50,0 | - | - |
| 1. Improving students’ professional skills | 35,7 | 64,3 | - | - |
| 1. Additional income for those involved | 30,8 | 23,0 | - | 46,2 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Problems and unwanted additional staff burdens | - | 28,6 | 50,0 | 21,4 |
| 1. Conflicts among staff because of the additional funds | - | 28,6 | 28,6 | 42,9 |

## **4.2. Teachers’ satisfaction in relation to their own activity**

The teachers had a chance to appreciate the satisfaction of teaching the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline in relation to the level of staff training, the teaching results, students' attitude, the possibility of skills level increase as well as equipment and relations set among the staff.

78.6% of respondents considered being fully satisfied with the level of personal education related to theoretical and professional training. Only 42.9% were fully satisfied with the methodological preparation, and 7.1% - unsatisfied.

The vast majority of teachers (92.9%) are fully satisfied with the possibilities of increasing their skills level (though, only one organization - CEDA currently handles the increasing of their qualification); 7.1% - unsatisfied. 64.3% of respondents are fully satisfied with the results of teaching the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline. Simultaneously, only one fifth (1/5) of respondents (21.4%) was fully satisfied with students' attitude towards this discipline. However, since the students appreciated highly the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline in their surveys, there is a possibility some teachers do not have the knowledge and skills to improve the student attitude.

**Таble 19. To what extent are you satisfied with teaching the "Basics of Entrepreneurship” discipline? %**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Satisfaction*** | ***Fully*** | ***Partially*** | ***Unsatisfied*** |
| Satisfaction with the level of personal education, including:  *Theoretical training* | 78,6 | 21,4 | - |
| *Professional training* | 78,6 | 21,4 | - |
| *Methodological training* | 42,9 | 50,0 | 7,1 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Satisfaction with the possibility of increasing the skills level | 92,9 | - | 7,1 |
| Satisfaction with the results of teaching | 64,3 | 35,7 | - |
| Satisfaction with the students' attitude towards this discipline | 21,4 | 71,5 | 7,1 |

42.9% of the respondents indicated, they are fully satisfied with the material resources of the institution; 50.0% - are partially satisfied, and 7.1% - unsatisfied. None of the respondents indicated they are fully satisfied with the remuneration, but 78.6% indicated, they are satisfied partially and 14.3% of respondents are not satisfied with their remuneration. Still, there are 7.1% - indicated, it was difficult to answer, which probably in reality means, they are also dissatisfied.

**Таble20. To what extent are you satisfied with the material resources? %**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Satisfaction*** | ***Fully*** | ***Partially*** | ***Unsatisfied*** | ***Hard to answer*** |
| Satisfaction with the material resources of the educational institution | 42,9 | 50,0 | 7,1 | - |
| Satisfaction with the remuneration | - | 78,6 | 14,3 | 7,1 |

The relations with the administration of educational institution as well as with students have been appreciated relatively positive (in both cases, 85,7% of respondents indicated, they are fully satisfied).

The relationships with colleagues was rated slightly worse (57.1% are fully satisfied). In addition, the psychological climate among staff was appreciated the worst: only 42.9% of respondents are fully satisfied, and more than a half of respondents are partially satisfied (50.0%) or dissatisfied (7.1%).

**Таble 21. Please, indicate to what extent are you satisfied with relationship among staff? %**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Satisfaction*** | ***Fully = 3*** | ***Partially = 2*** | ***Unsatisfied = 1*** |
| Relations with the administration of the educational institution | 85,7 | 14,3 | - |
| Relationships with colleagues | 57,1 | 42,9 | - |
| Relations with students | 85,7 | 14,3 | - |
| Psychological climate among | 42,9 | 50,0 | 7,1 |

# **5. RESULTS ANALYSIS OF questioning EMPLOYERS**

There were 13 employees interviewed in this study. Representatives of different sectors were surveyed: industry, agriculture, trade, catering and hotel services, other services.

During the last three years an undertaking of 6.5 graduates of technical vocational education were hired on average by the interviewed entrepreneurs. The respondents were listed as owners / co-owners (61.5%); businesses employees (38.5%); and most of them are managers (81.8%).

