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**Project: "Facilitation of Regional Professional
Education in Agriculture and Rural development in
EaP countries"**



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I. INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, especially after the signing of the Association Agreement (AA) with the European Union (EU) on 27 June 2014 in Brussels, there took place structural changes, the modernization and the vertiginous development of various sectors of the national economy. As efforts are consistent with the launch of various budget support programs, investment projects and EU-funded technical assistance, the immediate benefits are very relevant and palpable to the production and export of goods and services, and less to education and HEALTH. In these areas, structural changes are slower due to specificities, and the positive effects of change and development will be felt later in the medium and long term.

The sphere of science, education and vocational education is a major impact on the economic recovery and the national agricultural sector, especially agriculture and rural development.

The more developed and educated society, the more sustainable development of the economy and the country.

Speaking about Agricultural Technical Vocational Education (VET abbreviation "Education and training"), most of the students of this profile are certainly from rural areas, for whom the training of agricultural specialists is, in fact, the formation of the qualified resource in the environment rural areas, implicitly ensuring rural development and, in a wider context, sustainable rural development. During the last years, the migration of the young population from rural to urban areas has seen large increases, but access to major projects funded by the European Union (EU), the World Bank (WB), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (FIDA) and investments through the European Bank Investment (EIB) has enabled the Republic of Moldova to facilitate the start-up of small and medium businesses in such industries, as meat, milk, wine cellars, traditional products, agribusiness development and agro-tourism.

In this context, the role of VET agricultural education and formation is increasing and is to ensure labor market demand in line with the training needs required by young people and the business environment in rural areas. A major current problem of the agricultural sector and rural development of the Republic of Moldova is the lack of qualifications and youth, which ensure the quality, quantity and innovation of agricultural holdings in the process of modern market competition. According to data from the National Employment Agency (ANOFM), approx. 85% of business enterprises in the Republic of Moldova face with the problem of lack of skilled labor, enterprises require a higher level of professionalism or specific skills of the employers. In the agricultural sector approx. 55% of qualification certificates have a job incapacity that could be included in the production process.

Thus, in the current context, labor markets, agrarian and rural-related education require recasting, by adapting study programs and developing the skills required by the labor market and the business environment. Immediate efforts and actions are needed, to develop youth education in the field of agriculture through partnerships between educational institutions and the business environment with dual formation programs leading to practice and learning based on learning.

At present the study conducted by NGOs for regional cooperation to assess the existing situation and the needs of VET education in the northern region of the Republic of Moldova, in an area of 13 districts and 68 rural localities, represents the opinions, suggestions and potential solutions for improvement the situation in the field of background of 120 representatives of the business environment, civil society and local public administration, as well as 100 students and graduates of agricultural education institutions and related to rural development.

2. PROJECT SCOPE

The overall aim of this study was to assess the existing situation, problems and needs of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in agriculture and in the rural sector of the Northern region of the Republic of Moldova - to identify what kind of competencies, interventions and what type of training are needed to improve the situation in the field in the future.

The objectives of the study included: elaboration and implementation of the evaluation study of the existing situation in the field of vocational education in the Northern region of the Republic of Moldova, identification of persistent problems and gaps, familiarization and discussion of these issues with key actors in the field and identification of solutions for improving the situation on future. The information needed to prepare this study report was collected through the direct interview method of 2 categories (Category I - Stakeholders and Category II - VET students and graduates) and 4 target groups of beneficiaries from 13 districts and 68 rural localities in the North Region:

- 56 representatives of the SME sector - a major target group of the business sector from which it received detailed information on labor supply issues, the inclusion of young VET graduates in the production processes and cooperation with vocational education centers in the region in the domain of agriculture and rural development sectors (Category I - Stakeholders);

- 38 representatives of the Public Sector - from which it received information on the implementation in the field of the field of vocational education and employment of young specialists in the real economy and the public sector (Category I - stakeholders);

- 26 representatives of the NGO Sector and Regional Consulting and Education Centers - in organizing and implementing professional education, including technical vocational training, from which it has received information with the organization of the training and education process, the problems and solutions related to the teaching process and the co-operation of these institutions with the businesses (Category I - Stakeholders);

- 100 students and graduates of professional agricultural and rural education institutions, being based on their own experience, reported on the current situation and the problems of this sector, as well as the way of integration into the labor market after completing the studies (Category II - VET students and graduates).

Field work has been supplemented with interviews and meetings with key actors in the agriculture and rural development field and tangent or collaborating with VET institutions. Previously, on the basis of informal discussions on some questions, a list of competences and subjects, which are the most essential and necessary to ensure adequate agricultural education in the rural sector for a better integration into the workplace, has been developed. Some questions have been opened, with the possibility for respondents to express their views.

The elaborated questionnaires included all the moments related to the creation of a constructive dialogue between the data collectors and the interviewed students and stakeholders, which allowed to obtain answers to all the questions and primary data that make possible the analysis of the studies impact among the graduates of the VET institutions and finally to formulate conclusions and recommendations aimed at making the teaching process more efficient and practical within them.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The organization and implementation of this study included the following steps:

- Development of tools for the implementation of the study 2 Qualitative interview questionnaires for stakeholders (Annex 1 - representatives of SME sector, Public Sector and NGO).
- Sector and Regional Consultation and Education Centers, and students and graduates of professional agricultural and rural education institutions (Annex 2);
 - sampling intervention sectors and identifying people for formal interviews;
 - Implementation of the evaluation study of the existing situation in the field of vocational education in the Northern region of the Republic of Moldova through formal questioning at the headquarters of the entities or in the workplaces of 220 respondents from 4 groups belonging to the beneficiaries;
 - collecting the primary information represented by 220 questionnaires;
 - Development of 2 databases (120 stakeholders and the current VET students or graduates) for analysis and interpretation of primary data;
 - elaboration of study report, conclusions and recommendations for improving the situation in the respective field in the future;
 - dissemination of the study results within the frame of Regional Workshop informing the decision makers in the Northern region of the Republic of Moldova.

Working techniques

As far as the quantitative information is usually collected in a numerical form and the qualitative one in an empirical form, in the case of this study, 2 types of questionnaires were used for collecting the information, some questions being similar and of control for all 4 target groups. More qualitative method based on compilation of descriptive information using questionnaires based on the 1 to 5 scale response checklist for evaluating performance, problems, constraints, and where possible, open questions to collect information by expressing the respondents' own opinions. Data analysis was based on two techniques also used in other similar research studies:

- **Statistical method:** Based on collected questionnaires, the relation database of interviewed beneficiaries created with the help of IBM SPSS Statistics software.

- **Content analysis:** This technique was based on the analysis of questionnaire data and field meetings with representatives of relevant institutions and organizations, students and graduates of VET institutions.

The methodological approach used in the elaboration of the study was supported in the integrated use of quantitative and qualitative methods:

The quantitative method was based on the random selection of the beneficiaries for evaluation and analysis, but from a well-defined environment according to the two categories and 4 target groups of beneficiaries. This work method included the complete use of survey tools, statistical clusters, comparison methods, etc..

The qualitative method survey required satisfactory results on the situation and exposures of the beneficiaries in the formal interview process, this method proved to be less effective for the analysis of educational processes or for institutional analyzes. In many cases, some beneficiaries were not enough honest or open to exhibiting, analyzing and interpreting the problems they face or faced in the studies. Therefore, in addition to the survey data, the textual data and direct observations were also used on the groups of direct beneficiaries or beneficiaries previously collaborated with NGO Pro Regional Cooperation.

4. SURVEY OF STAKEHOLDERS OF THE CURRENT JOB MARKET DEMANDS IN AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN NORTH REGION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Within the study according to the applied methodology a qualitative assessment of the existing situation, problems and needs of technical vocational education in agriculture and the rural sector of the Northern region of the Republic of Moldova was made on a sample of 120 stakeholders (representatives of the SME sector, Public Sector and NGO Sector) from 12 districts (Edinet, Donduşeni, Soroca, Drochia, Floresti, Soldanesti, Rîşcani, Glodeni, Falesti, Telenesti, Singerei, Ungheni) and Balti municipality with a total of 13 cities and towns and 38 localities.

The sample of VET students and graduates who have done their studies in the northern Moldovan institutions, although included only 100 respondents, they had a much larger geographical distribution area and included 22 districts (it accounted for about 62% of the total territorial administrative units of the Republic of Moldova: Edinet, Briceni, Donduseni, Ocnita, Soroca, Drochia, Floresti, Soldanesti, Risani, Glodeni, Falesti, Telenesti, Orhei, Singerei, Ungheni, Cahul) and Balti with a total of 22 cities and towns and 68 localities.

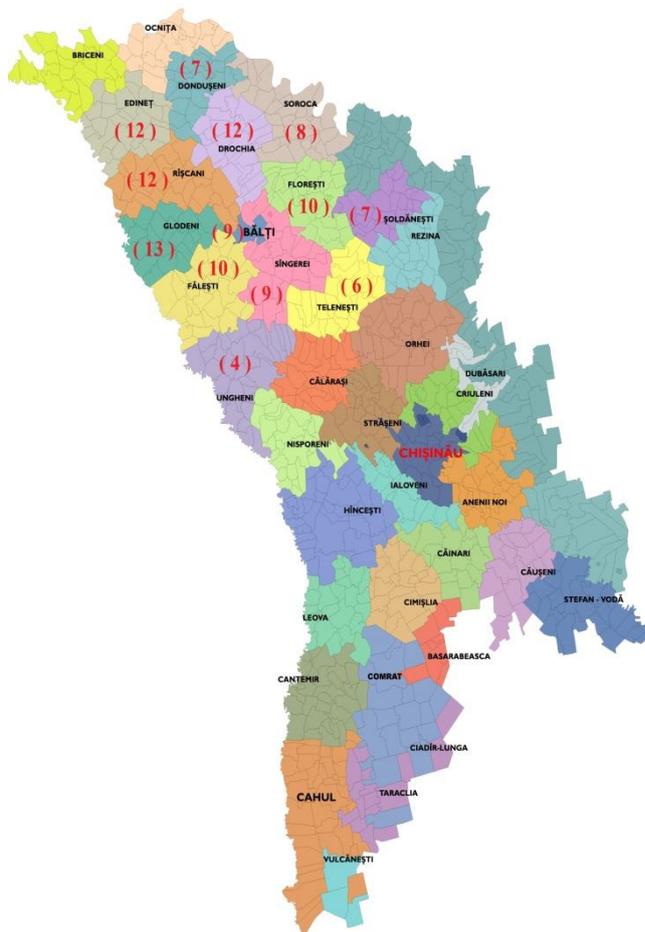


Figure 1. Map of distribution of respondents of the civil society and local public administration

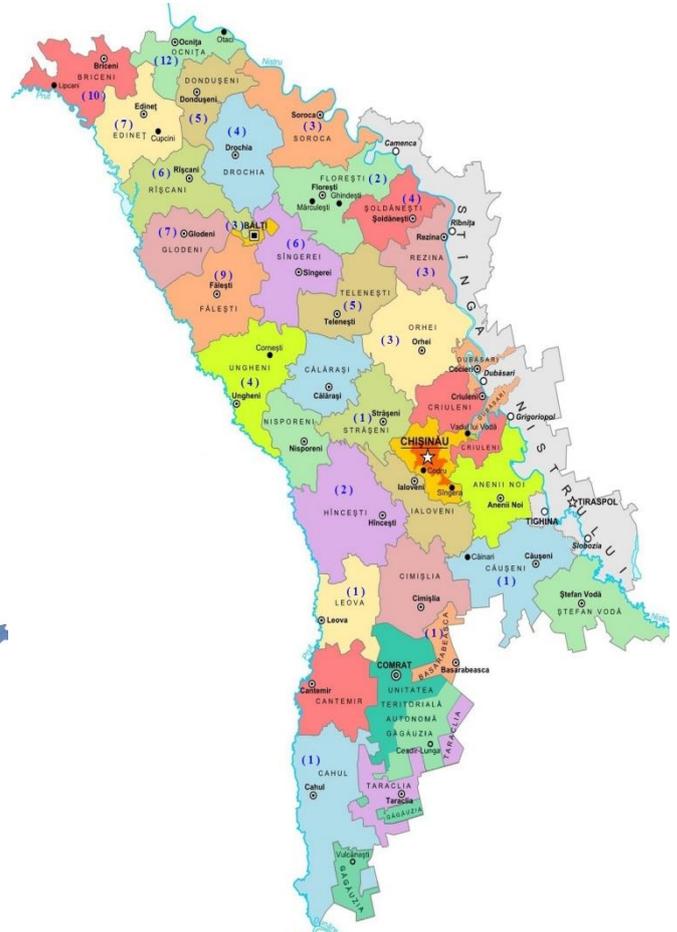


Figure 2. Map of the distribution of respondents studying or graduate VET centers

The territorial distribution presented is a primary finding, indicating that although the interviews were conducted in the Northern part of the Republic of Moldova, the obtained findings and results have an inclusive incidence and on general situation regarding technical vocational education in agriculture and the rural sector on the level of the whole country.

4.1. Type of organizations included in the studies

In the survey on the existing situation, issues and needs of technical vocational education in agriculture and the rural sector, of the 120 respondents in the sample of stakeholders, 56 interviewees (or 46%) were representatives of the SME sector, 38 interviewed (or 32%) were representatives of the Public Sector and 26 interviewed (or 22%) were NGO representatives. Thus, approx. 78% of those interviewed are the beneficiary directors - employers of VET graduates and 22% NGO representatives, are institutions that most often work together with VET institutions to develop practical training programs and to attract youth into the workplace agricultural and rural sectors.

