

HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF DUAL VET EDUCATION IN KOSOVO

(2022–2026)

From a Pilot Initiative to a National Technical and Vocational
Education and Training System

June 2026

Introduction

The development of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Dual VET Education in Kosovo represents one of the most significant reforms undertaken in the vocational education sector in the Republic of Kosovo. Within a relatively short period, the system evolved from a pilot phase involving only four occupational profiles and four schools into a consolidated national system comprising dozens of vocational schools, thousands of students and hundreds of partner enterprises.

The need to transform vocational education arose from the mismatch between the skills acquired by students during their schooling and the actual needs of the labour market. For many years, practical training was mainly carried out within schools, while cooperation with businesses remained limited and lacked standardisation. This situation directly affected the employability of young people and contributed to the shortage of qualified labour for the private sector.

In response to these challenges, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) at that time, with the support of international partners and national and international experts, initiated the process of developing the Dual VET system, based on the experiences and best practices of countries with a long tradition in this field, particularly Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The Dual VET model is based on the principles of Work-Based Learning (WBL), whereby a significant part of the learning process takes place in real enterprises, enabling students to develop professional competencies in line with labour market requirements.

This document presents, in chronological order, the history of the development of Dual VET in Kosovo during the period 2022–2026, the key reform processes, the partners involved and the results achieved.

1. The Beginning of Dual VET in Kosovo (2022–2023)

The year 2022 marked the beginning of the implementation of the Dual VET model in Kosovo. The initiative was launched by MESTI and initially implemented as a pilot project in four vocational schools:

School	Occupational Profile
Competence Centre in Skenderaj	Bricklayer
Competence Centre "Shtjefën Gjeçovi" – Prishtina	Hairdresser
VETI "Sahit Baftiu" – Gjiilan	Cook/Chef
VETI "7 Shtatori" – Prishtina	Hospitality hotel Assistant

Approximately 90 students were involved in this phase, marking the beginning of a new approach to vocational education based on the combination of school-based learning and practical training in enterprises.

The main objective of the pilot phase was to test the new model of vocational education delivery and strengthen cooperation between vocational schools and enterprises.

However, at this stage the system still lacked a standardised structure. The following elements were missing:

- A common framework for curriculum development;
- A clear division of learning between schools and enterprises;
- Standard documentation for the implementation of practical training;
- Monitoring and supervision procedures;
- An assessment and certification system;
- Training programmes for teachers and in-company instructors.

Furthermore, the distribution of learning units and the organisation of practical training varied from one school to another, creating the need for the development of a unified system at the national level.

2. GIZ Support and the Engagement of GFA Consulting Group

In March 2023, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) requested the support of GIZ for the further development and expansion of Dual VET in Kosovo.

Within the framework of an existing project implemented by GFA Consulting Group, GIZ entrusted the project team with the task of developing a standardized Dual VET system in Kosovo.

The professional leadership of this process was entrusted to:

Mr. Jürgen Kosemund – Team Leader and international expert in Dual VET;

Mr. Driton Berisha – Deputy Team Leader and national expert in institutional development and vocational education and training.

Under their leadership, the process of developing the first standardized Dual VET model in Kosovo was initiated.

The Dual VET model in Kosovo was built upon four fundamental principles:

- At least 50% of professional competencies should be acquired through practical training in enterprises;
- Practical training should be carried out in real enterprises;
- An educational employment contract should be established between the student and the enterprise;
- Students should receive financial compensation during their practical training.

In June 2023, the first working group was established, consisting of seven members representing MESTI, school principals, deputy principals and teachers. The group worked under supervision of GFA experts and in close coordination with MESTI to support the reform process and the development of the Dual VET system.

At the same time, two dedicated task forces on Dual VET were operating under the Office of the Prime Minister and MESTI. These task forces were established to support and coordinate the development and implementation of the Dual VET system in Kosovo.

3. Development of the First National Framework for Dual VET

During the summer of 2023, the GFA project team developed and MESTI approved:

- the National Dual VET Curriculum Framework;
- a unique model for curriculum development;
- the structure of both school-based and enterprise-based curricula;
- standard implementation documentation;
- administrative forms and templates;
- procedures for cooperation with businesses;
- the educational contract for students;
- the visual identity (logo) of Dual VET in Kosovo.

During the period from August to September 2023, twelve (12) working groups were established, bringing together experts from the private sector and teachers representing the respective occupational profiles.

The curriculum development process was financially supported by LuxDev and was professionally led by experts from GIZ/GFA Consulting Group, in close coordination with MESTI.

This process represented the most comprehensive reform of vocational curricula undertaken in Kosovo and, for the first time, introduced a clear distinction between school-based curricula and enterprise-based curricula. As a result, the respective roles and responsibilities of vocational schools and partner enterprises in delivering practical training were clearly defined, laying the foundation for a standardized and nationally coordinated Dual VET system.

4. National Expansion (2023–2024)

The 2023/2024 school year marked the first major expansion of the Dual VET system in Kosovo.

Dual VET was expanded to:

- 23 vocational schools;
- 12 occupational profiles;
- more than 1,000 Grade 10 students.