## **5.1. Assessing the preparedness of vocational-technical institutions graduates**

Employers appreciated the preparedness of graduates by the following criteria: high, medium or low. A relatively large number of employers (84.6%) appreciated the graduates’ preparedness as one of a medium; only 7.7% indicated a high level of preparation, and a lower level of training was mentioned by 7.7% of respondents.

**Figure 20. Level of graduates’ professional training, %**

Answering the questions related to the graduates’ qualities, the respondents mentioned the following:

- A 100% of them mentioned the *desire to work and honesty* as the most important qualities, over 92% of employers said *professional skills and responsibility* is also important, and nearly 85% have mentioned s*elf-control* of an employee as one of the qualities important and required to work.

- It is worth mentioning that *owning professional skills*, proved to be relatively less important in the opinion of entrepreneurs, than the *desire to work*. We can assume that entrepreneurs find continuing professional development as a relevant quality for the VET graduates through training at work, if only they wish to work.

- *Entrepreneurship and initiative* are considered less important for the employers. Only 38.5% of respondents mentioned *Entrepreneurship and initiative* as very important quality, while 15.4% of respondents indicated such criteria as an unimportant*.*

**Тable 22. What kind of qualities, above all, the graduates of technical-vocational education must be endowed with? %**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Qualities*** | ***Very important*** | ***More or less important*** | ***Unimportant*** |
| Willingness to work | 100,0 | - | - |
| Sincerity | 100,0 | - | - |
| Owning professional skills | 92,3 | 7,7 | - |
| Responsibility, self-control | 92,3 | 7,7 | - |
| Ethical qualities | 84,6 | 15,4 |  |
| Loyalty and compliance with corporate culture | 61,5 | 38,5 | - |
| Tendency of learning and growing | 61,5 | 38,5 | - |
| Communicability | 46,2 | 53,8 | - |
| Entrepreneurship and initiative | 38,5 | 46,1 | 15,4 |

In addition, the employers have been asked to assess to what extent the graduates have the above-mentioned qualities. The results are shown in **Table 23**.

Overall, the above listed qualities demonstrate that there is a high demand of them in business, much higher than the VET graduates can offer now. For example:

* A 100% of employers cited the *willingness to work* quality as a very much needed and a very important quality. Only 50% of employers have noted this significant quality present at the graduates employed within their enterprise; while the other 50% of respondents noted an insignificant existence of this quality at the graduates.
* The need of *professional skills quality* was mentioned by 92.3% of employers as a very important quality. Only 50% of employers have found the existence of this significant quality at the graduates they employed; while the other 50% of respondents noted an insignificant existence of this quality.
* The need for quality of *responsibility and self-control* was mentioned as a very important quality by 92.3% of employers. However, none of them found this quality developed at a significant level among the graduates; while an insignificant existence of such quality and even its absence - were recorded respectively by 50% of respondents.
* The quality need of the entrepreneurship spirit and initiative was mentioned by 84.6% of employers as a very important or more or less important quality; 15.4% of the employers considered it unimportant. However, none of the employers found a significant presence of such qualities in graduates they hire; an insignificant presence of such quality or even lack of it - was mentioned by respectively 50% and 50% of respondents.

The conclusion is that the following qualities must be emphasized when training students in order to better match the employers’ needs:

* The *willingness to work, sincerity, professional skills and ethical qualities owning* because they are very important to the employers, yet the VET graduates lack these qualities to a significant extent.
* The *spirit of the entrepreneurship and initiative, the responsibility and self-control. N*one of employers indicated that VET graduates have a significant extent of these qualities. At the same time, a half of employers reported, the graduates are missing these qualities.