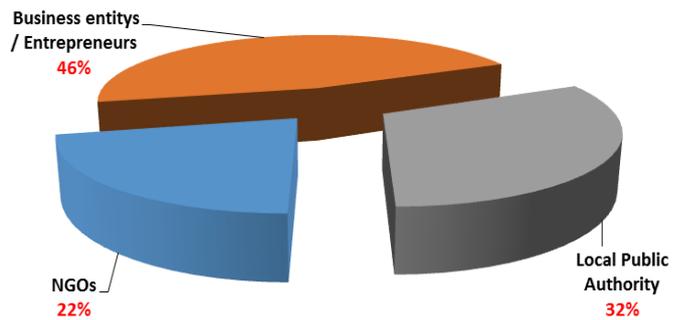


Figure 3. Type of organisation in the study

4.2. Accessibility of information about VET institutions

Out of the total 120 respondents in the sample of stakeholders, 62 people (about 52%) say that the information provided by the vocational education institutions is easily accessible for different age groups and especially for young people, and 58 respondents (about 48%), states that the information provided by VET institutions is not so easy to use or not used at all. Thus, we find that the interview sample was approximately 50 to 50, represented by young respondents from the sample of stakeholders, who are concerned with VET education, not so technical (purely agricultural and rural) but technical and related to other opportunities that these institutions open for young people willing to work. On the other hand, approx. 48% are older respondents, say that VET institutions have to output good technicians, and other managerial options can be acquired in the professional activity or similar professional experiences that these people have had.

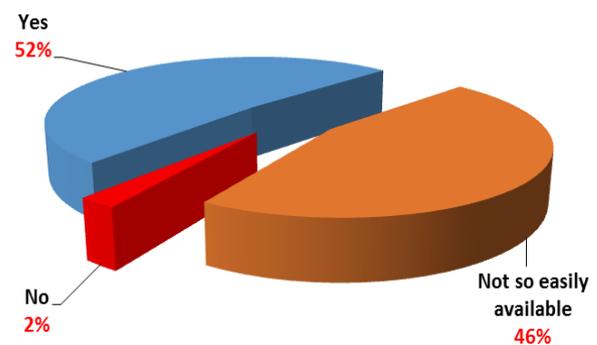


Figure 4. Accessibility of information about VET institutions

4.3. Evaluation of the level/quality of education programs in agricultural sector provided by local VETs

According to relevance and overall assessment of agricultural education programs provided by VET education institutions around. 47% of the respondents stated that their quality is good and very good, on the other hand approx. 40% of respondents say that the quality of studies is mediocre (average) (average), and 13% say that the quality

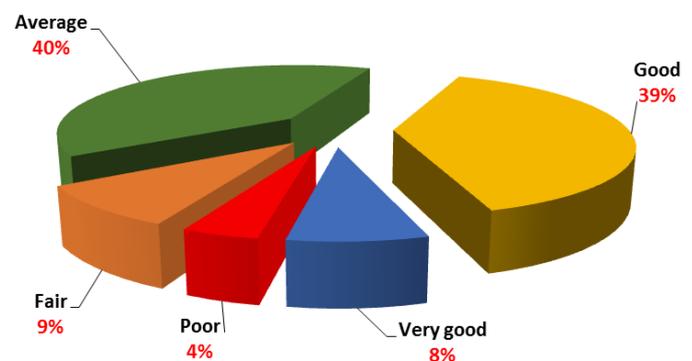


Figure 5. Evaluation of the level/quality of education programs in agricultural sector provided by local VETs

of studies is poor and fair. According to the respondents, the knowledge and experience of the agricultural and rural profile are still obtained primarily through specialized studies, previously supplemented by specific training in these fields, which they had during the management of the business, working in the public institutions. For these reasons, the respondents argue that combining studies in VET institutions with dual training in business or public institutions would bring a higher quality to them.

4.4. The major problems identified in education sphere in agriculture sector

This question has attempted to assess the severity of the major issues in the agricultural education sector in general and in the VET training institutions in particular (5- major problem / most problematic, 1 - less major / less problematic).

Regarding the correspondence of education programs to the needs of the labor market, approx. 42% of respondents say that it is a major problem and about the same percentage (42%) that it is a problematic environment, this being argued by the fact that there are many objects in the study program that need to be replaced or improved, the specialization and qualification required by the labor market and the business environment.

Regarding quality of study materials approx. 41% of respondents said it was a major problem, and 30% said the issue was problematic. However, 29% of respondents say that the quality of study materials has started to change significantly for the better both through the inclusion of several practical subjects and the fact that thanks to different state programs and international projects of technical assistance, the libraries of VET institutions with teaching materials with novelties and new technologies in the field of agriculture and rural development.

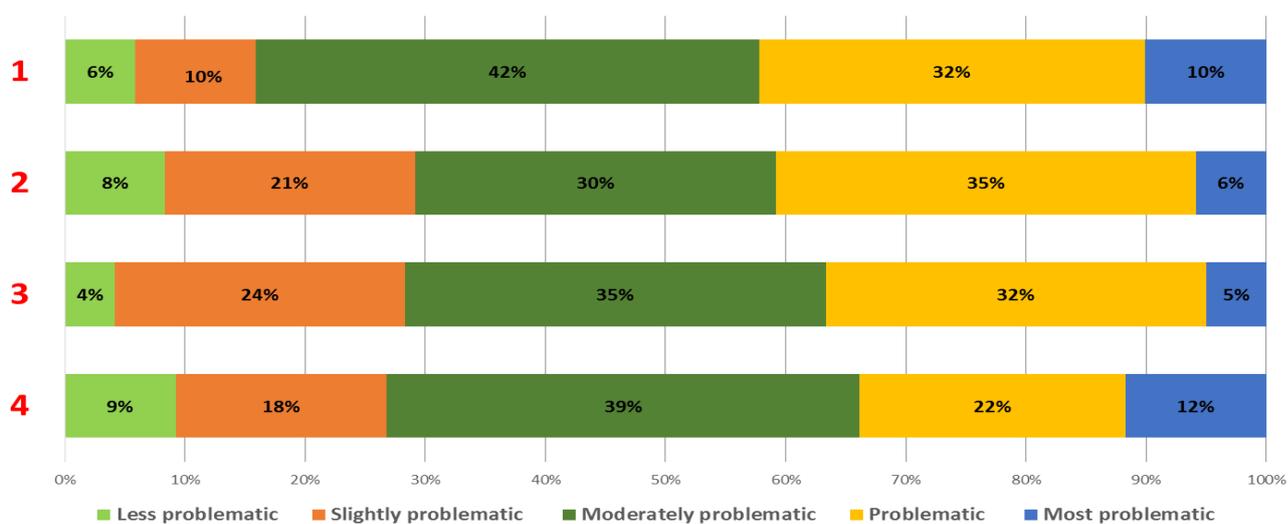


Figure 6. The major problems identified in education sphere in agriculture sector

*The legend:

1. The Education programs do not correspond to market needs
2. Training materials are of low quality
3. Trainers lack necessary knowledge / experience
4. There is lack of high quality vocational programs - specific trainings focusing on concrete professional skills (especially preparation of low/medium level workers)

The lack of young specialists (teachers) who would provide a teaching process with their best experience and the necessary knowledge is considered as major and the utmost major problem of approx. 37% of respondents, and 35% of respondents said that combining the experience of older and younger teachers leads to moderate severity of this problem. The negative side of this problem

is that in the last 10 years the number of young teachers included in the teaching process of VET institutions is decreasing and older teachers in most cases are not aware of the swift changes made at the technological and sector level in agriculture.

The majority of respondents, of approximate rate of 34% as a major and upmost problem and about 39% as a major environment, states the lack of quality educational programs for the training of specialists with a focus on concrete vocational training abilities. This problem, according to respondents' opinions, is in most cases related to the lack of a practical technical-material basis of VET institutions, but also to their poor working relationship with the business environment in the implementation of dual training programs.

4.5. Needs of trainings and better education programs in agricultural sector

Thus, as very necessary and necessary are considered, according to the opinion of approx. 81-87% of the respondents strengthening the training programs in the field of management and business planning, methodologies - agricultural technologies and product quality management, with rates of less than 71-77%, but not less important are the training programs in the fields of: agricultural operations, marketing and sales and skills specific to different functions - specializations in the agricultural sector.

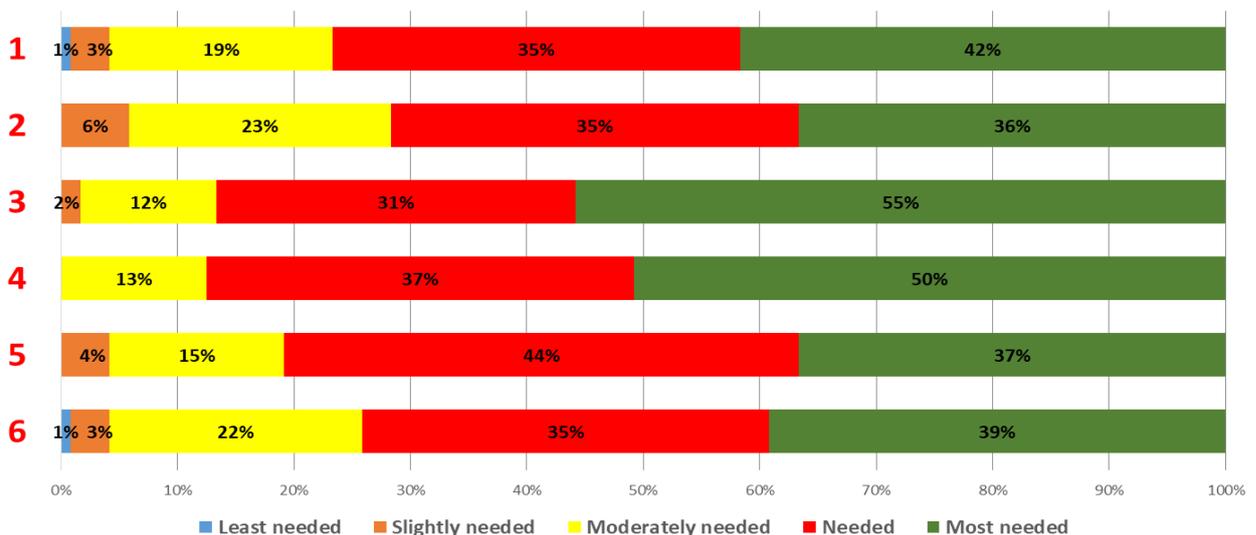


Figure 7. Needs of trainings and better education programs in agricultural sector

*The legend:

1. Marketing & Sales issues
2. Agricultural operations
3. Product Quality management
4. Management and business planning issues
5. Agriculture methodologies
6. Specific skills related to various functions in agricultural sector

The respondents in the business environment and within public institutions, both on the basis of their own experience and the hiring experience of fresh graduates of VET institutions, find that solving the good part of the existing agricultural and rural sector problems would be through the acquisition of professional skills management, implementation and management of agricultural technologies and product quality management assurance. At the same time, we mention that the respondents did not have and did not propose practical opinions (other opinions) to solve the mentioned problems, or the priority of the necessary competences was a dilemma for them.

4.6. Suggest changes in curricula/practical lessons at VET centers to ensure development of useful skills for agricultural sector

The issue about the necessary changes to be made in the study program / practice of VET institutions to ensure the development of useful skills for the agricultural sector approx. 87% of respondents argue that it is necessary to strengthen and add a more practical component of the training process and 74% say that solving this problem would be possible by developing specific skills related to agriculture and rural development. Regarding the development of language skills in ensuring the development of useful skills for the agricultural sector, only 15% of respondents see the changing value of the curriculum. These answers were also expected, as far as according to the opinions of the majority of the interviewed stakeholders, the development of practical skills for new employees trained in specific technological processes in agriculture is spent in the average of 0.5-1.5 years of work and practical explanations, the labor productivity is far below that of skilled workers.

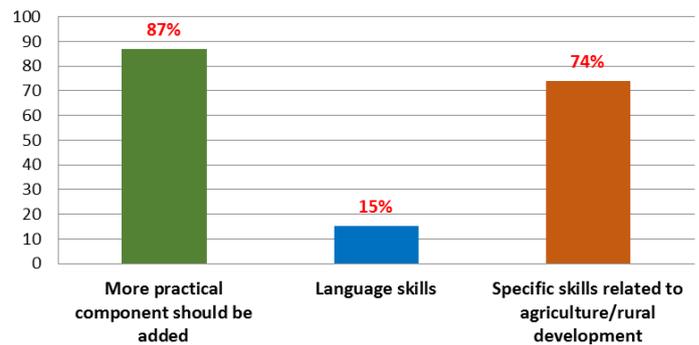


Figure 8. Suggest changes in curricula/practical lessons at VET centers to ensure development of useful skills for agricultural sector

4.7. Compliance of the qualification level of graduate students of the needs of labor market demands

The opinions of the interviewed stakeholders regarding the correspondence of the level of education / qualification of the graduates with the labor market requirements reveal at approx. 73% that correspond to a little, very little or do not correspond at all, opposite to the statements of approx. 27% match or match exactly. However, the above mentioned answers have a causal explanation, employers in the business environment and public institutions employ young graduates who are available on the labor market (with any level of training) and less encourages the selection of young people from secondary or secondary schools with the delegation young people to specialized training in VET institutions. Such a practice is widely extended in European countries in partnerships between VET institutions and private companies, and in the Republic of Moldova this practice is at the beginning of a stage. Private companies and public institutions do not have sufficient financial resources to educate and train their future employees through VET institutions.

