

MODEL OF METHODOLOGY FOR DETERMINING THE NEEDS OF CONTINUING VOCATIONAL TRAINING OF SOCIAL WORK SPECIALISTS PROVIDING SOCIAL SERVICES

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Abstract: *This study justifies the need for building a system for research, identification and monitoring of the needs of vocational training in compliance to the constantly changing needs of the labour market. When considered in a narrower sense this problem justifies and proves the need for this activity related to social work and social workers. A method for determining the need for continuing vocational training of specialists in social work is developed and an experimental model for its implementation is offered.*

Keywords: social management, social activities, continuing vocational training.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since 1997 in Bulgaria a reform is carried out in the field of offering vocational education and training that corresponds to the changing needs of the labour market. Support has been given by number of programs and projects that represent a platform for continuation of the reform aiming to transform strategic planning into practical reality.

In the basis of building the system for research, identification and monitoring of the needs for vocational training is the philosophy for communication on the labour market, in some countries understood as social dialogue.

The above scheme shows the place and role of the main partners of the labour market, representatives of the government administrations and social partners. The effectiveness of functioning of such a communication system depends exclusively on the political will and political attitude for communication of all interested parties. In case of presence of suitable legislation and

qualified and motivated experts and employees in those institutions that perform key roles in the systems, the aggregate of the upper two attitudes will have positive contribution to the development of the country [1-15].

The analysis of the labour market in Bulgaria shows serious deficits in regards to communication both between the separate public institutions and between institutions on one hand and employers, employees and officers on the other hand. In regards to the general situation on the labour market in Bulgaria and the condition of the vocational education and training, the representatives of institutions from the field of employment and social policy unanimously highlight the need for fundamental changes in the cooperation between partners on the labour market, but also in the contents of the work as quality control of educational and training services, collection and analysis of information about the employers' needs of qualified staff, compliance of the offered education and qualification with the needs

of employers and others [15-35].

Systematic communication on the labour market requires equal in rights and responsibilities participation of all partners on the labour market regardless of whether they are governmental structures or employers, employees and officers' representatives, vocational training centres, district and municipal administrations, non-governmental organizations and others. In this way each one of the partners may receive trustworthy information if before that they themselves have provided trustworthy information to other partners.

Along with all studies that aim to foresee the future development, the forecasts about the needs for qualification and skills are characterized by some uncertainty of anticipated results and expected effects. The introduction of future oriented system for labour market development, which includes analysis of the needs for skills, is a good step. But in reality it is not enough. Such a system can be useful only if it constitutes a part of a broader system. Broader systems provide information and ensure professional communication between all interested parties in the socio-economic sphere. The workforce of our country is one of the most important resources that it has and therefore the quality of the workforce should be present as a major component both in the plans for economic development of the country and in its policy regarding vocational education and training. It is preferable that such an approach is implemented in close cooperation and continuous communication with all interested people, ministries and social partners [1-7, 17-35].

2. OBJECTIVE AND TASKS OF THE METHODOLOGY FOR DETERMINING THE NEEDS OF CONTINUING VOCATIONAL TRAINING OF SOCIAL WORK SPECIALISTS PROVIDING SOCIAL SERVICES

The objective of the methodology for

determining the needs of continuing vocational training of social work specialists providing social services is to increase the level of correlation between demand and supply on the labour market that should contribute for improving the workforce quality in the country as competitive factor with increasing significance for the successful economic development.

The expectation is that in future the organizations in Bulgaria will more and more often pay attention to quality and improvement of its workforce's skills. The sharp deficit of qualified workers and employees is present even now and in many of the economic sectors in the country, that is why the methodology will cooperate to the managerial and entrepreneurial decisions in the Bulgarian organizations.

For the purposes of achieving this goal should be created an organized mechanism connecting ministries, government agencies, social partners, employment agencies - private or public, chambers of commerce, institutions for vocational education and training, employers and employees' organizations.

3. STUDYING THE NEEDS FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN DEPARTMENTS 'CHILD WELFARE' AND 'PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND SOCIAL SERVICES' AT THE 'SOCIAL ASSISTANCE' DIRECTORATES OF THE SOCIAL ASSISTANCE AGENCY FOR INCREASING THE QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF SOCIAL WORK

Objective of the study of the needs for continuing vocational education in departments 'Child Welfare' and 'People with disabilities and social services' at the 'Social Assistance' directorates of the Social Assistance Agency for increasing the quality and efficiency of social work

The objective of the study of the needs for continuing vocational education in

departments 'Child Welfare' and 'People with disabilities and social services' at the 'Social Assistance' directorates of the Social Assistance Agency for increasing the quality and efficiency of social work is to determine the needs of adequate training courses and the measures for support of the social workers with the purpose of achieving better efficiency of social work in the context of lifelong learning and continuing vocational training. **Tools of the study of the needs for continuing vocational education in departments 'Child Welfare' and 'People with disabilities and social services' at the 'Social Assistance' directorates of the Social Assistance Agency for increasing the quality and efficiency of social work**

4. ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY ON THE NEEDS OF CONTINUING VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR EXPERTS AND SOCIAL WORKERS, EMPLOYED IN THE DEPARTMENTS 'CHILD WELFARE' AT THE 'SOCIAL ASSISTANCE' DIRECTORATES OF THE SOCIAL ASSISTANCE AGENCY
The questionnaire intended for the employees of the departments 'Child welfare' was made to be filled-in on a hard copy, including 23 pages. 767 respondents filled it in and returned it, and 468 of them responded to all questions in the questionnaire.

The questionnaire had totally 76 questions divided into sections. 11 are the questions requiring general information, 62 are with an option of choosing only one answer, 3 – with an option of choosing more than one answer, 2 are open questions and 1 question

for prioritization and giving more than one answer.

From these data it becomes clear that greatest is the percentage of social workers – women – 90.6% of the total number.

Interesting is the fact that 48.5% of the respondents are aged between 36 and 55 years, 33.8% are aged 26-35 years and only 12.1% are up to 25 years.

To the question about the type of the last completed education, 85.9% answered that they have University degree of which 51.0% have Master academic degree and 34.9% have bachelor academic degree. Employees with secondary education are total 13.8%).

Interesting information provides the question 'Year of completing the last education'. As it may be seen from table 8, the number of graduates begins to increase from 1995 – 2.2%, 2000 – 5.4%, 2005 – 5.9%, 2011 - 8.2% compared to 1972 – 0.4%, 1977 – 0.5%, 1982 – 0.7%, 1990 – 0.8%

5. CONCLUSION

This study justifies the need for building a system for research, identification and monitoring of the needs of vocational training in compliance to the constantly changing needs of the labour market. When considered in a narrower sense, this problem justifies and proves the necessity for this activity related to social work and social workers. Still the curriculums and the educational programs for training such specialists in the universities in Bulgaria do not correspond to the real, established needs, as well as to the specifics of the performed activities.

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