**Тable 23. How do you assess the level of following qualities in graduates of technical-vocational education? %**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Qualities*** | ***Significant extent*** | ***Insignificant extent*** | ***Lack of*** |
| Willingness to work | 50,0 | 50,0 | - |
| Sincerity | 50,0 | 50,0 | - |
| Professional skills owning | 50,0 | 50,0 | - |
| Responsibility, self-control | - | 50,0 | 50,0 |
| Ethical qualities | - | 100,0 | - |
| Loyalty and compliance with corporate culture | 50,0 | 50,0 | - |
| Tendencies to learn and grow | 50,0 | 50,0 | - |
| Communicability | - | 100,0 | - |
| Entrepreneurship and initiative | - | 50,0 | 50,0 |

The employers came up with the following proposals, suggesting, what should be done to improve the students’ training in the vocational technical institutions:

1. To improve the quality of teaching, and especially:
   * More of practical training, combining theory with practice.
   * Development of entrepreneurship and initiative.
   * A greater attention gifted children.
   * Developing the right attitude towards one of the most precious resources - time.
2. To improve teachers’ professional training. Attracting more people with practical experience, as well as implementing new learning methods and techniques.
3. To improve the training process design: to reduce the theoretical period of study.
4. To equip the VET with modern equipment.

When asked to appreciate the importance of *entrepreneurial skills* of the VET graduates the employers reported the following: 84.6% of employers believe that the entrepreneurial skills are generally important to graduates: (46.2%) graded these skills as very important, and they are more or less important to (38.4%).

**Figure 21. To what extent the entrepreneurial skills are currently important to graduates? %**

Employers have been also asked to assess whether the skills related to business development could have a positive impact on employee’s activity results.

According to their opinion, an understanding of entrepreneurship bases by an employee may influence, primarily, on *caring attitude towards the working tools* *and equipment.* 69.2% indicated that the impact of these results is very possible. An *increased respect for someone’s property* may also improve the quality of work (i.e. by 53.8%). 61.5% of employers did not see the probable link between *graduates' skills related to business development and the growth of their initiative and innovation in the enterprise*, and/or the negotiation over *mutual agreement on remuneration*. That allows the conclusion that the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline pays insufficient attention to such topics as *initiative and innovation* and other useful qualities, necessary for the future *relations between the graduates and potential employers*.

**Таble 24. Employees’ better understanding of the way the business is conducted, could contribute to the following results? %**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Results*** | ***Very likely*** | ***Likely*** | ***Do not think so*** |
| Caring attitude to instruments and equipment | 69,2 | 23,1 | 7,7 |
| Increasing respect for someone’s property | 53,8 | 38,5 | 7,7 |
| Improving the work quality | 53,8 | 30,8 | 15,4 |
| Agreement / understanding / mutual negotiation on wages | 38,5 | 53,8 | 7,7 |
| Initiative and innovation growth | 38,5 | 38,5 | 23,0 |

## **5.2. Cooperation between the enterprise and the educational institution. Staffing needs at the enterprise**

Absolutely all the respondents (100%) stated, they are ready to cooperate even closer with technical vocational education institutions in order to improve the graduates’ professional training.

Analyzing the potential types of cooperation that would be of employers’ interest, the highest interest (61.5%) was demonstrated in *job offering to students*, and to the *internship offer* (without pay) - (53.8%).

The employers expressed a great interest in *organizing tours for students through the enterprise*, including *meetings with staff*, *acquaintance with modern technology* - (46.1); *entrepreneurs’’ participation in the professional qualification exams* at the school - (41.7%); *offering jobs to students or internships* - with partial or full remuneration of labor (38.4%).

A smaller number of employers (8.3%) have expressed great interest in *sponsorship,* and (23.1%) are ready to *participate in curriculum development* for technical vocational schools.

These results demonstrate that entrepreneurs are less interested in:

(а) *Investing resources* in VET’s activities or in some students (by paying for internship);

(в) Active *participation in the learning process*: curriculum development or participation in the exams.

Respectively, the employers have a better interest *in a job or an internships offer* (with no pay).

**Таble 25. What type of cooperation would be of your interest? %**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Type of Cooperation*** | ***High Interest*** | ***Medium Interest*** | ***Low interest*** |
| Offering jobs to students or internships - without remuneration | 61,5 | 7,7 | 23,1 |
| Employment entry for graduates | 53,8 | 15,4 | 30,8 |
| Organize tours for students through the enterprise, including meetings with staff, acquaintance with modern technology | 46,1 | 23,1 | 15,4 |
| Participation in professional qualification exams | 41,7 | 41,7 | 16,6 |
| Internship offer to students - with full or partial pay | 38,4 | 30,8 | 30,8 |
| Participation in curriculum development and production of professional-technical education institutions | 23,1 | 23,1 | 30,7 |
| Sponsorship | 8,3 | 33,3 | 33,3 |

Entrepreneurs’ opinion vis-a-vis the rationality of the fact that the educational institution, in addition to students’ training should be engaged in entrepreneurial activity - production and commercialization of products/services by involving students, was totally dispersed. A number of respondents (46.2%) indicated that it would be rational, but 38.5% - said, this is not appropriate.