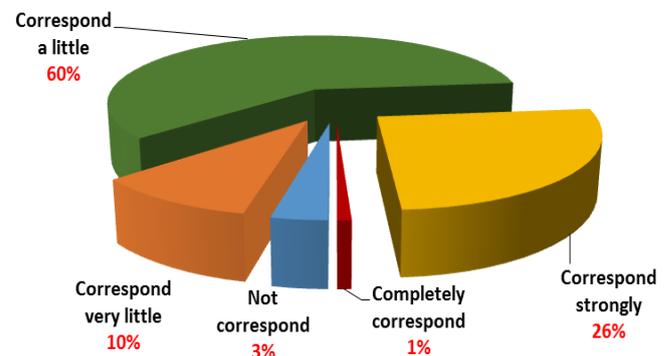


Figure 9. Compliance of the qualification level of graduate students of the needs of labor market demands

4.8. The main specific problematic issues with graduates of the VET centers

To question asked about identifying the main problems faced by graduates in employment, the opinions of respondents from the business environment and public institutions indicate, as problematic and very problematic, on the first place with a rate of 75-85% lack of managerial skills, practical skills and specific professional qualifications (answers 3,1 and 2 respectively), second place with a rate of 51-60% indicate lack of creativity, initiative and knowledge of a modern language (answers 5, 6 and 7 respectively) and third place with a rate of 35-47% lack of theoretical

knowledge, IT skills and communication skills (answers 4, 8 and 9 respectively). As noted by the stakeholders, the business and public institutions are looking for qualified and highly specialized graduates on the labor market, which would be easier to identify and train them on viable partnerships between these actors and VET institutions. The business environment should be the contingent of the future employee profile, which VET institutions have to shape in the teaching process. But as long as the business environment is amorphous, VET institutions produce labor force with more general and less special qualifications, or demand should dictate the offer.

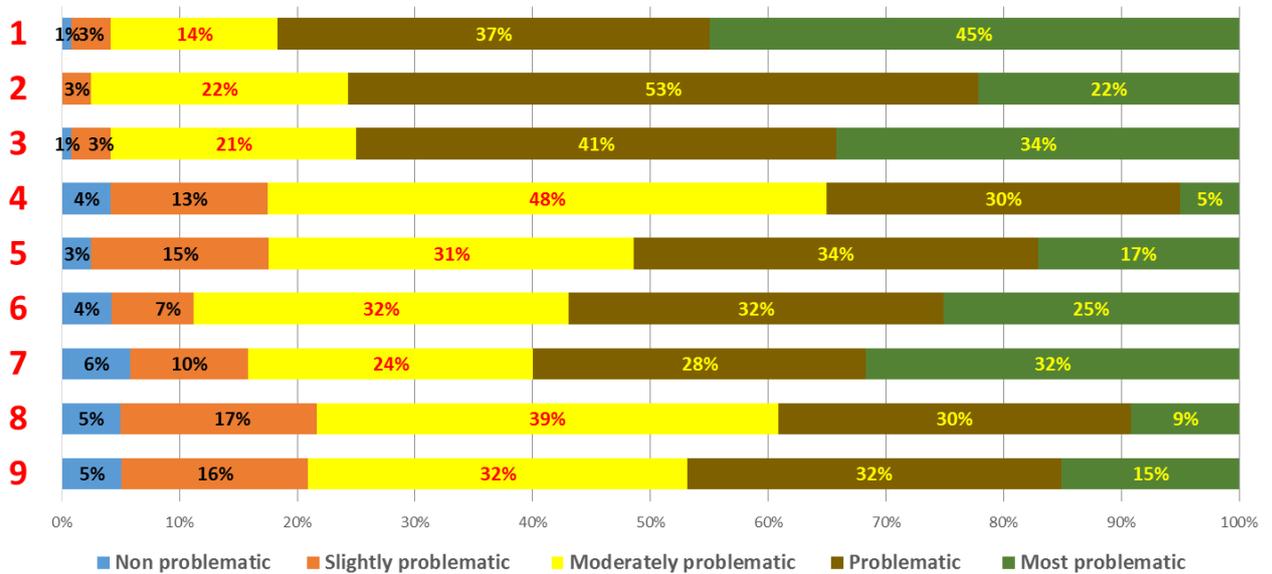


Figure 10. The main specific problematic issues with graduates of the VET centers

*The legend:

1. Lack of practical skills
2. Lack of Specific professional qualifications
3. Lack of managerial skills
4. Lack of Theoretical knowledge
5. Lack of Creativity
6. Lack of initiative
7. Lack of Knowledge of foreign languages
8. Lack of IT skills (computer skills)
9. Lack of Communication skills

4.9. How easy is it to recruit qualified employees in agricultural/rural sector

To the question how easy is it to find qualified employees for the agricultural and rural sector, over 61% of respondents in business and public institutions admit that it is difficult and very difficult to identify them, 28% say it is relatively difficult (neutral) and only 13% say it is easy and very easy to find qualified employees. Lack of labor is generally a major problem for the Republic of Moldova (in the context that more than 1 million citizens are working abroad), and the lack of qualified employees is a specific problem specific to the agricultural and rural sector. The level of technology of the agricultural processes increases and the demand for skilled

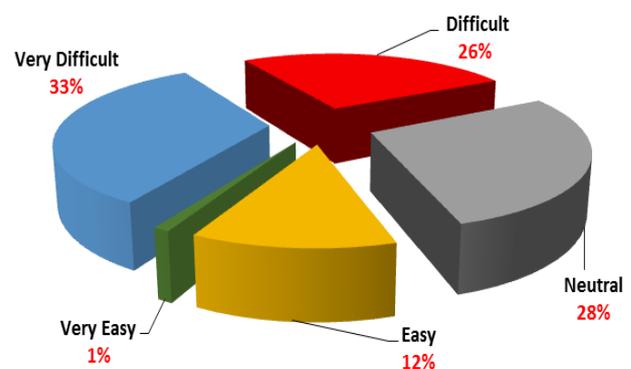


Figure 11. How easy is it to recruit qualified employees in agricultural/rural sector

workers on the labor market in the Republic of Moldova is increasing as well. But young graduates of VET institutions, in the absence of a stable offer and an appropriate remuneration proposed by the local business community, prefer to look for more generous offers across the country. We can observe a specific trend in this context, the Republic of Moldova spends important financial resources for training the young generation of specialists but in the absence of clear employment prospects and adequate remuneration, they prefer migration to European countries or to Russia. Thus, the local education system works for the future prosperity of the economies of other countries. In this context, the issue of VET local education should be viewed as a whole with addressing the issues of creating the prospects of decreasing of personnel defections and increasing the adequate remuneration of the labor market regarding qualified specialists.

4.10. The main problems encountered during the recruitment process

The respondents from the business environment and public institutions were asked their opinion on the evaluation of the main problems encountered during the employment of VET graduates in employment (from the point of view of employers). Thus, 80-81% (respectively 3 and 5 respectively) of the total respondents stated they agree or totally agree that candidates are not motivated to work in rural areas, and low wages in the agricultural and rural areas do not encourages graduates of VET institutions to engage and settle in rural areas. Approx. 69% (answer 2) of the respondents mentioned that the lack of practical skills is a major impediment to employment in the agricultural and rural sector, and 49% (responce 4) of respondents say that the qualifications required by the labor market are not provided by the vocational schools or colleagues. Only 33% of respondents confirm that lack of theoretical knowledge as a problem in employing VET graduates. The answers confirm that the problem of employing VET graduates is a complex issue, closely related to the quality of VET education, motivation of young people and adequate remuneration offered by the labor market for this motivation and professional qualification.

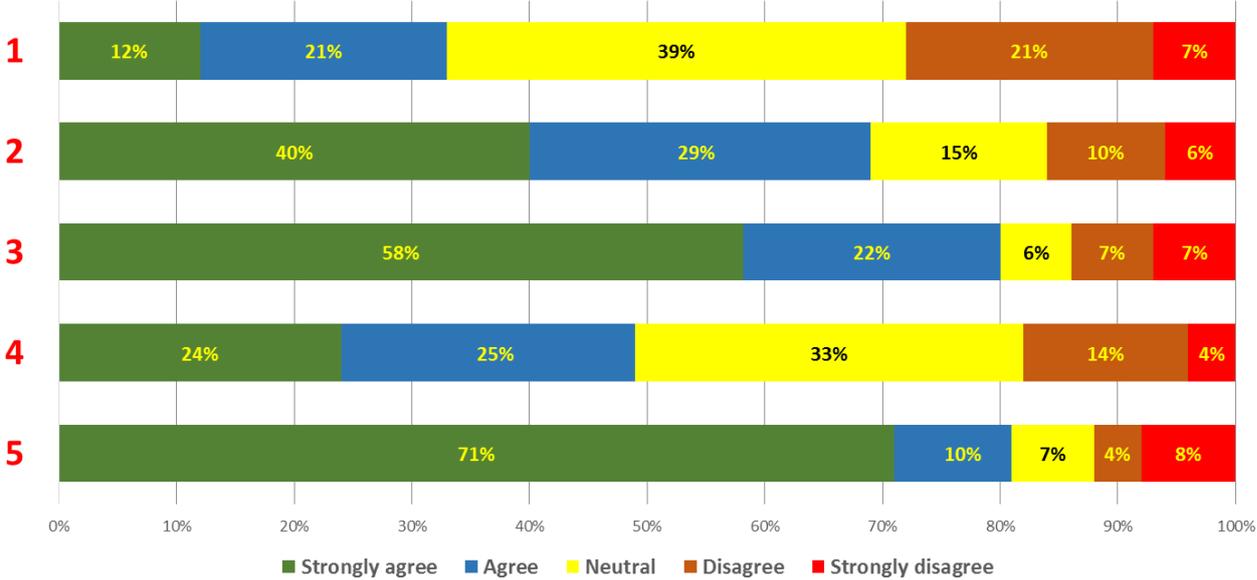


Figure 12. The main problems encountered during the recruitment process

*The legend:

- 1. Lack of theoretical knowledge
- 2. Lack of practical skills
- 3. The potential candidates lack of motivation to work in rural areas
- 4. The qualification needed is not provided by local educational centers
- 5. Low salaries in agriculture / Rural sector

4.11. The level of cooperation of business sector and VET centers to receive interns

A number of respondents in the business environment and public institutions were asked to assess the level of cooperation between agricultural enterprises and VET institutions (vocational schools and colleges) to take students to practical training or implement joint dual education programs. 82% of respondents say that there is poor cooperation in this area, agricultural businesses only sometimes accept interns and 10% of agricultural enterprises do not accept young people to internship, considering that time and financial resources should not be spent for this occupation. It is a specific situation; on the one hand, the business environment has no choice and recruit skilled workers, and on the other hand the same business environment is not open to collaboration with VET institutions to train and prepare future professional workforce. As business reasons for lack of cooperation between agricultural enterprises and VET institutions are lack of time.

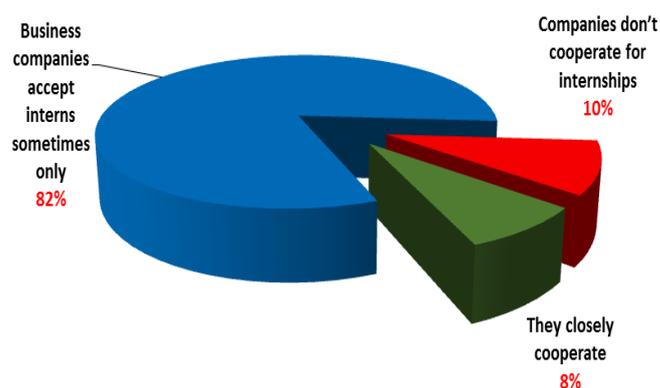


Figure 13. The level of cooperation of business sector and VET centers to receive interns

4.12. The main reasons of lack of interest among some business companies in receiving the interns from VET center

As business reasons, regarding the poor level of cooperation between agricultural enterprises and VET institutions to receive trainee for practical traineeships are:

no.	Reason – of respondents answers	Number of answers	Afirmations percentage
1	Lack of interest, motivation and responsibility of agricultural and rural entrepreneurs to have internships	23	20
2	Lack of practical training of entrepreneurs - mentors for the implementation of the training process and the transmission of the skills necessary for the trainees	14	12
3	Lack of necessary premises and facilities for internships	12	10
4	The theoretical and practical initial level of trainees is quite limited to those who make it quite difficult to integrate it into the production process of the enterprise.	12	10
5	The lack of time and possibilities of trainees remuneration by mentors - agricultural holdings.	11	9
6	Entrepreneurs are not aware about such opportunity to get trainees into practice.	10	8
7	Lack of collaboration and dialogue between the parties: VET centers - entrepreneurs – trainees.	10	8
8	Entrepreneurs fear that as a result of the practical process the trainee will divulge the commercial confidential information and the technology of the host company.	10	8
9	Lack of trainees' interest in working with mentors and in learning the technological moments through practical manipulation	10	8
10	Due to the mechanization of processes in the agricultural sector, the need for trainees and future labor force fall away	8	7

The business environment and public institutions recognize that the lack of interest, motivation and responsibility of agricultural and rural entrepreneurs to get into internship practice are the most common problems to integrate young people in the labor force. The problem is related not only to the lack of time but also to limited possibilities of creating dual training conditions.