During this period, GFA experts developed the **Operational Guideline for the Implementation of Dual VET**, which standardized:

- administrative procedures;
- implementation documentation;
- educational employment contracts;
- school-enterprise cooperation arrangements;
- the roles and responsibilities of Vocational Practice Teachers (VPTs) and company instructors;
- monitoring and assessment formats.

At the same time, the first training programmes for Professional Practice Teachers (PPTs) were developed and implemented.

A total of 57 teachers were trained during the period from November to December 2023, while 211 company instructors received pre-qualification training between January and March 2024.

By March 2024, more than 90% of the students had been placed in over 300 enterprises across Kosovo, ensuring the effective implementation of work-based learning and strengthening cooperation between vocational schools and the private sector.

In March 2024, GIZ organized a ten-day study visit to Germany. During the visit, participants had the opportunity to visit:

- vocational schools;
- chambers of commerce and industry;
- companies;
- teachers and training experts;
- institutions responsible for the implementation and governance of the Dual VET system.

The main objective of the study visit was to facilitate the transfer of German experience and best practices to the Dual VET system in Kosovo. The knowledge and experience gained during the visit contributed significantly to strengthening institutional capacities and supporting the further development and expansion of Dual VET in the country.

5. System Consolidation (2024–2025)

The 2024/2025 school year marked the consolidation phase of the Dual VET system in Kosovo.

The number of participating schools increased to 27, while more than 1,000 new students joined the system.

To ensure the continued development and institutionalization of the reform, GIZ engaged the German consulting company BiBeKu and the local partner ITED to provide further technical assistance and support.

Mr. Jürgen Kosemund and Mr. Driton Berisha continued to lead the technical development of the system, while the overall process was coordinated by Mr. Lah Nitaj, Director of the Department for Vocational Education and Training (DVET), and Mr. Agim Krasniqi, Senior Officer of the DVET Department within MESTI.

During this period, under their leadership, several key components of the Dual VET system were developed, including:

- the Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme;
- the Professional Practice Teachers (PPT) Training Programme;
- the Examination and Certification System;
- the Examination and Certification Guideline;
- instruments and procedures for written, practical and oral examinations.

As a result:

- 32 Trainers of Trainers (ToTs) were trained and certified;
- 139 Vocational Practice Teachers (VPTs) were trained and certified;
- the training programmes were prepared and submitted for accreditation to the Council for Teacher Licensing and Professional Development (CTLPD) under MESTI.

All ToTs and PPTs received certificates officially recognized by MESTI for the implementation of Dual VET in Kosovo.

Particular importance was given to the development of the Examination and Certification System, which had not previously existed within the Dual VET system in Kosovo.

During the period January–March 2025, the Examination and Certification Guideline was developed. In March 2025, the first 22 assessors from the public and private sectors were trained and the first five assessment commissions were established.

Between May and June 2025, final examinations were organized for the first time for 88 students from the four pilot occupational profiles.

This milestone marked the graduation of the first generation of Dual VET students in Kosovo.

In May 2025, another study visit to Germany was organized with the financial support of LuxDev and implemented by BiBeKu and ITED. The visit focused specifically on the German system of examination and certification and provided valuable insights for the establishment of a comparable system in Kosovo.

Furthermore, in November 2025, GIZ, in cooperation with the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce (KCC) and the Chamber of Skilled Crafts of the Stuttgart Region (Handwerkskammer Region Stuttgart), organized the first Training of Trainers (ToT) programme for company instructors.

6. Transformation into a National System (2025–2026)

At the beginning of the 2025/2026 school year, the Dual VET system had expanded to include:

- 32 vocational schools;
- 18 municipalities;
- 16 occupational profiles;
- 142 Dual VET classes;
- more than 2,300 students;

- around 800 partner enterprises;
- more than 450 company instructors;
- 192 trained Vocational Practice Teachers (VPTs);
- 32 Trainers of Trainers (ToTs).

In January 2026, GIZ, in cooperation with the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce (KCC) and the German Chamber of Commerce (OHK), organized the first Training of Trainers (ToT) programme for examiners from the private sector.

In April 2026, LuxDev engaged ITED and the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce (KCC) to support the organization of the national examination process and to strengthen the institutional capacities of the KCC for the future.

Given that ITED experts had been involved in the development of the Dual VET system since its inception, Mr. Jürgen Kosemund and Mr. Driton Berisha were engaged as the key experts leading this process.

During the period from April to June 2026:

- 225 examiners from the private sector were trained and certified by ITED and the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce;
- 87 assessment commissions were established and officially approved by MESTI;
- practical examinations were monitored in 37 classes across 23 schools;
- written examinations were supported in 50 classes across 27 schools;
- approximately 1,223 Grade 11 and Grade 12 students were monitored and supported throughout the examination process;
- promotional activities and open days were organized in many vocational schools.

For the first time in Kosovo, the Dual VET examination and certification system was implemented on a nationwide scale.

This milestone represented a major achievement in the development of Dual VET in Kosovo and marked the transition from a pilot initiative to a fully operational national system. It also demonstrated the increasing involvement of the private sector and the growing institutional capacities required to ensure the sustainability and quality of the Dual VET system.