**Figure 22. Do you think it’s appropriate, for educational institution, to be engaged in entrepreneurial activity - production and commercialization of products/services by involving students, in addition to students’ training?, %**

Estimating the staffing need, employers have noted the following professions/competencies that can be currently employed within their enterprise:

**Table 26. List of vacancies within the surveyed enterprises**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Nr.***  ***d/o*** | ***Competence (occupation)*** | ***Number of people / vacancies*** |
|  | Tailor/sewer/tricoter | 18 |
|  | Waiters | 15 |
|  | Workers (including auxiliaries) | 13 |
|  | Cooks | 11 |
|  | Computer operators | 7 |
|  | Tractor drivers | 6 |
|  | Sellers | 4 |
|  | Combine drivers | 2 |
|  | Electro mechanics | 2 |
|  | Hairdresser | 2 |
|  | Administrators | 2 |
|  | Driver- distributor | 1 |
|  | Cosmetologist | 1 |
|  | [Laboratory](http://hallo.ro/search.do?l=ro&d=en&query=laboratory) assistant | 1 |
|  | Shop assistants | 1 |
|  | Machinist | 1 |

**GENERALISED CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS**

***Generalized conclusions***

**"Basics of Entrepreneurship" Discipline**

The VET graduates appreciated the importance of several modules of "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline for their career differently:

* The high appreciation of the "*Business planning*" module can be attributed to the entire discipline to some extent, because the knowledge obtained by students from this module mostly have the [presumptive](http://hallo.ro/search.do?l=ro&d=en&query=resumptive) character.
* “Financing *and entrepreneurial activity records* " module denotes the fact that young people understand the importance of financial and economic calculations both at the initiation stage of business establishment and at conducting further business activities. In addition, despite the relative complexity of this module, graduates consider the knowledge about the main business activity: entrepreneurial records, accounting registers and reporting forms as a very important segment.
* The "*Elements of management and risk management*" module seems to provoke a relatively low students’ interest. Although its content is not very complicated, and the main topics of this module: general notions about management, with a focus on human resource management and business risks - are very important. A good knowledge of these matters could affect the company’s competitiveness (e.g., effective employee recruitment or motivation), or can help to avoid bankruptcy (minimizing the risks). It may be noted in conclusion that the teaching methods used were insufficiently interesting, there was no good examples used, if the students did not realize the importance of these topics. Training young people management skills and risk management is also important because these methods and techniques can be used effectively not only in business but also in other spheres of activity just as well.

When evaluating teaching methods, it can be noted, a relatively large share of students *appreciated highly* such methods as SWOT analysis, free discussion on a particular topic and projects presentation in "Power Point". Relatively *fewer respondents* mentioned they liked the interactive games and lesson methods using feedback. These methods are widely used and considered useful and interesting in teaching. This is why, it makes sense to continue organizing training sessions for teachers, to train them to apply these methods in an interesting manner with a focus on students’ entrepreneurial skills development.

Almost all the students indicated the importance of this discipline for, initiating a business, first, and for a job search as an employee to a smaller extent. Such result allows concluding that teachers have failed in transmitting students the importance of the entrepreneurial skills and initiative not only in business. Such skills may help young people in the future for not only self-employment or creating a business, but also in a wider context of any other spheres of activity, including family and social life.

Another interesting aspect of the study is that certain modules assessment done by teachers and graduates do not always coincide. For example, the module "*Elements of management and risk management*" has been evaluated much higher by teachers than the students. At the same time, the module "*Financing and entrepreneurship records*” was rated much lower by teachers than by students. One possible cause could be – the teaching material and the subject of financing and accounting itself are fairly complicated, which is why teachers, especially those, who do not have economic competencies, experience difficulties in understanding deeply the subject themselves, more so, in explaining the material to students. This largely explains the teachers proposals to improve teaching materials, especially those related to the "*Financing and entrepreneurship records* " module (mainly by simplifying or totally eliminating some topics related to accounting, records and accounts, balance sheet, etc.). Several respondents submitted such suggestions.