4.13. The level of cooperation of business sector and VET centers to recruit the personnel

In the same context, regarding the cooperation between agricultural enterprises and VET institutions (vocational schools and colleges) regarding the recruitment of employees, graduates from these institutions, 64% of respondents state they only sometimes cooperate in recruitment and 34% of agricultural enterprises do not cooperate on recruitment.

The main reasons for non-cooperation invoked by the business environment are the low level of qualification of graduates, those who make it quite difficult to integrate them in the production process of the enterprise and the lack of confidence that after the practical training effort, the young trained will leave the job seeking and finding a higher paid one abroad.

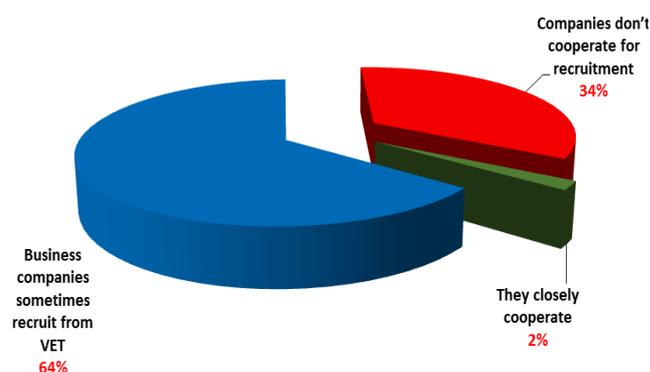


Figure 14. The level of cooperation of business sector and VET centers to recruit the personnel

4.14. Cooperation with business companies and education centers for organizing the trainings for employees to upgrade their skills

The respondents from the business environment and public institutions were asked to answer the question as to how closely and often they collaborate with VET institutions to organize training for their own employees to spur their professional skills and personnel further training.

Approx. 45% of the respondents state they only sometimes cooperate with VET institutions and 26% of agricultural enterprises do not know

about such an opportunity or do not cooperate at all. Reasons for the business environment are limited to the fact that a large part of them are not informed and another party confirm that they doubt about the level of competence of VET institutions to provide such training services at the required quality level. From the group of respondents who do not cooperate with VET institutions, a good part of them invoked the opportunities offered by exchange programs offered by various national and international programs and projects.

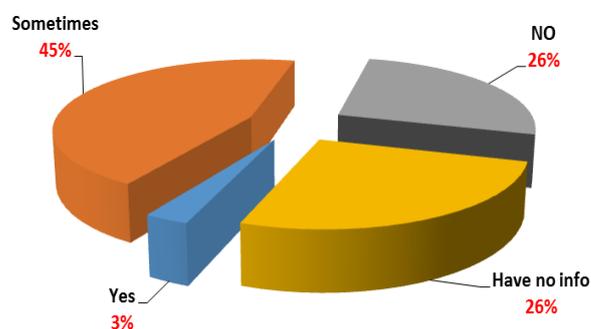


Figure 15. Cooperation with business companies and education centers for organizing the trainings for employees to upgrade their skills

4.15. Evaluation of the currently deficit of types of employees

The questionnaire on the types of employees (areas of professional qualification) that are most needed and currently lacking in the labor market was appreciated by the respondents in the sample of stakeholders on a scale of 5 to 1 (respectively, 5- very necessary and up to 1 less necessary).

Thus (figure 16), ca. 83% of respondents mention the deficiency of lower-level workforce (medium skilled and narrow specialists and / or simple workers), approx. 78% attest the shortage of professions - specific specialties for agricultural operations (in particular skilled technicians, veterinarians, etc.) and only 49% mentioned the necessity and the deficit of employees of medium and upper management level.

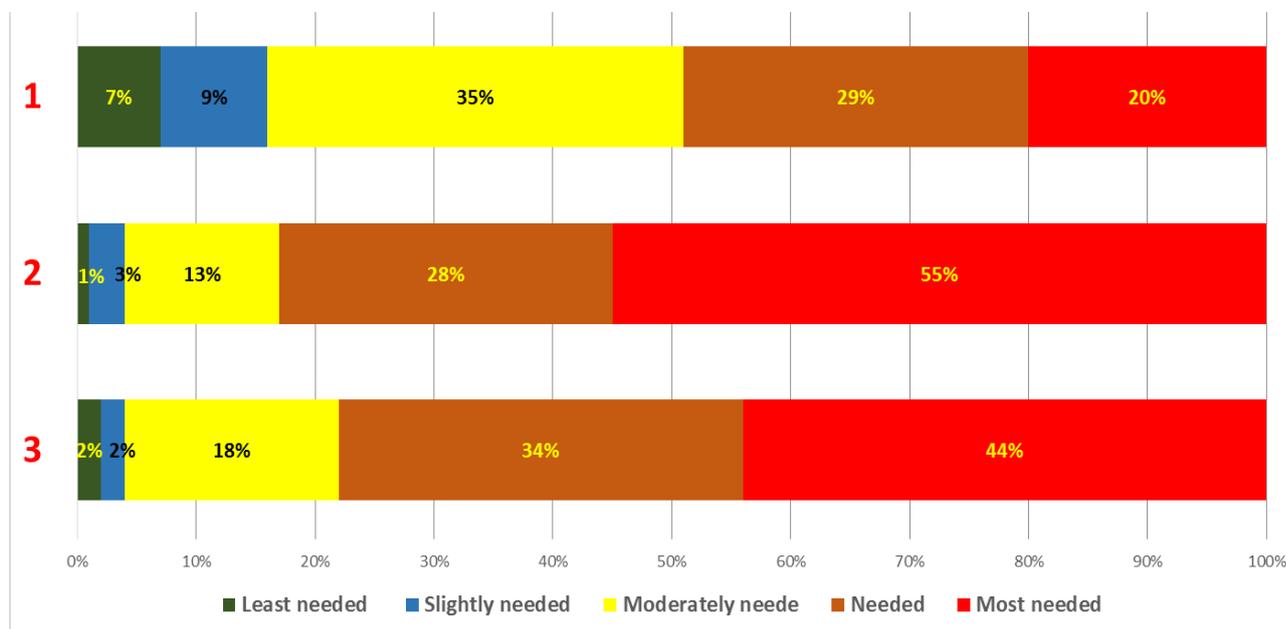


Figure 16. Evaluation of the currently deficit of types of employees

*The legend:

1. High and medium level of management
2. Lower level (specialists, workers etc.)
3. Specific professions related to agricultural operations

The current shortage of medium skilled labor but with an agricultural skill is felt by most economic entities in the manufacturing environment as well as by the public sector, and this issue from one hand is due to the lack of trained technicians, and on the other hand, is generated by the demographic situation and the exodus of young people from village settlements to cities or migration abroad. Some respondents to this question suggested that it is more reasonable to employ laborers as technicians and train them through the dual education model but there is still a risk that after the qualification these young people will abandon their job due to non-competitive remuneration of the agricultural sector compared to other sectors of the national economy.

4.16. The List of the professional skills in agriculture sector reported but not at all provided by VET

This question was open-ended and referred to the assessment of professional competencies needed in agriculture but not provided or partly provided by VET education institutions in this field. Respondents from the business environment, civil society and local public administration with regard to the professional skills required in agriculture, that unfortunately, are not offered or are partly offered by the secondary education institutions and vocational schools in the field have reported the following opinions, which were grouped into the following categories:

It was stated that the lack of skills of special practical technological skills of specialists in the agricultural sector is a greater barrier to the functioning of the enterprise than the lack of competencies for public sector employees, while the lack of skills for public sector employees is considered to be more frequent than for specialists from agricultural sector..

no.	Opinion –the respondents answer	Number of responses	Afirmations percentage
1	The acquisition of special technological practical skills	46	38
2	Implementing innovations in agriculture and rural development	12	10
3	Developing and applying project proposals to access various sources of funding and invest in the agricultural sector	11	9
4	Trainings and skills in the field of rural entrepreneurship	10	8
5	Management of agricultural entities and rural services	16	13
6	Agriculture-food marketing and agricultural inputs	8	7
7	Art and interpersonal communication techniques	9	8
8	Information technologies integrated in the agricultural sector	8	7

Lack of skills for young specialists has a greater impact on the productivity of agricultural companies and is more of an obstacle to the operation of the enterprise than lack of skills for public sector employees.

In the same context, the lack of skills for young employees up to 30 years of age has a greater impact on business than lack of skills for employees over 30 years age.

The art and techniques of interpersonal communication, agro-food marketing and agricultural inputs and Information technologies integrated in the agricultural sector have the lowest percentage of respondents, and this can be argued by the lack of such abilities, including the respondents.

4.17. Opinion of the respondents about which types of education programs are more needed and effective in agriculture/rural sector

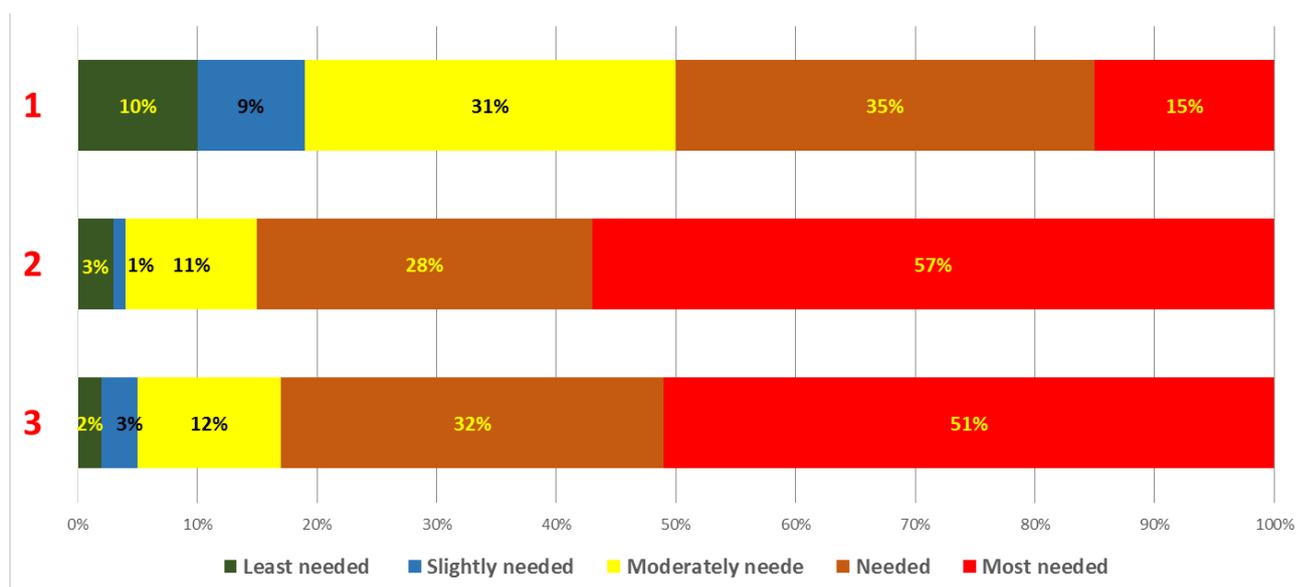


Figure 17. Opinion of the respondents about which types of education programs are more needed and effective in agriculture/rural sector

*The legend:

1. Higher education (bachelor, Masters)
2. VET (Vocational)
3. Short term trainings / on specific issues in agricultural sector

The questionnaire on the respondents' opinion on the types of educational programs that are most needed and most effective in agriculture / rural sector (according to its duration, complexity and level of qualification at its completion) was appreciated by the respondents in the sample of

stakeholders on a range from 5 to 1 (respectively, 5- very necessary and up to 1 less needed). Thus (Figure 17), the respondents' opinion on the efficiency, duration, complexity and level of qualification of educational programs as necessary and highly necessary opts for approx. 85% and 83% respectively for VET and short-term training (by specific fields of agriculture) and to a much lower extent than approx. 50% for specialists with higher education (graduates and masters). The agricultural sector and rural development are based more on the work of technical and managerial specialists, because in the new context of Moldovan agriculture, new businesses (especially in the high added-value crops sector) are based on type of family business and less corporate enterprises.

4.18. Opinion of the respondents about effectiveness of State programs focusing on development / support of education in agriculture sector

Within the study a qualitative and quantitative assessment of the efficiency of state programs for the development and support of agricultural education was carried out. From the interviewed sample of stakeholders only approx. 19% of respondents consider as efficient and very efficient the state programs for the development and support of education in agriculture, approx. 48% as moderately efficient, and 33% as relatively effective and ineffective. The business environment and public sector representatives admit that over the last decade or many changes have been made in re launching the development and support of education in agriculture and the rural sector, but the effectiveness of these changes is limited by the lack of investment in the technical and material basis of VET institutions, changing the teaching methods (emphasis on dual learning), as well as the lack of young specialists in these institutions, which would make these changes more palpable.

