

NEWSLETTER

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MARKET LEADERS INVESTING IN HUMAN CAPITAL



Albi Group is one of the leading retail companies in Kosovo, with 800 employees under its umbrella. It has performed very well in the last year, expanded its operations, and become one of the busiest shopping malls in the region. Continuous investment in business and human capital needs is important to Albi Group, as is demonstrated by its commitment to take part in Kosovo's Human Capital Development Initiative (HCDI), an initiative of EYE that is co-facilitated by the Center for Enterprise Excellence and Development (CEED).

The goal of HCDI is to stimulate investments of companies such as Albi Group to increase their profits by: matching competencies with company needs, increasing employee performance and efficiency, optimizing in-house productivity and growth, and building strong teams. The second objective of the initiative aims at increasing the capacities of human resource (HR) consultants to provide better HR services to the lead firms.

HCDI is a three-phase program that started in May 2014 and is now well under way, with 14

market leaders participating in total.

HCDI

Human Capital Development Initiative
Better Leaders, Better People, Better Business

Additionally 18 local consulting companies were engaged during training modules and are currently working in phase two of the initiative: in-house diagnostic process in Lead Firms (employing more than 50 workers) supported by regional consultants.

Shkumbin Ibraimi who is HR Manager at Albi Group is enthusiastic about the opportunities offered by HCDI to invest further in the human capital of the company. According to him "the whole set up of the program suited the company very well as it enabled us to analyze and identify opportunities of enhancing Albi's human capital needs"

The third phase of HCDI includes investments by Lead Firms in new HR practices (based on diagnostic reports completed during phase two), enabling them to reduce costs and allows them to invest more in their businesses.

Kaltrina Luzha, who is a member of HCDI implementation team, reminds that "qualitative HR services are one of the key missing services needed by the Lead Firms. Through EYE's facilitation, we can reach out to professional advice and training of international and regional experts and I am certain that we will make a difference for the private lead firms in Kosovo."

HCDI three-phase program specific for HR needs of the lead firms will be completed by the end of this year. This initiative is expected to continue in 2015 by focusing on other aspects of company development such as: senior management, strategic planning, marketing, and investments that will offer more employment opportunities for youth in Kosovo.

DEVELOPMENT OF JOB MATCHING SERVICE PROVIDERS



The number of young Kosovars graduated from universities that are unemployed is high and stands at around 75%. Valbona Fejza is a young aspiring lawyer who has actively been seeking a full-time job since she finished her studies in 2012, but she has not been successful so far. She is using the online job portal Portalpune.com to search for jobs, but it is, in her words, “very hard to find a short internship, let alone to find a proper full-time job as a freshly graduated student”.

An important reason why the job-seeking process is not more efficient is the fact that the communication channels between job-providers and those who seek labour information are limited. Until recently, only top printed newspapers would publish job vacancies. Instead, with 70% internet penetration in Kosovo, both jobseekers and employers have turned to online firms to fulfill their job-matching needs. Additionally, the lack of services offered by job matching intermediaries is was evident too according to early assessments.

Online job matching firms are taking the lead and some significant market developments occurred in the last months. Thanks to the facilitation by the EYE project, several job portals have successfully developed new services and expanded their outreach to a large number of job seekers, including private companies and public institutions that seek to hire skillful labour. Arion Rizaj, the owner of Kosovajob.com, analyzes

Kosovajob.com's latest achievements: “My company is growing faster. When I established KosovaJob.com, it was just like a hobby. I was taking the job ads from the newspapers and posted them online to target young job seekers. The response was overwhelming. I was surprised by the number of clicks that I was getting. Then, EYE came along, and opened a whole different perspective to KosovaJob. We are now a registered business, offering a range of services to young job-seekers.” He continues, “thanks to our job-matching services, 5,000 young women and men have found employment and we have just started to make money too out of this business”. Meanwhile, government employment agencies have agreed to collaborate with EYE on labour issues too. Ylber Aliu, is the Acting Head of Employment Office Monitoring Division within the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) and is managing the implementation of reforms within Public Employment Services (PES), which is an activity supported by EYE.

According to Ylber Aliu “PES are public job matching providers that are very important to support unemployed youth with finding jobs more easily. For instance, the Government is responsible for following general trends in the labour market and to conduct reforms according to real time needs”. Recently EYE signed a contract with an ICT company, which will develop multi-channeling software solutions for PES as part of a major reform that includes a sustainable internal system, performance management, and a Labour Market Information System (LMIS). This reform is expected to significantly improve communication of PES with job-seekers and future employers, affecting positively the employment outlook in Kosovo. In the coming years, EYE will continue to expand its labour market programs, enabling public and private job-matchers to further develop their capacities, which will help Valbona and many other unemployed youth to find sustainable jobs more easily.