The main problems that teachers encountered, when delivering the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline were the following:

* Some topics are complicated for students, primarily those related to the accounting terms (balance sheet, financial accounts), as well as pricing, revenues, expenses and organizational-legal forms.
* There are deficiencies in teaching process design, and namely: limited time offered for course study; number of hours of course curriculum is greater than the national educational plan offers, which forces teachers to combine many topics.
* Teachers do not always have sufficient pedagogical skills to apply different teaching methods, particularly those related to students’ evaluation, using practical examples to each the topic, increase students’ interest to the discipline.
* There is an insufficient endowment with all the necessary materials - manuals, specifications for students.

**Entrepreneurship trainings**

Over 80% of graduates indicated that trainings in general have had very high importance. The importance though of certain training topics vary significantly. Similarly to the "Basics of Entrepreneurship", course evaluation, the VET graduates stresses the importance of such topics as "*Business Planning*" and "*Financial Management*" in trainings as well. Because people participating in the trainings are usually those, who have a high interest in setting up their own business, such topics as "*Developing business idea*" and "*Marketing and market research*" were also assessed relatively high.

From the other hand, the topic "*Management and staff*" gained relatively smaller interest (just like, when studying similar subject within the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline, while in VET). At the same time, the topic "*Management and staff*" has a greater importance to the female respondents versus male. In general, the role of individuals as the main business resource has greater importance for female respondents than for male ones. Relatively, fewer respondents appreciated the importance of the topic "*Product description technological process*". In order to reinforce the importance of this issue for students, it is necessary to take into account the particularities of their future professional activity, to link them to the technological process development. Even the equipment distribution in the room and other compartments of the operational (production) plan have to be linked directly to the potential business they might create.

**Employment, self-employment, and the VET graduates entrepreneurship carrier**

The VET graduates have faced a number of problems, when searching for a job: low salary; entrepreneurs are not interested to hire staff without work experience; great competition on the labor market; scarcity of information about how to search for a job etc. Setting up their own business is an additional opportunity to earn a living without being employed. The **"Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline significantly influenced students to establish a business.**

Almost half of the respondents indicated, they are employed. At the same time, a sufficiently large share of respondents (almost 40%) indicated that they initiated their own business. Female respondents indicated more frequently, they work as employees; when male respondents indicated relatively frequent, they set up their own business. Interestingly enough, all the respondents, who participated in entrepreneurship trainings, have set up their own businesses (either being self-employed or employing staff).

Some of the graduates reported, they work as employees, but at the same time, set up a business of their own. Combining business with salaried work can be explained by the insufficient level of income from the entrepreneurship. Thus, most graduates-entrepreneurs indicated that their business revenues provide them the living only to some extent. This phenomenon of joint careers in two fields is a very positive thing at the early stage of professional development, as it offers the graduates a higher social protection and mobility. Any external change influencing one or the other kind of activity will result in immediate and comfortable career reorientation.

The low income is largely explained by the fact that businesses set up by graduates, are not registered in most of the cases. Explaining the reasons behind this, young entrepreneurs, pointed primarily, the high rates of taxation or small turnover /profits / revenue /, which makes the business registration unprofitable. It is important to note though, that female respondents register their own business more frequent than the male.

When analyzing the perspective of business/personal career development within one (1) or five (5) years’ time period, a relatively larger share of respondents indicated, they intended to develop/expand their businesses in time.

Among the main barriers that hamper business development, the graduates named most frequently the lack of financial resources; the shortage of qualified personnel, the general economic situation in country, small domestic market with the high competition and the low experience in the field.

In terms of the support the graduates-entrepreneurs need, the female respondents mentioned frequently the need for training and information, when the male respondents indicated, the need for financial resources and the space at first. 2/3 of the respondents did not know about organizations that can provide such support. Which probably means that business support organizations do not consider the VET students as their target group and do not offer their services too actively. However, interestingly enough the graduates, who participated in entrepreneurship trainings, do know about the organizations that can offer support.