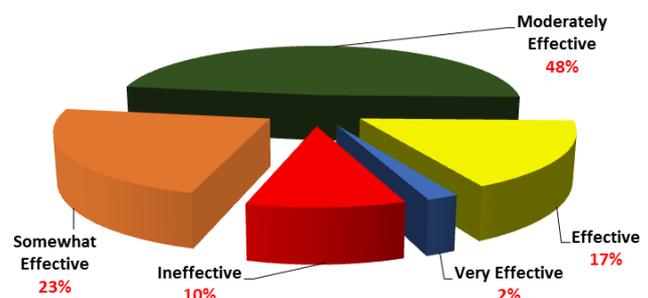


Figure 18. Opinion of the respondents about effectiveness of State programs focusing on development / support of education in agriculture sector

4.19. Opinion of the respondents about effectiveness of International donor programs focusing on development / support of education in agriculture sector

The same question, but with specific qualitative and quantitative appreciation of the efficiency of the programs of the international donors supporting the education in the agricultural sector, more than 69% of the respondents appreciated their effective and very effective intervention in this field, about 28% rated moderately efficient and only 3% as relatively effective. Among the support projects mentioned by respondents, as successful projects with a major impact on the efficiency of VET education in the Republic of Moldova, were mentioned:

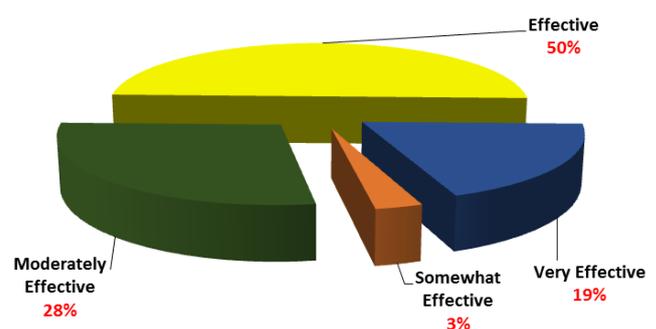


Figure 19. Opinion of the respondents about effectiveness of International donor programs focusing on development / support of education in agriculture sector

1. The project "Technical Assistance for Education and Training in the Republic of Moldova", Europe aid / 133799 / C / SER / MD / 12, funded by the European Union;
2. Proiectul "Education for Agriculture (EdAgri)", implementat de fundația The Liechtenstein Development Service (LED), având ca beneficiar Centre of Excellence in Horticulture and Agricultural Technology, Taul (CEHTA);

3. The project "VEN - Generating Income at VET Schools and Colleges", implemented by the non-governmental organization "KulturKontakt Austria", benefiting VET institutions from the professional, agricultural and rural areas of the Republic of Moldova
4. The project "Structural Reform in Technical Vocational Training (VET) in the Republic of Moldova", implemented by GIZ - the International Cooperation Agency of Germany as part of the Sustainable Economic Development Program, having as beneficiaries the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural and Environment of the Republic of Moldova;
5. The "Twinning Plus" project, which is part of the Erasmus + Program financed by the European Union. The project being co-financed in the Republic of Moldova with the resources provided by the Swedish Government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark / DANIDA;

4.20. Assessment of knowledge by respondents about international cooperation projects implemented for exchange of students, trainers by Education centers in Agriculture sector and their effectiveness

The sample interviewed stakeholders was approximately 50 to 50, represented by economic entities (about 46%) in the business and public sectors and NGOs (32% and 22% respectively). The question on the assessment of respondents' knowledge of the international cooperation projects implemented for the exchange of students, trainers by agricultural education centers and their efficiency, 3 relevant and distinct responses were obtained, at a rate of 46 % of statements as YES, there are projects that are considered to be quite effective and effective (the sample of representatives of the public sector and NGOs) and 35% of respondents who do not know about the existence of such projects or 17% respondents who know but do not have access to such projects (the sample of representatives of economic entities in the business environment and some representatives of the public sector).

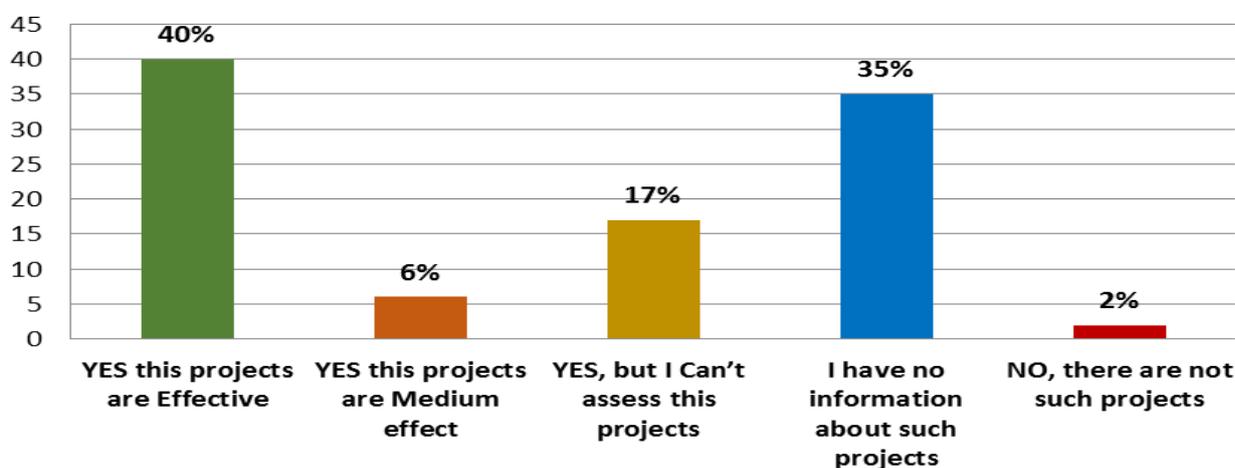


Figure 20. Assessment of knowledge by respondents about international cooperation projects implemented for exchange of students, trainers by Education centers in Agriculture sector and their effectiveness

According to the respondents, especially business entities, they are more concerned with business and are less informed about international cooperation projects for student exchange developed by agricultural education centers and partners in International projects. However, the percentage of respondents who do not know about access to such projects is within the limit of approx. 45% of respondents (question 4.14.) Who say that they only sometimes cooperate with VET institutions and 26% of agricultural enterprises do not know about such an opportunity or do not cooperate at all. Thus, in this chapter it is necessary to inform the business environment more widely about the

opportunities offered by the exchange programs offered by various national and International programs and projects.

4.21. Opinion of the respondents about actions steps to improve the education programs in agriculture sector, both from government side and from International Donor Organizations

To the open question on the steps and actions required by the Government (state institutions) and donor organizations to improve and improve agricultural education programs, the respondents from the business environment, civil society and local public administration reported the following opinions, being grouped into the following categories:

no.	Opinion - the respondents answer	Number of answers	Afirmations percentage
1	Professional orientation of school students in choosing the specialties required by the labor market and of the business environment	10	8
2	Continuous training and further training programs for VET teachers and mentors	8	7
3	Identification of needs in the field of specialization, technologies and innovations in the business environment and on their basis revision and adaptation of curricula and study programs of VET institutions.	6	6
4	Active motivation and involvement of students (including financial and dual learning), teaching process and implementation of technology transfer projects	19	16
5	Implementing new learning methods based on performance technologies, innovations, demonstration batches, and dual training.	40	33
6	Programs of experinece exchange, technology practice and internship with VET institutions from other countries.	6	5
7	State facilities and other facilities, including tax, for agricultural enterprises involved in dual training.	10	8
8	National programs to support the integration of VET institutions graduates in the employment and business environment	20	17

Respondents from the business environment and public institutions, regarding the necessary steps and actions of the Government and the donor organizations for improving and improving the agricultural education programs, have opted to the greatest extent at approx. 33% on the implementation of new education methods based on advanced technologies, innovations, demonstrative batches and dual education, and at about. 16-17% through motivation and active involvement of students in the teaching process and implementation of state programs to support the integration in the field of work and business environment of VET institutions graduates. Thus, the business environment is more reserved for personal involvement in educating one's own labor force.

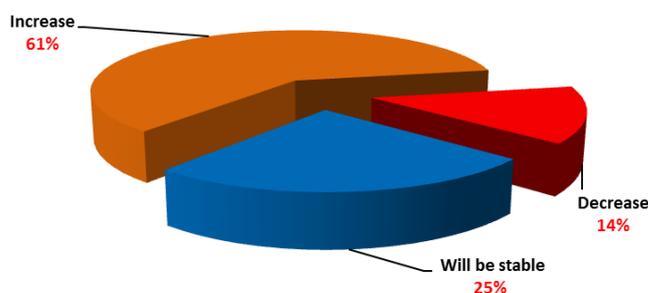


Figure 22. Opinion of the respondents about the demand on labor in agriculture/rural sector in future

4.22. Opinion of the respondents about the demand on labor in agriculture/rural sector in future

Regarding the question of increasing labor demand in the agricultural and rural areas, more than 61% of respondents in the stakeholders pointed to the increase in the demand for labor force in the future, but which can not be repaid due to the demographic situation, but also to the exodus (migration) of young active people from rural areas to cities and abroad.

SURVEY OF EMPLOYEES IN AGRICULTURE SECTOR – FEEDBACK OF THE EFFICIENCY PROFESSIONAL TRAININGS ORGANIZED BY VET INSTITUTIONS IN NORTH REGION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

5.1. Age and status of VET students and graduates respondents in the study

The majority of sample participants in the sample of VET students and graduates in the Northern Republic of Moldova were aged 16-30 years, 35% are between the ages of 31 and 50 years, of which 54% are studying, and 33% are fresh graduates with up to 10 years experience in the workplace. The sample comprised 100 interviewees from 22 districts and Balti municipality, with a total of 22 cities and towns and 68 localities.

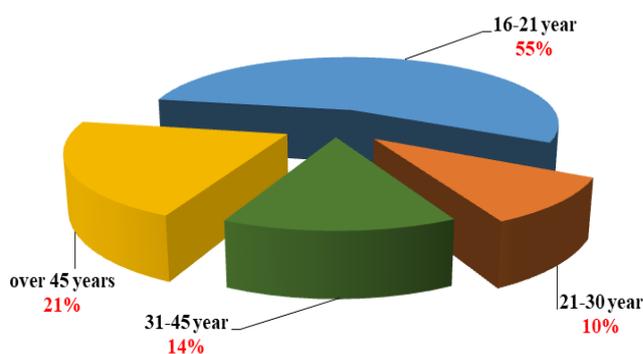


Figure 23. Age of VET students and graduates respondents in the study

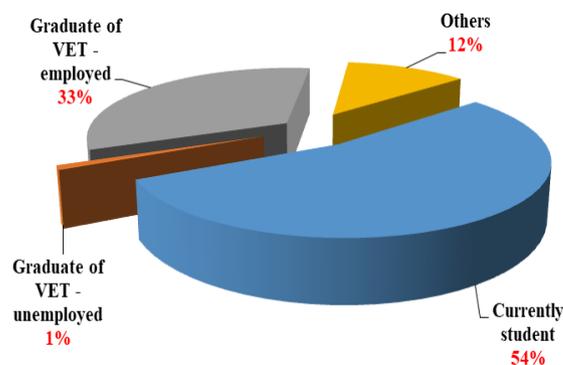


Figure 24. Status of VET students and graduates



Approx. 12% of VET students and graduates are self-employed, consultants or sales agents, and only 1% of those currently surveyed are not in employment. According to the majority of VET students and graduates, it is not a problem to be employed, but the basic problem is low payment for skilled labor in the agricultural sector. Here are some reasons for it. 12% of respondents prefer to work on their own account.

5.2. Assessment of the quality agricultural education programs provided by local VET

According to relevance and assessment of the level and quality of agricultural education programs provided by local VET institutions, approx. 68% of respondents in the sample of VET students and graduates in the Northern Republic of Moldova stated that their quality is good and very good, on the other hand, 25% of respondents say that the quality of studies is mediocre (average) and only 7% say that the quality of studies is poor and fair. According to the respondents, the knowledge and experience of agricultural and rural profile obtained or obtained in VET institutions allows them to be asked for temporary employment (those who study) or full employment. The level of qualification they have in their opinion is relevant to the requirements of the labor market, and if they feel uncomfortable with the challenges, they can always use the advice and recommendations of VET teachers. Most of the graduates maintain contacts and relationships with the teachers in the agricultural institutions they graduated from.

Figure 25. Assessment of the quality agricultural education programs provided by local VET

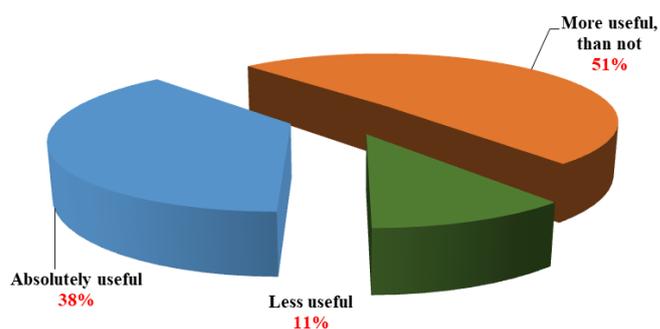


Figure 26. Usefulness of theoretical knowledge received in vocational institution in the professional training process

5.3. Usefulness of theoretical knowledge received in vocational institution in the professional training process

When questioning the usefulness of the theoretical knowledge received in the VET institution in the training process, the majority of the survey participants or approx. 89% said they were useful and very useful and only 11% of respondents consider they were less useful. No respondent stated that the theoretical knowledge received in the VET institution was not useful. The percentage of 51% of respondents asserting the theoretical knowledge received in the VET institution is absolutely useful predominantly for those who are currently studying at VET institutions and the percentage of 38% of respondents who say more useful than not, refers to recently employed graduates.