7. System Consolidation and Post-Implementation Activities Following the First National Assessment and Certification Process (June–September 2026)

Following the completion of the examination and certification process for the 2025/2026 school year, project activities shifted towards evaluating the experience gained, identifying lessons learned, and undertaking measures aimed at further strengthening and improving the Dual VET system.

The key activities planned for this period included:

- organizing feedback sessions with all stakeholders involved in the assessment and certification process;

- analysing experiences and identifying lessons learned from the organization of examinations during the 2025/2026 school year;
- developing recommendations for further improvement of the system based on the feedback and findings collected;
- reviewing and updating the Dual VET Assessment and Certification Guideline to reflect the experience gained through the nationwide implementation process;
- preparing profile-specific guidelines aimed at standardizing the organization and implementation of practical examinations.

Institutional Integration of the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce

One of the main objectives of the ITED project during this period was to strengthen the role of the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce (KCC) within the Dual VET system and to facilitate its gradual integration into the assessment and certification processes.

In this regard, the following activities were planned:

- integrating the role and responsibilities of the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce into the Dual VET Assessment and Certification Guideline;
- organizing a workshop with KCC staff and relevant stakeholders aimed at strengthening capacities and enhancing the involvement of the Chamber in Dual VET processes.

Alignment of Student Intake, Awareness Raising and Activation

In order to support the further expansion of Dual VET and align occupational profiles with labour market needs, a series of activities were planned to support vocational schools.

These activities included:

- organizing workshops with vocational schools to support the enrolment process for students entering Dual VET programmes;
- conducting school visits to provide support in the identification, planning and organization of occupational profiles based on the needs of municipalities and the labour market;
- supporting promotional activities and organizing open days to inform and guide prospective students.

Enterprise Feedback and System Evaluation

In order to ensure the continuous improvement of the Dual VET system, a structured evaluation process involving all relevant stakeholders was planned.

This process included:

- designing and conducting a survey to collect feedback from students, enterprises and other stakeholders regarding the assessment and certification process;
- analyzing findings and identifying challenges as well as good practices;
- developing concrete recommendations for further improving the Dual VET assessment and certification system in the years ahead.
- These activities represent an important step towards the consolidation and sustainability of the Dual VET system and provide the basis for further institutional development and quality improvement in the years to come.

8. Conclusion

The period 2022–2026 represents the foundational phase of Dual VET in Kosovo. Within a period of only four years, a standardized system based on partnerships between vocational schools and enterprises was established, creating for the first time an integrated model for the development of professional competencies and a stronger link between education and the labour market.

In addition to its quantitative expansion, the reform introduced significant structural changes, including the development of curricula, the establishment of the operational framework for the implementation of Dual VET, the strengthening of the capacities of teachers and company instructors, and the creation of an assessment and certification system for students. For the first time in Kosovo, a unified system was established that enables the planning, organization, monitoring and assessment of work-based learning processes in accordance with the principles of Dual VET.

Important contributions to this process were made by MESTI, GIZ, LuxDev, GFA Consulting Group, BiBeKu, ITED, the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce, vocational schools, teachers, school management and hundreds of partner enterprises, whose close and continuous cooperation has contributed to the gradual development of the system.

Thanks to these joint efforts, Dual VET has evolved into one of the most significant reforms in vocational education in the Republic of Kosovo and has laid the foundations for the development of a qualified and competitive workforce, aligned with labour market needs and European standards.

Despite the considerable progress achieved during the period 2022–2026, the Dual VET system in Kosovo is still in a phase of consolidation and further development. Many processes and mechanisms have been established for the first time and require continued institutional, technical and financial support in order to be fully consolidated and integrated as a sustainable component of the national Technical and Vocational Education and Training system.

In particular, there is a continued need for support in the areas of curriculum review, the development of new occupational profiles, the continuous upgrading of the capacities of teachers and company instructors, the strengthening of the assessment and certification system, greater involvement of the private sector, and the empowerment of national institutions to gradually assume full responsibility for managing and further developing the system.

Therefore, the period 2022–2026 should be regarded as the phase during which the foundations of Dual VET in Kosovo were established, while the next phase should focus on consolidation, institutionalization and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the system. Continued support from national institutions, development partners and the private sector will be essential to ensure that the achievements and investments made so far are not interrupted at this stage, but rather serve as a basis for the further development of a modern and functional Dual VET system capable of contributing directly to the economic and social development of the Republic of Kosovo.

In this context, maintaining the continuity of the reform and investing further in Dual VET should not be seen merely as a necessity for the education sector, but as a strategic investment in human capital development and in enhancing the competitiveness of Kosovo's economy in the future.

If the continuity of the reform is maintained and the necessary institutional and development support is ensured, Dual VET has the potential to become the cornerstone of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Kosovo. The experience gained during the period 2022–2026 has demonstrated that strong partnerships among public institutions, the private sector and international development partners can create a sustainable system that not only increases the employability of young people, but also contributes directly to the economic development and competitiveness of the country.