About 30% of all the graduates surveyed, got the mini-grants for business development. ¼ of them have underlined the direct link between the establishment of their own business and getting the grant. Almost two-thirds (2/3) of them though said, they would still have set up a business, even if they would not obtained the grant. Thus, the opportunity to participate in additional entrepreneurship trainings and the possibility to obtain mini-grants for setting up their own businesses increased the opportunity for young people to establish an enterprise.

Over a half of the VET graduates have a job profile that does not match their study profile from the educational institution. One of the reasons mentioned – there are no jobs in Moldova for everyone, who wants to work (nearly half of the VET graduates believe that). The lack of jobs on the labor market of Moldova lead to the fact that 1/3 of the respondents already managed to work abroad.

Speaking of graduates’ future plans of job migration or emigrate, it is nice to admit that most of them are not planning to go to work abroad, or to emigrate. However, about 1/5of them are thinking about leaving for another country. Graduates who participated in trainings after graduating educational institutions relatively rare plan to go to work abroad or to emigrate.

The vast majority of employers, who reviewed the preparedness of VET graduates to work at their enterprises, appreciated the level of their professional qualification as a medium one. Thus, the employers are not completely satisfied with VET graduates’ preparedness to work. On the other hand, the graduates appreciated the level of their professional skills much higher than the employers did. Thus, it is worth mentioning that employers and graduates appreciate the quality of VET education differently*.*

**Strengthening cooperation of enterprises with VET**

All the respondents demonstrated their readiness to cooperate closely with the professional-technical educational institutions in order to improve the staff training. However, the types of cooperation analysis showed that the employers are mostly interested in offering jobs or internships (without remuneration) to students. Accordingly, the entrepreneurs are less interested to; (a) invest resources in VET activity or some in students (payed internship); (b) to participate more actively in the learning process – attending the professional qualification exams. In other words, despite the fact that the employers need more professionally trained staff, they are not completely ready yet to contribute with the most significant resources - funds and time – in order to improve the VET students’ readiness.

Employers were also asked to assess what kind of qualities, the graduates of technical vocational education should have. The most important qualities named were: the willingness to work; sincerity; possession of professional skills; responsibility, self-control and ethical qualities. It is worth mentioning that having professional skills, in the opinion of entrepreneurs, proved to be relatively less important than the desire to work. The conclusion is that entrepreneurs consider it is appropriate to train professional skills of VET graduates only if they wish to work.

Analyzing the level of the above-mentioned qualities, the employers mentioned that they clearly have greater need of these qualities to enter into their enterprises, than the VET graduates can offer them. Among the less important qualities for employees, according to the employers, is the entrepreneurship spirit and initiative. This is the only quality that a number of employers have rated as an unimportant one, mentioning that the graduates are endowed insufficiently with this quality, or it is missing completely. Therefore, an entrepreneurship spirit and initiative as a quality should be paid more attention to, when in training.

The employers were asked whether the graduates’ entrepreneurial skills could have a positive impact on the results of employee’s activity. Almost 2/3 of employers indicated no link between the graduates’ skills and the entrepreneurial initiative and innovation increase. This leads to a conclusion that there is an insufficient attention offered to the entrepreneurial initiative and innovation as a quality within the education process at the VET. These qualities are not too important for owners/ businesses managers either. What interests them the most is professionalism and employees responsibility?

**Expectations related to the organization of entrepreneurial activity/activities generating additional revenue (AGV) at VET**

The **VET** teachers expressed their opinion on organization of entrepreneurial activity within the educational institution and in accordance to the institution’s profile - production and commercialization by students of products/services. Will that lead to a different result?

The positive results of the entrepreneur activity that teachers identified, where the following: increase of the institution’s attractiveness and strengthening students’ entrepreneurial skills (the majority of respondents indicated such benefits). The possibility of additional income for those involved was found questionable - almost half of the teachers indicated that it is difficult to evaluate such an outcome.