5.4. Evaluation of the vocational programs and study process in VETs

By this question, through the VET students and graduates' view, it was an attempt to assess the relevance of VET programs and study process (Figure 27) on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 - I do not agree and 5 - totally agree).

The majority of respondents with a degree of affirmation ranging from 60% (No. 1 - the courses offered are relevant to their profession) up to 78% (No. 5 - training focuses on relevant skills and develops the expected skills), agree and strongly agree that VET programs and VET study are relevant. VET students and graduates' statements are based on the fact that the study program offers.

VET students and graduates' assertions are based on the fact that the study program provides an effective learning opportunity with a good combination of theory and practice with effective teaching methods that ultimately allows them to have occupational skills specific to the labor market. The allegations are more punctuated by recent students and, to a lesser extent, by fresh VET graduates already employed.

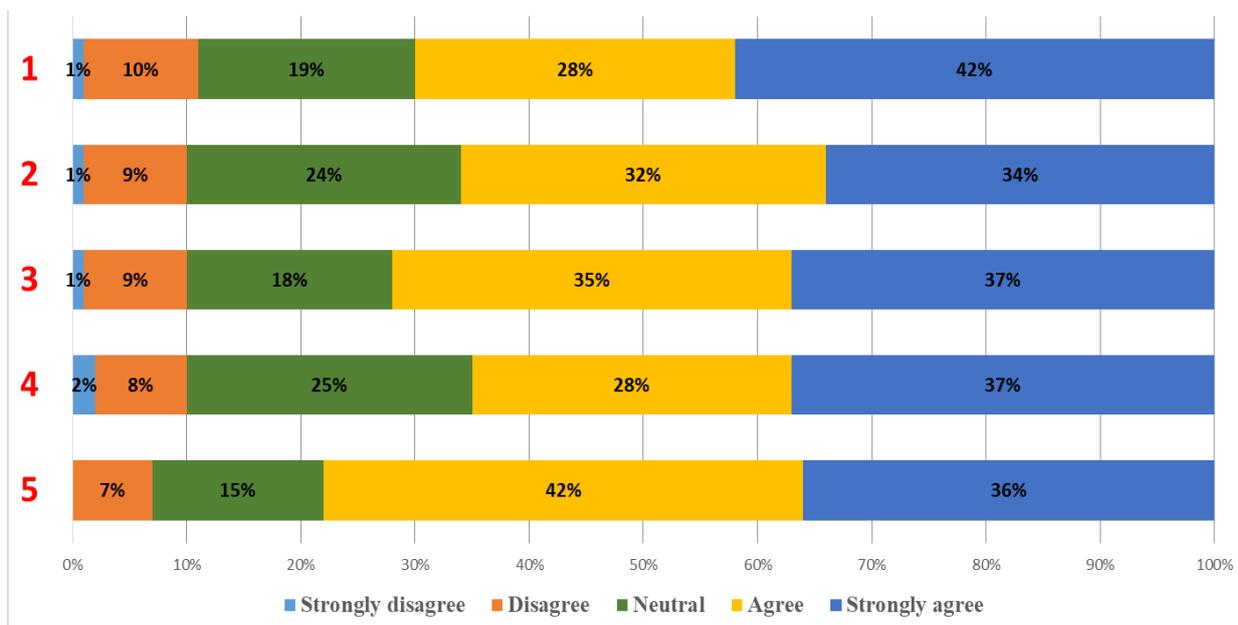


Figure 27. Evaluation of the vocational programs and study process in VETs

*The legend:

1. Offered courses are relevant to the profession I am/was pursuing
2. The selection of literature and other studying materials is/was good
3. The study program offers an effective practical learning opportunities, good mix of theory and practice
4. The study program is taught using effective teaching methods
5. The training focuses on relevant skills and I am developing (developed) the skills expected

5.5. Attitudes of the respondents towards VET

By the same scale from 1 to 5 (respectively 1 - disagree and 5 - totally agree) the attitudes of VET students and graduates responded to VET education and training centers. As in the previous case, the majority of survey participants, with a degree of assertion ranging from 65% (No. 3 - study fees are accessible or the program is offered free of charge) up to 82% (No. 4 - a vocational school is easy), agree and strongly agree that studies in VET institutions are accessible, useful and contribute to the future education of the professional staff that will be required by the labor market in the agricultural and rural sector.

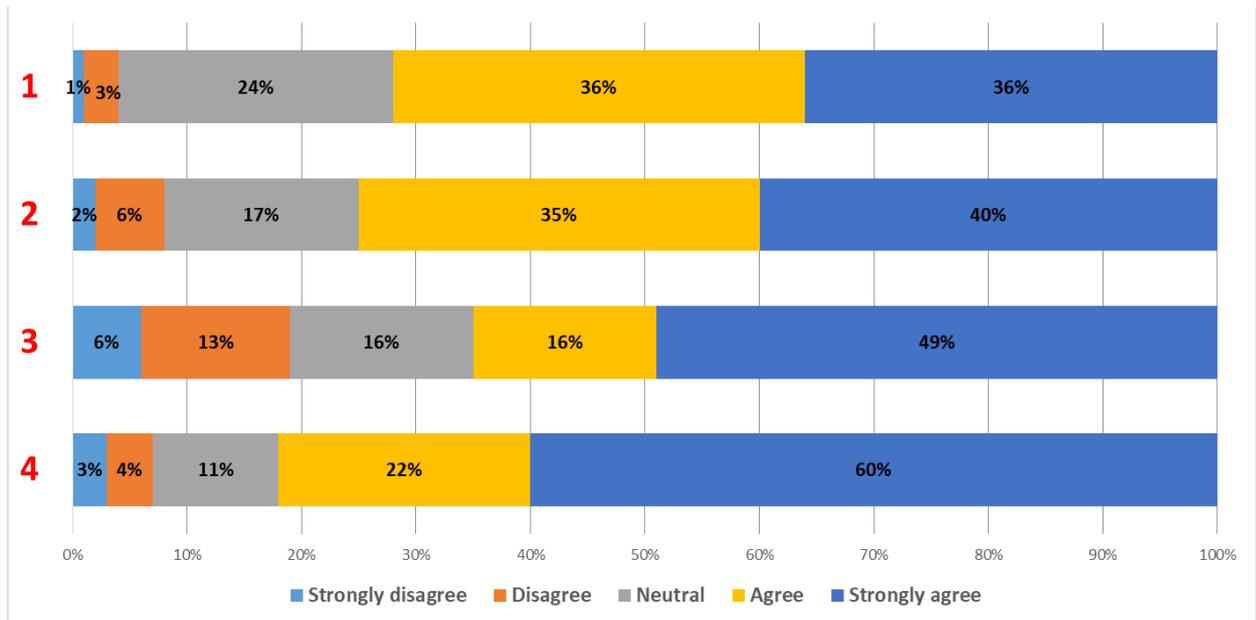


Figure 28. Attitudes of the respondents towards VET

*The legend:

1. *The vocational education system prepares professionals*
2. *The vocational education is useful in terms of future employment*
3. *Study fees are affordable or the program is offered free of charge*
4. *Enrolment in a vocational school is easy*

As in the previous answer, positive assertions are more punctuated by recent students and to a lesser extent by fresh VET graduates already engaged in the workforce. The questions and allegations in question, or more related to the general and multi optional aspect of VET studies and less specialized (technical and narrowly qualified) training that is in demand on the labor market.

5.6. Evaluation of the professionalism of trainers at VET

The actual students (about 54% of respondents) and graduates were asked to evaluate the professionalism of teachers / trainers within VET institutions and centers on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 - I disagree and 5 - with everything agreed). The majority of respondents with a degree of assertion ranging from 74% (No. 4 - foreign language courses are taught by a professional) to 87% (No. 1 - vocational education teachers have high level professional knowledge of the subject), agree and strongly agree that VET teachers and institutions have high-level professional experience, ensure effective communication with students, and strive to ensure a varied teaching process for practical and cognitive development. According to the alumni of the VET institutions graduates, they often appeal to former teachers' recommendations for uncertainty or uncertain situations and get practical advice that helps them solve difficult situations. It is to mention that these services are provided free of charge by the teachers of the VET institutions.

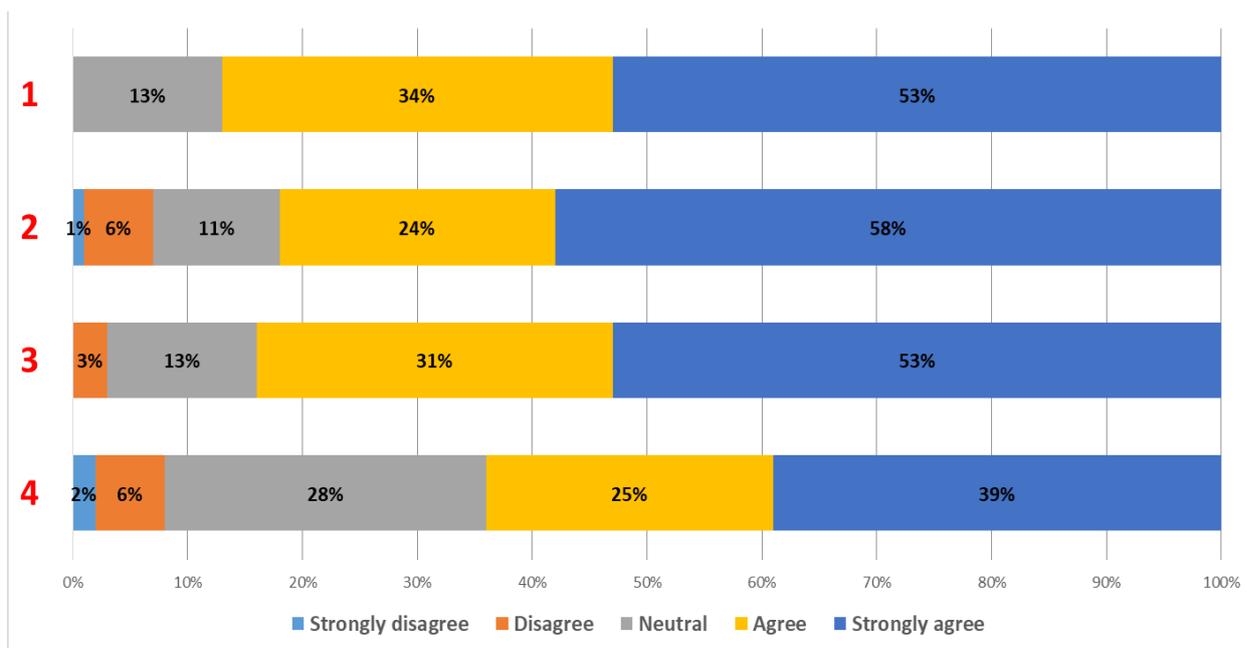


Figure 29. Evaluation of the professionalism of trainers at VET

*The legend:

1. The vocational education Teachers have high-level professional knowledge of the subject
2. Teachers have high-level professional practical experience
3. Teachers can easily communicate with students
4. Foreign language (English) courses are taught by a professional

5.7. Evaluation of Practical Training at VET

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 - not satisfied and 5 - very satisfied), VET students and graduates were asked to assess the level of VET training. The majority of survey participants, with an assertion level ranging from 60% (No. 1 - availability of required tools / materials / study equipment) to 80% (No. 4 - skills acquired during practical training), are satisfied and very satisfied with the level of practical training offered by VET institutions. Practical training is organized by VET institutions, most often on their own demonstration lots or on site visits to economic entities that implement state-of-the-art performance technologies. The frequency of practical training is correlated with cultivation technologies and plant development phases, with the specifics of maintaining, breeding and reproduction of the domestic animals, or by involving agricultural machinery and equipment in various technological processes.

Many of the graduates (according to their allegations) regularly come to the practical trainings or seminars organized by the VET institutions and the specialists from the National and International projects with which these institutions work together. Thus, VET institutions provide not only a practical, but also a recycling and technology transfer process. In some cases VET graduates become the initiators of inviting information visits to students to take on innovative experience, to be up to date with the introduction of innovations, and to identify potential candidates qualified for employment.