UNIFICATION OF THE INTERNSHIP SCHEME AT VET LEVEL

Hajrie Shaipi is the School Principal of "Gjin Gazulli", an ICT VET school in Prishtina. One of her priorities during the summer is to follow the progress of the newly established internship scheme her students. The development of this internship scheme was closely supported by EYE.

The Swiss-funded program offered expertise and facilitation services in designing a unified functioning and sustainable internship system, for all the vocational schools in Kosovo for ICT and Agribusiness profiles. The internship program is further supported by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, and Municipal Education Directorates of Prishtina, Peja, Ferizaj, Gjiilan and Vushtri.

The scheme provides guidelines and tools to support the implementation of the internships, which are expected to enhance the work of teachers in analyzing the effectiveness as well as overall performance of internships.

According to Mrs. Shaipi, this is a much needed reform since it allows students to enhance their skills through a structured internship scheme.

Up until now VET Schools offered very few opportunities for internships and they were generally without a unified mentoring and evaluation mechanisms. She adds: "each VET school in Kosovo should follow suit and allow students to apply their skills in practice within the private sector, where they have the chance to become full-time employees in the future". Moreover, she is actively lobbying within the education system to bring businesses to management councils of schools, directly negotiating more internship opportunities, as well as contributing directly to the curricula that are offered to the incoming students and future professionals. The need to bring the private sector and education institutions closer together was mentioned in the World Bank profile of Kosovo's education system. The report emphasized that "the private sector does not yet systematically and comprehensively participate in defining policies, setting priorities and implementing vocational training".

Majlinda Bajraktari, expert on skills and education who works at EYE, highlights that to tackle youth unemployment in Kosovo, the process of bringing together educational institutions (i.e. the skills suppliers) and the private sector (i.e. the demand side of the labour market), is the main priority. The internship scheme is not the only intervention of EYE that focuses on bringing the private sector and the skill providers closer together. For instance, EYE recently supported the University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina" with creating a so called "Industrial Board", which enables academia and the private sector to regularly meet and discuss what type of skills are needed in the labour market.



Mrs. Hajrie Shaipi, School Principal of "Gjin Gazulli" VET School

LATEST MARKET DEVELOPMENTS BY EYE PARTNERS



baruti.
service & contact center



BARUTI GmbH is supported by EYE with their investment to get international ISO certification and introduce a quality management and data security system. The certification was awarded in April 2014 and since then the company has already observed that clients of German-speaking countries have increased trust in the services of BARUTI. The company has attracted new clients and recently signed a new agreement with a customer from UK market.

The results demonstrate a continuous market growth; within one year, the revenues of Baruti have doubled and employment has increased 70%; the company is now employing 85 full-time employees. 50% of their employees are women and two young professional women manage their Kosovo branch office. By January 2015, Baruti plans to have 130 employees as they are negotiating a large project with a new client. The IT-based service outsourcing industry of Baruti GmbH has become a fast growing sector and is attractive employer for young women and men that graduate from university and possess the necessary skills to deliver the services.

DYGUR.COM is online platform supported by EYE too, is growing and now has 65,000 registered active businesses in the system. All the businesses have contact information, divided by sector and place of operation. As a business operating in Kosovo, one will be able to find relevant updated information about the market and competition in one platform.

There are 350 relevant administration, legal, and other commercial templates of documents available for users in a download center and 600 templates in the library. Besides benefiting from the library which is continuously upgraded, companies can contact directly consultants that are registered within Dygur.com

It is expected that by the end of the first year, 10 permanent staff will be hired to manage the portal. In addition, within the first 2 years of operations, Dygur will employ 30 regional consultants covering 30 municipalities in Kosovo. DyGur will generate revenues from developed packages for membership and from the engagement of regional consultants to provide services to enterprises.

SCARDS ACADEMY has recruited fifteen young talents for 12 month training in the five following modules: mobile application development, application and database development on Windows and Unix platforms, graphic design and internet and social media marketing. The academy is co-financed by EYE and SCARDS. More than 480 applicants have applied for the 15 positions, showing how popular these professional training programs are amongst young women and men. The 15 selected participants at SCARDS are learning technical skills while working in five different modules as well as soft skills trainings, such as: time management, leadership, project management, math, IDEO-design thinking.

SCARDS will support Academy participants to also create new ventures that would lead to business growth and employment. Rita Aliti who participates in the Internet Marketing team and is founder/innovator of Inventa handmade jewelry became the winner of the Business Idea Competition in Kosovo, organized by FIQ. Her business idea will now compete with 14 other ideas from 5 regional countries in an event in Albania at the end of July. Scards Academy supported her too with business plan preparation and presentation skills training. After the 12 months learning experience within SCARDS Academy, the participants will be offered full-time employment at SCARDS and SCARDS academy will continue with another round of interns, following the same format, and financed by SCARDS own investment funds.

Financed by:



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