At the same time, teachers have not mentioned any significant adverse effects, although many do not exclude the likelihood of conflict appearance among staff because of additional funds. Thus, the conclusion can be made here that a sufficient number of teachers do not have a clear understanding of the benefits and effects related to the possible introduction of the entrepreneurship/income generating activities (AGV) into the educational institution

The entrepreneurs’ opinion about the rationality of the introduction of the entrepreneurship/income generating activities (AGV) into the educational institution - production and commercialization of products/services by involving students - was divided: a slight majority of the respondents (46 2%) stated it would be rational; still 38.5% - said, it is not appropriate. Therefore, in order to promote entrepreneurship development policy within the VET, it is necessary to work not only with VET teachers but also with the entrepreneurs - potential partners also. It is important to explain the benefits and opportunities yet minimizing the risks.

***Proposals based on the results and conclusions***

**А) Proposals for teachers involved in the "Basics of Entrepreneurship” discipline delivery:**

*To pay more attention to the following discipline’s modules and topics:*

* The "*Financing and entrepreneurial activity records*" module that students appreciated higher than teachers. The possible causes is - lack of profile knowledge and skills of some teachers, which makes it difficult for them to understand yet explain the economic and financial topics included in the Curriculum. A particularly difficulty is faced, when teaching the topics related to accounting, financial reporting forms completion, accounting records. The solution should include a review of this module and complementing it with examples that are more practical. At the same time, the initial training should be offer to teachers in order to better prepare them for this particular subject.
* The "*Elements of management and risk management*" module presents a relatively lower interest for students. The possible causes could be - the use of insufficiently effective teaching methods. The solution would be, to apply new methods that would allow students to convey the importance of human resource management and risk minimization. It is important to explain to students that an individual-employee is the main company’s resource in the modern economy.
* The importance of topics related to the „*product description and technological process*” is not fully appreciated by the students. The possible causes for this could be – the lack of knowledge/special professional skills of some teachers, related to study profile’s technology and machinery. Students receive this knowledge in other classes., However, it is important in this context, that teachers who deliver the "Basics of Entrepreneurship “discipline work closely with other specialists-colleagues from the institution (per profile study) in order to deepen their own knowledge and to further help students.

*To use more modern teaching and training methods:*

* To put greater emphasis on practical orientation of education (this was mentioned both by students and teachers and even by employers). For example, when explaining the procedures of business registration, or teaching students to work with legal document; enter the website of the State Registration Chamber, download and complete all the documents by yourself; if there questions, look for help online, try to find the organizations/individuals that can provide the necessary support.
* To commonly use in class more practical "live" examples from the region/locality, in order to illustrate the theoretical theses. For that matter, it is important to invite practitioners into class (entrepreneurs, active members of professional associations, and business local government representatives), who would share their career experience, would talk about way and methods to overcome the barriers, about their successes. It makes sense to invite to the class young entrepreneurs - graduates of vocational schools who have achieved success. This would allow VET students to understand better how young people managed to establish a business in the current business environment, what problems they encountered and how did they solve them.
* To organize study tours to the enterprises with similar profile to their study within the district/city. At the enterprises, to accustom students with the technological process organization and equipment, giving them the opportunity to ask questions to employees and managers.
* To involve students more actively in the learning process, making it common - the teacher here becomes more of a facilitator/mentor. To use commonly such methods as simulation of entrepreneurial activities, group work, successful examples.
* To update permanently the information presented in the teaching materials set, taking into account changes in legislation, tax rates, and other important information.
* To create a folder with the main materials needed: laws, policy documents, normative-legal acts, regulating the entrepreneurial activity in the country. To have all the registers forms, by hand the main accounting and reporting forms, the list of business support organizations that can provide the necessary support to young entrepreneurs.
* To teach students to use the Internet for studying the basics of entrepreneurship and further entrepreneurial activity. By explaining that the currently available information allows them to find funding, to improve their skills/qualifications, to obtain counseling and other support. Teachers should have a database of email addresses of Web pages where students can get access to important documents and business support institutions.

*To offer more attention to training students such qualities and skills as:*

* Willingness to work, Sincerity, Possessing professional skills, Responsibility, Self-control, Ethical qualities. It is important to explain to students the role of taxes paid by businesses to the state budget, how and where these amounts are directed (education, healthcare, benefits for those in need, etc.). Students need to understand how valuable the entrepreneur’s reputation is, as well as of any other citizen’s, or legal activity’s.
* Entrepreneurship, initiative and innovations in business and in life in general. There is no successful career nowadays without such skills. When it comes to business, it is important to mention that innovations are the main factor of increasing competitiveness in the long term.
* The skills of using the Internet for personal or entrepreneurial development, and in a longer run – for setting up a business.