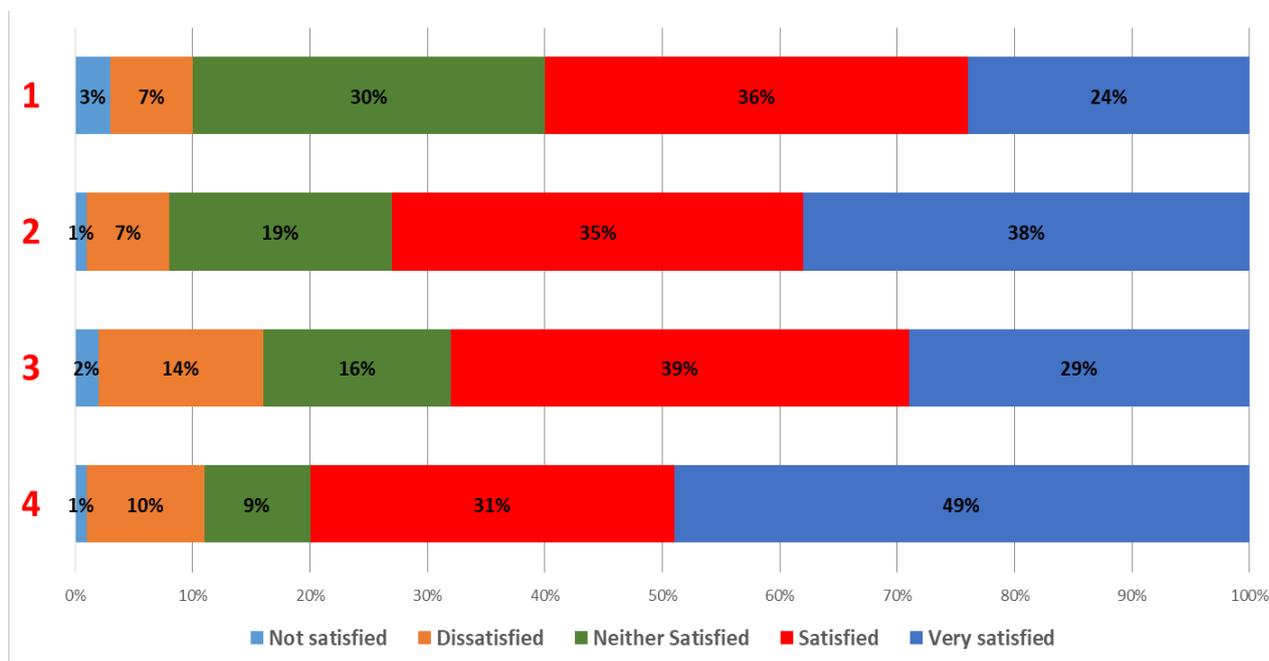


Figure 30. Evaluation of Practical Training at VET

*The legend:

1. The availability of the necessary study tools/materials/equipment
2. Correct instructions provided by your instructor to complete practical training
3. The frequency of practical training
4. Skills gained during practical training

In this context of co-operation, VET institutions turn to the services of former graduates to create dual training partnerships by including students into production practice. However, graduates of VET institutions (business entities) recognize that the initiative is most often exclusive of VET institutions (leadership and teaching staff), and the inclusion of students in production practice is occasional and short-lived.

5.8. Participation of the internships or professional trainings during study process

Both student recruiters and graduates have been asked about their personal placement in practical internships and dual training courses during their studies. Most survey participants or approx. 86% of respondents said they were trained in internship and professional training programs, and 4% planned to practice in the near future. Only 10% of the respondents did not participate in practical internship programs, for different reasons, but mostly due to the lack of interest or inappropriateness of the practice time with the favorable period of the technological processes.

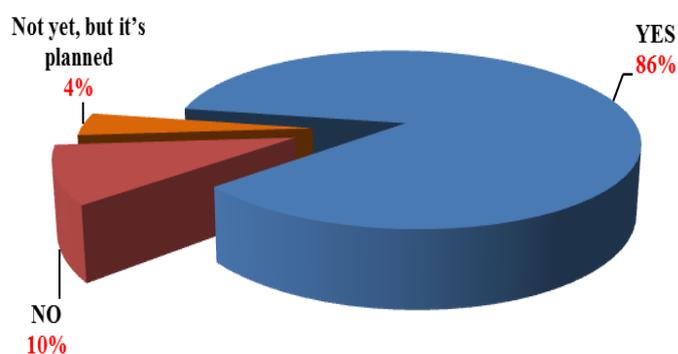


Figure 31. Participation of the internships or professional trainings during study process

Further to the affirmative answer of the respondents in the sample of VET students and graduates who were enrolled in practical internships and dual training courses during their studies, two questions were asked about:

1. Their own internship experience, and
2. Participation in international exchange programs (both during and after graduation).

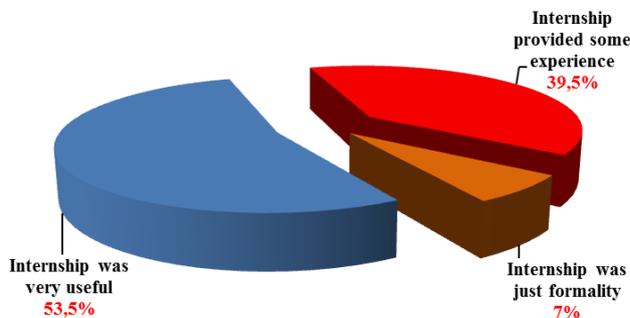


Figure 31. Respondents experience during of the internship

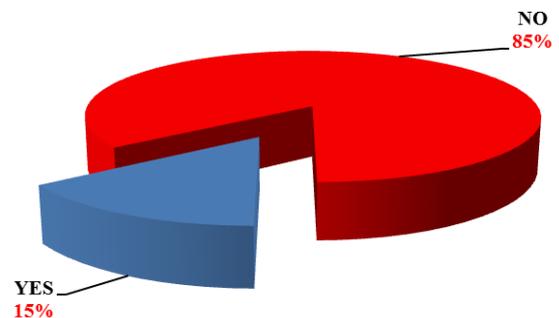


Figure 32. Respondents participation of the international exchange programs

Approximately 39.5% of VET students and graduates (Figure 31) having been enrolled in practical internships and dual training courses during their studies stated that the internship was very useful to them and provided the necessary experience to strengthen the theoretical knowledge and the acquisition of practical skills, and 53.5% revealed that the internship was a very useful practical experience. Only 7% of respondents claimed that the practical training was a formality.

As far as regarding participation in International exchange programs, approx. 85% of the respondents affirmatively answered that they had at least one practical internship abroad, most of which were organized after graduating from VET institutions during their employment. According to some respondents, participation in International exchange programs during VET studies was possible either thanks to the International projects the institution collaborates with, or most often on their own through the Work and Travel program in the US during the summer vacation.

5.9. Evaluation of the Professional Trainings organized by VET centres with partner companies

Within a frame of study, on a scale of 1 to 5 (respectively 1 - not satisfied and 5 - satisfied), VET students and graduates were asked the question of the evaluation of vocational training organized by VET centers in common with companies business partners. The majority of participants to survey (Figure 33), with an assertion rate, ranging from 59% (No. 2 - duration of the training program) to 79% (No. 3 - the role of the tutor in the organization where completed their practical training), are satisfied and somewhat satisfied with the level of organization and implementation of vocational training developed by VET centers in common with partner companies in the business environment. VET students and graduates have argued that the implementation of dual training programs under the guidance of specialists in agricultural and business environments has been a real experience close to the realities of employment. Skills gained from practical training have been useful and essential to finding jobs, and the practical skills, obtained through the method of own proofs and mistakes, have had a major impact on establishing the qualifications required by the labor market.

The only less favorable moment was the short duration of the training program from 2 weeks to 3 months. According to VET students and graduates, the duration of dual training programs would require at least one production cycle (one agricultural season) in the field of agricultural crops and mechanization of agricultural processes, and approx. 1 year in the zoo-veterinary field.

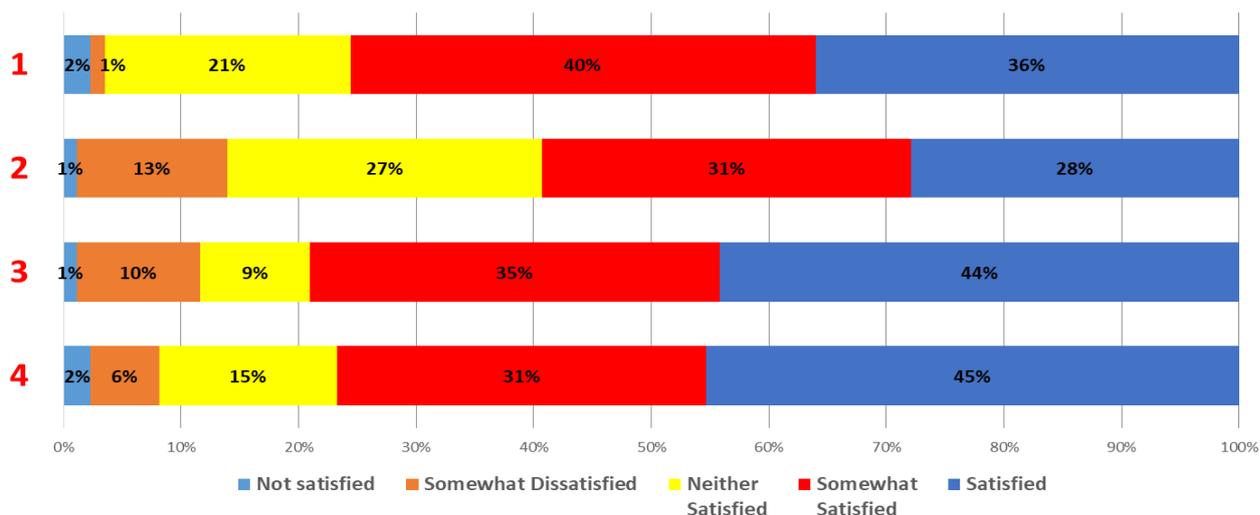


Figure 33. Evaluation of the Professional Trainings organized by VET centres with partner companies

*The legend:

1. Organization/enterprise in which you had practical training
2. Length of the practical training program
3. Supervisor at the organization in which you completed practical training
4. Skills gained from practical training

5.10. The three most useful things learned in the VET/education center

The question have been put to VET students and graduates about the useful things or the necessary practical skills learned at the VET institutions, have shown the following opinions, being grouped into the following categories:

No.	The respondents' answer	Number of answers	Affirmation percentage
1	Techniques of interpersonal communication between technical specialist - clients and guild colleagues	27	16
2	Innovative technological elements and their transfer to rural areas	22	12
3	Practical handling of technological and investigation operations - treatments in domestic animals.	21	12
4	Harvesting, post-harvesting and primary processing technologies for crop and livestock products.	19	11
5	Management and use of machinery, equipment and work equipment estiuena și utilizarea tehnicii, mașinilor, utilajelor și echipamentelor de lucru	16	9
6	Pedology, soil quality diagnosis and application of fertilization.	15	9
7	Busieness management	15	9
8	Practical aspects of customer support in economic, financial management, accounting and rural entrepreneurship areas.	14	8
9	Diagnosis, prophylactic measures and application of treatments to diseases and pests in plant cultivation and livestock breeding	13	7
10	Observational and behavioral techniques for crops growing and for breeding of domestic animals	12	7

5.11. The List of Professional skills in agriculture sector reported as essential but either partially provided VET/education center

The question to students and recent graduates of VET institutions on the estimation of a list of professional skills and competences in the agricultural and rural sector reported as essential, but which for various reasons were taught and provided in part or not, reported the following, which were grouped into the following categories:

no.	The respondents' answer	Number of answers	Affirmation percentage
1	Particularities of the implementation of prophylactic measures in the sanitary veterinary and zootechnics in breeding domestic animals	18	16
2	Personnel management techniques and development of professional abilities.	16	14
3	Information technologies applicable in the agricultural and rural sector	13	11
4	Secretarial bases, office work, and extension methodologies	12	10
5	Transfer of innovations in the agricultural sector and rural area	12	10
6	Maintenance and repairing of machinery and of up to date agricultural equipment	11	9
7	Issues related to the management of critical moments in the application of technologies, plant health and traceability of agricultural products in the plant breeding sector	11	9
8	Aspects of practical handling specific to the speciality.	9	7
9	Economic aspects, financial management, accounting and rural entrepreneurship	9	7
10	Quality and marketing of agricultural food production	9	7

5.12. Compliance of the qualification level of graduate students of the needs of labor market demands

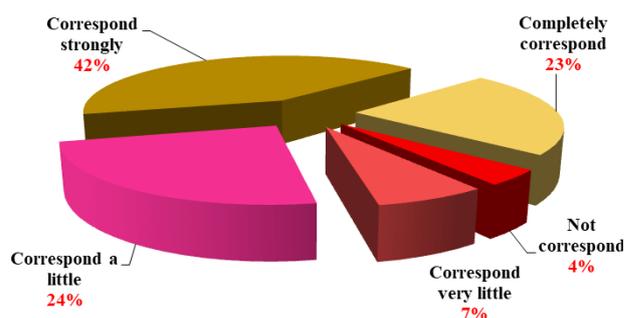


Figure 34. Compliance of the qualification level of graduate students of the needs of labor market demands

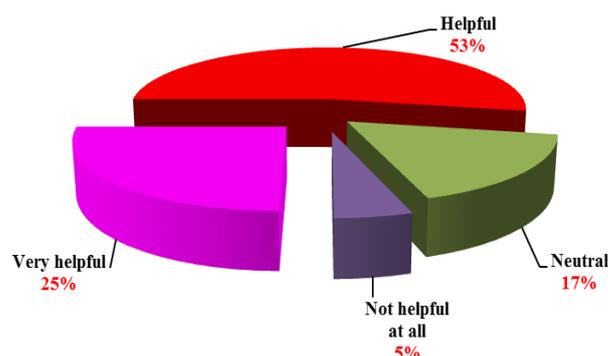


Figure 35. Relevance of VET studies for well prepared for work and finding the jobs in agriculture sector

To question regarding the conformance of the graduates' qualification level to the labor market requirements, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 - not correspond, 5 - completely correspond), the majority of the participants to survey approx. 65% stated that VET vocational competences correspond strongly and completely correspond (see. Figure 34) and only 31% say they correspond very little or a little.