*To organize "Seminars of young entrepreneurs" for students on a voluntary basis*

*To participate permanently in continuing professional development -* independently and in trainings organized by various institutions (Ministry of Education, ODIMM, CEDA, etc.)

*To explain to the students, these skills obtained that could be used not only for business development* but can also help to achieve other vital purposes in work and in social life (e.g. organizing family budget; career development etc.)

**B) Proposals for VET leaders/managers:**

* Explains to teacher that the new possibilities and benefits related to educational reform, in particular the possibility to organize the entrepreneurial activity within the VET in accordance to the institution’s profile - production and commercialization of products/services with student involvement.
* Invite university or college professors that are more prepared to conduct an open lecture (or short courses) in entrepreneurship for VET students and teachers.
* Find financial possibilities to develop material resource base, and in particular: (a) increase the number of computers; create specialized classes, including the one for the FE discipline, respectively provided with computers and furniture; (b) improve teaching materials, insure students with manuals, specifications, etc..
* Involve entrepreneurs more actively in economic cooperation with vocational schools. The employers realize the importance of such collaboration for their businesses. This would allow increasing the level of students’ training, because their skills will better match the future employer’s needs.
* Offer more attention to the psychological climate among staff, even if relations between the management of the institution and the teachers seem to be good for leaders.

**С) Proposals for supporting institutions that cooperate with VET:**

* When developing the educational programs it is necessary to consider VET students as a target group that needs to develop professional and entrepreneurship skills and to support them in starting a business. Currently, many graduates do not know about the existence of the institutions/organizations that could provide the necessary support.
* When organizing trainings and seminars for (potential) young entrepreneurs - VET students and graduates, take into account the specifics of the entrepreneurial activity sectors where they have the professional skills and work experience.
* When training teachers in continue educational activities/seminars, pay attention to: (a) the use of modern teaching methods of the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline; (b) studying further (in-depth) the issues related to accounting and finance; (c) update the information related to legislation, tax rates changes; (d) improve the methodological organization of teaching and evaluation process.

**D) Proposals to the governmental regulatory institutions that regulate the activity within the education and business, domains, including SMEs:**

* To promote the idea and the need for close cooperation between the VET and businesses. To boost the contacts with employers, and to explain, it is in their interest to participate in improving the VET student’s education.
* To return to the initial teacher training for the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline. An optimal solution would be to introduce this discipline to pedagogical faculties at the universities.
* To strengthen the teachers training system for those involved in delivering the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline. As known, some VET teachers that offer this discipline have no economic studies, while others have insufficient pedagogical knowledge and skills.
* To revise the Curriculum and increase the number of hours for the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline, which would allow to include a relatively larger number of topics and study them in-depth (in particular, business plans development, accounting and reporting, compliance with quality standards of production and services in Moldova and foreign markets, etc.).
* When revising the teaching materials set:
  + Simplify the material exposure within the "*Financing and entrepreneurial activity records*" module, making it more accessible for students (pay attention especially to, balance sheet, accounts accounting, pricing, revenues and expenses).
  + Include more concrete examples and success stories into the modules "*Entrepreneurship - a career option*" and "*Elements of management and risk management* ".
* Keep an opportunity for beginners-entrepreneurs to use simplified forms of entrepreneurial activity without creating business - via entrepreneurial patents (permits) or other simple legal forms.
* Provide free access to the VET teachers and students to the necessary methodical documents on the website of the Ministry of Education. Now, the curriculum text and the set of teaching materials can be find easily on the CEDA’s NGO websites. However, it is quite difficult to find the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline’s curriculum and the set of teachers and students materials on the Ministry of Education’s website.

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The results of this research, conclusions and proposals can serve as basis for improving the teaching of the "Basics of Entrepreneurship" discipline at the VET. In a broader context, research results can have a positive impact on entrepreneurship education at different levels of education, thereby triggering the entrepreneurial potential of young people, reducing the scale of labor migration and emigration of young people from Moldova.

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