On this subject, some respondents pointed out that obtaining qualifications that would correspond to the labor market requirements also depended on the level of interest and personal motivation of the students. VET institutions build on knowledge and develop practical skills, but need to deepen through self-training and personal involvement in practical training process.

5.13. Relevance of VET studies for well prepared for work and finding the jobs in agriculture sector

The same way, the question of the relevance of studies in VET institutions in the context of better training for work and finding employment in the agricultural and rural sector was addressed to the students and graduates of the VET institutions (Figure 35). Approx. 78% of respondents stated that studies in VET institutions were very useful and useful for a thorough and practical training to find jobs. Only 17% of respondents stated that these trainings were neutral or 5% of respondents said they were not at all helpful and in this context they had to find jobs that did not require specific education / training. These statements fall within the limit of the percentage of people who are traditionally not satisfied with the way of life and the labor market opportunities, as far as relevant arguments were not afford by these peopleau prezentat.

5.14. Assistance provided by VET education centers in Job placement

VET students and graduates have been asked whether vocational education and training centers offer assistance in job placement and how effective these interventions are, and quantification of their responses has been carried out on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 - Yes, very helpful, 1 - No, not helpful at all). Approx. 55% of respondents said that they have received useful and very useful help from VET institutions in identifying future jobs, about 25% somewhat helpful assistance, and only 20% did not get or have been given a useful assistance in helping them to be employed. In general, in this context, some respondents have stated that they prefer to find their properly job by themselves.

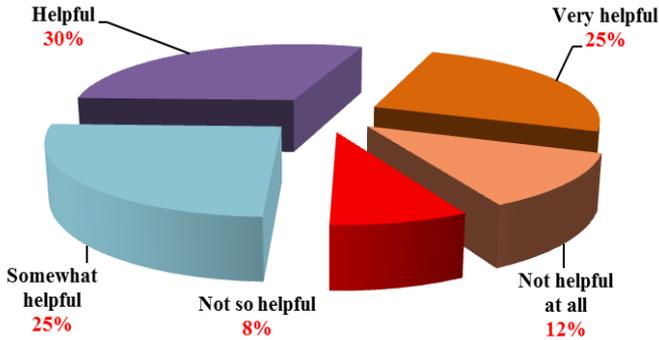
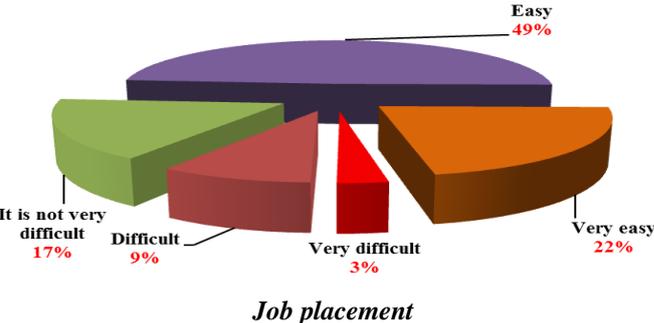


Figure 36. Assistance provided by VET education centers in



5.15. How easy VET education centers graduates find a jobs in gricultural/rural sector

VET students and graduates have been asked if it was easy it is to find jobs in the agricultural / rural sector after completing their studies in VET institutions. The quantification of the claims was done on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 - very easy, 1 - very difficult). Approx. 71% of respondents said that finding employment in the agricultural / rural sector is easy and very easy. With the required level of qualification, jobs with a good payroll level, with a medical and social package included and possibly place of employment.

Figure 37. How easy graduates of the VET education centers find a jobs in agricultural/rural sector

5.16. Respondents evaluation - needs for further trainings in order to be more successful in agriculture/rural sector

The training process in the agricultural and rural sector is an uninterrupted one, there are new production items and inputs, so qualified specialists require regular further training. In this context, VET students and graduates were asked the question of assessing the needs of continuing training for more success in the agricultural and rural sectors. Approximately 54% of respondents mentioned the continuous training is very important (corresponds to the sample of about 46% of respondents who are graduates and already are employed) and 45% of respondents consider that uninterrupted training is of some importance (corresponds to the sample of about 54% of respondents who are still students). Either current VET students have not yet realized the importance of this process.

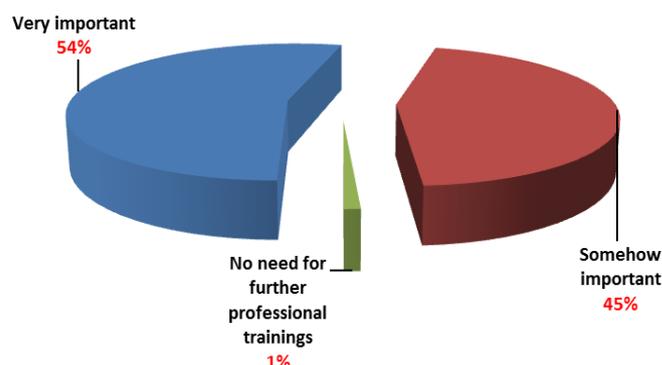


Figure 38. Needs for further trainings in order to be more successful in agriculture/rural sector

5.17. Needs of trainings and knowledge/skills improvements to be successful in agro/rural sector

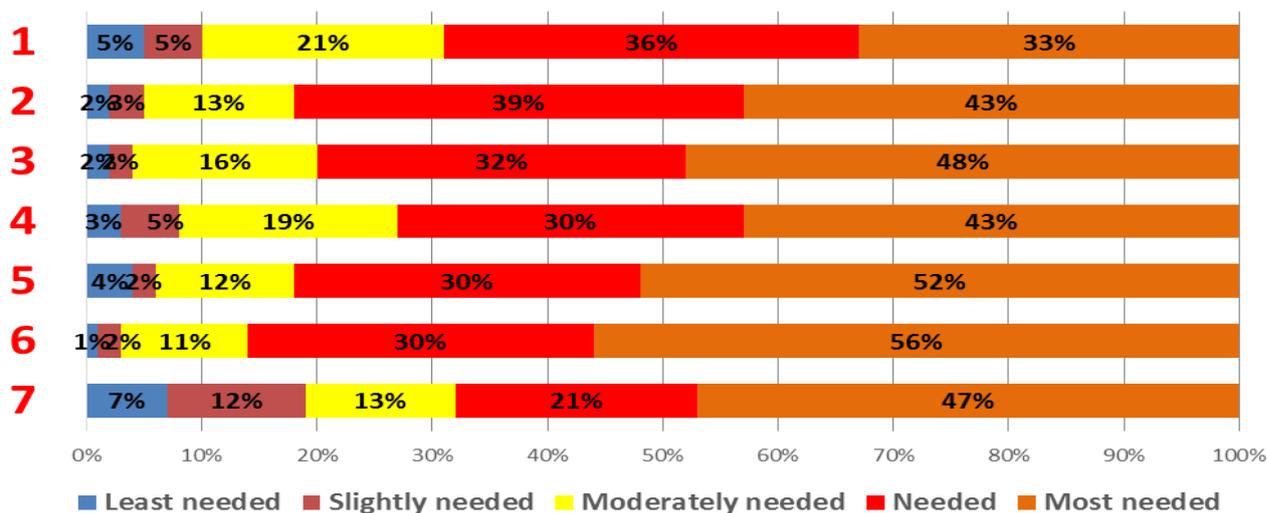


Figure 39. Needs of trainings and knowledge/skills improvements to be successful in agro/rural sector

*The legend:

1. Management skills
2. Marketing & Sales skills
3. Financial skills
4. Technological knowledge necessary for the farm activities
5. Knowledge of Quality Management and standards requirements in Agro sector
6. Skills related to applying for subsidies/ grants/ credit
7. Foreign languages

In the end of the questionnaire was included a checklist question addressed to VET students and graduates in which area they would consider needing more training and knowledge / skills improvements to be successful in the agricultural -rural sector (Figure 39). The quantification of the claims was done on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 - most needed, 1 - least needed).

With a rate of over 80%, the need for training and knowledge enhancements to guarantee success in the agro-rural sector are necessary as such domains: linked with grants / Credit grants (approx. 86%); marketing and sales skills and knowledge of quality management and standardization requirements in the agriculture and foodstuff sector (by about 82%); and financial abilities (about 80%). With a 73% rate of affirmation, there is a need of technological knowledge for agricultural activities, and with a rate of approx. 68-69% is knowledge of foreign languages and management skills. In this context, the conclusions of graduates and current students of VET institutions (54% of the respondents) are important in choosing the priorities of professional excellence with a tendency in the financial and economic fields combined with the technological knowledge needed for agricultural and rural activities.

5.18. Suggested changes in the curriculum of VET education centers to ensure the development of useful skills in the agricultural sector

With that in mind, VET students and graduates have been asked the question of their opinion on the need for curriculum and practical lessons to VET education centers to ensure the development of useful skills in the agricultural sector. At a rate of 82%, respondents consider it appropriate to change the curriculum of VET education centers by adding more practical elements close to professional technical qualifications, with a rate of approx. 48- 49% better planning of practical dual training formations and providing a better system in consulting and job placement assistance. less than 26-29% is required to change the curriculum by including skills and language proficiencies with general skills related to agriculture / rural development.

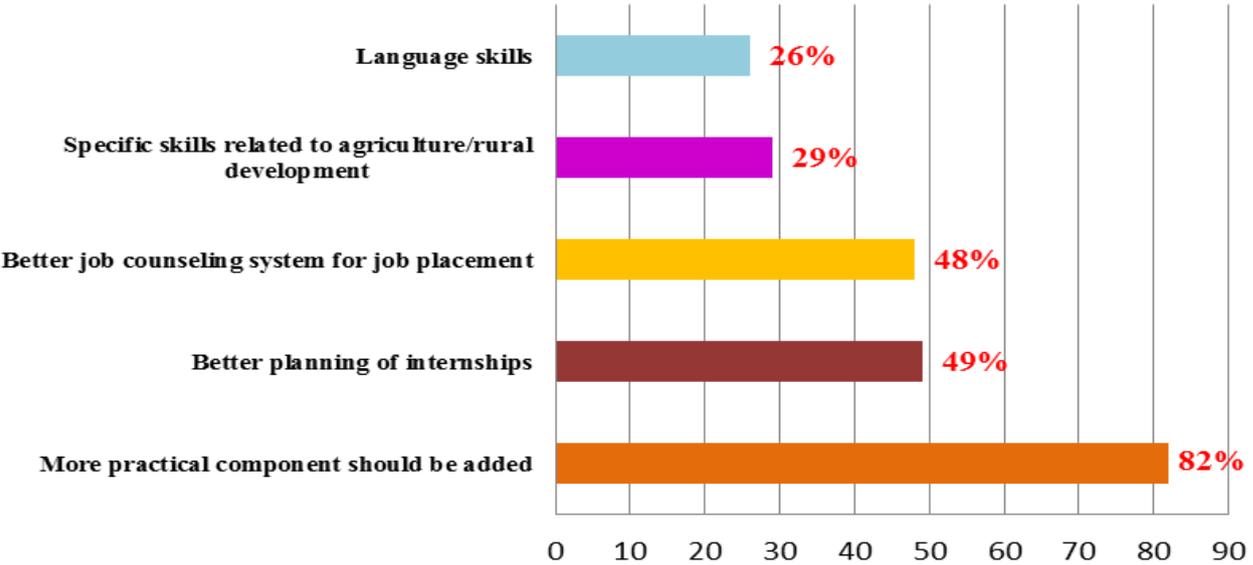


Figure 40. Suggested changes in the curriculum of VET education centers to ensure the development of useful skills in the agricultural sector

A better X-ray investigation of adjusting the teaching process and curricula of VET institutions to ensure the development of useful skills in the agricultural sector for future students and graduates does not seem to be. Very accurate and reasoned pointing, which requires discussion with VET institutions to improve the teaching process in general and the practical - professional aspect in particular.

5.19. The main problems associated with effectiveness of VET centers which need further improvements

no.	The respondents' answer	Number of answers	Affirmation percentage
1	Insufficiency in development of practical skills and abilities Solution: Train students in the second half of the day to technology and animal care in demonstration teams of VET institutions or nearby farmer	57	44
2	Lack of new didactic materials, of advanced computing techniques, and digital teaching technology classrooms. Solution: to initiate projects and partnerships of international programs and projects and with national support, similar to institutions from abroad, to ensure specific technical and material endowment and to implement new practical training techniques.	22	18
3	Lack of jobs and insufficient motivation for students to advance in teaching process and practical training. Solution: establishing partnerships between VET institutions and the business environment for the selection and dual training of future employees at the company, followed by subsequent employment after completion of the studies.	20	16
4	Out of date and obsolete technical and teaching material Solution: dual education and practical lessons for demonstration plots and businesses with high-performance agricultural producers.	16	13
5	Lack of skills and knowledge of working within various local and regional public institutions and services.. Solution: conducting a series of practice days with mentors within the regional public institutions and services.	11	9

At the end of the survey and in the context of evaluation the issues related to the efficiency of studies regarding vocational education and training VET centers, it is important to note that the sample of VET students and graduates was much more open and more objective and more oriented towards solving the problems of VET compared to the stakeholders participating in the research. Or to put it allegorically: *"the truth comes out of the children's mouth."*