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# More Practice and Increasing Efficiency in the Hungarian System of Vocational Training

**Abstract:** The change in the Hungarian political course in 2010 has brought a need for reorganizing the country's economic and social framework. Vocational trainings, certificate programs and the field of education in general are also part of the restructuring process. Practically speaking, repositioning a given field has of course been a continuous procedure, however the ongoing reorganization seems to be more in depth compared to earlier periods. In the course of the above mentioned process the network of Chambers of Commerce and Industry is a highly important partner, aiming at showing the economic needs in the framework of adult education. The article is introducing an analysis of the characteristics of the field and the set of tasks connected to intense participation of the Chambers.

**Key words:** vocational training, certificate programs, Chambers of Commerce.

## Introduction

In autumn 2010, The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Hungarian government established a tighter bond concerning trainings. The reasons of the aforementioned decision are straightforward due to the well-known structural problems of the field. Theoretical trainings overshadow practical ones, mainly because the number of companies providing access to field experience for students is insignificant (only 2-3% of companies do so, on the other hand this rate in Austria or Germany is 20-25%). The overall percentage of students learning physical professions is only 23%. The decline of skilled workforce training has been present since the fall of the iron curtain. The change of the economic

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framework, the increasing unemployment rate among skilled workers and the significant attention paid to high education resulted in the depreciation of labor schools. Currently 75 percent of untrained young people between the age of 18 and 23 are unemployed, which shows that without any preparation for work conditions entering the labor market is impossible. As a result of the low employment rate (around 53%) marginalized, underprivileged social layers should be mobilized as well. It of course can only be achieved by launching more training programs.

The Chamber claims that the first step of bringing a more efficient system to life is increasing the number of practical lessons (at least 2000 lessons in case of basic qualifications) and introducing a 3 year skilled labor training program starting immediately after elementary school. In other words students should take part in practical trainings in the very first year of their studies instead of being only introduced to theoretical backgrounds. Although getting familiar with different aspects of work significantly shapes personality, currently youngsters under 15 cannot be employed. However, reducing school-age to 15 years is a matter being considered and the necessity of changing the structure of training programs has been recognized. Dropout rate (presently around 30%) could be notably decreased by more field experience and earlier labor market participation hence having a job as soon as possible is a matter of high importance because many members of this group are breadwinners, especially among members of minority groups. Taking into account the capable age group of the population only one quarter of the untrained is employed, while this rate among those with intermediate qualification is 63%. It inevitably influences the system of social provisions, standard of living, social integration not to mention the budget and economic sphere.

### **Outlines of the agreement**

The Chamber has given attention to public tasks concerning training programs, and in order to increase efficiency has put forward many ideas. In favor of realizing plans assistance from the newly elected government (2010 autumn) – the prime minister and minister of finance – was required. In accordance with the agreement the Chamber took over additional training programs for coordination of their contents. First of all professions connected to the needs of companies – currently 125 training programs - are involved. The government is responsible for maintaining the system of trainings, the chamber represents itself by taking part in certain programs, tasks for instance handling of exam requirements, supervi-

sion of central programs issued by the government, elaboration of methodology and contents of exams, delegation of heads of exams, providing right of delegation for stakeholders, coordination and organization of exams, organization of competitions among professionals and providing assistance for orientation. Increasing the competitiveness of Hungarian economy is not possible without trained human resources – among many other factors like tax policy, cutting back bureaucracy - and hopefully in order to reach this goal cooperation on an institutional level will be successful. On the one hand setting a course for economic procedures is the government's responsibility; however the economy itself is run by companies. Chambers should act as a communication channel, forwarding the needs and experience of companies to decision making authorities; furthermore they should act according to their possibilities. The world and the market with it change quickly hence representing those changes in the system of training programs is not an easy task. The strength of economy plays a vital part, without a strong economic background the country cannot stand firmly, therefore an optimal working education system – all forms of education – is essential. One of the biggest objectives of the Chamber is the rebirth of the *dual training system*, meaning that the theoretical part of the training happens at schools, while the practical training takes place at factories, workshops. Establishing efficient relationship between partners – educational facility and economic unit – is very important.

### Participation of Chambers - precedents

For obvious reasons the bond between educational network and social-economic sphere is firm and heavily influenced by certain institutions. The nationwide and local network of economic Chambers - and their local branches - plays an important role in this relationship. From the wide scale of tasks of economic Chambers – especially the Chambers of Commerce and Industry – only those related to trainings are going to be introduced here. Without doubt, well-trained workforce is one of the most important resources for companies. This is the reason why it is very important to supply companies with capable human resources by exercising certain rights.

Act LXXVI of 1993 on professional trainings created a new division of tasks among participants of the field. Economic Chambers developed their framework in accordance with the above mentioned enactment<sup>2</sup>. When socialism broke down many employer related organizations worked, the Hungarian

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<sup>2</sup> Local Governmental Regulations for Standardized Implementation of Tasks Related to Professional Trainings on National Level – The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Chamber of Commerce and Industry was one of them. The law on chambers came into force in 1994 (Act XVI of 1994 on economic chambers) which was related to the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Hungarian Chamber of Agriculture and the Hungarian Chamber of Handcraft. Its objective was to reduce state participation. In order to carry out that deed economic public tasks were needed to be performed by economic organizations acting as public bodies. Following the elections in 1998 the parliament passed a new bill concerning Chambers (Act CXXI of 1999) which cancelled mandatory membership from 2000. Establishing chambers operating in cities with county rights and the merger of Chambers of Handcraft and Chambers of Commerce and Industry were both based on the new legal framework. The law acknowledged the necessity of the operation of Chambers as public bodies; however it also released the Chambers from the duty of carrying out public duties.

In accordance with the bill Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Chambers of Agriculture could spring to life as economic chambers. Public tasks related to organizations dealing with commerce, industry and handcraft are implemented by chambers of commerce and industry. As the referential law points out regional economic chambers can operate in counties, cities with county rights and the capital city. As a national economic chamber they had to form the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry on the other hand agricultural chambers had to form the Hungarian Chamber of Agriculture.

In concordance with the underlying legal regulations and memorandums their task is – in accordance with the principles of local governmental system - to improve the economic setting and framework. As they work for bringing general economic interests to reality, they took part in the preparatory process of the EU integration, took a sight on regional development and also aimed at creating uncorrupted, fair conditions for the market.

It is also understood that economic chambers also play an important role concerning professional trainings. Before the regulation, the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry made an analysis on the situation of the professional training system. As for a conclusion the analysis showed that the proficiency level and practical knowledge of school-leaving students do not meet the requirements of a modern economy. The contents of trainings do not comply with the economic needs, hence improvements should be initiated. Understanding the findings of the analysis the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry published a study – *Nemzeti Szakképzés-Fejlesztés Kezdeményezés 2001-2004* – in 2001. The chamber gave voice to its opinion on the situation of professional trainings based on the evaluation of the relationship of trainings and labor market. The study assigned tasks which can improve trainings concerning quality and framework

as well. The need for exams related to certain levels of the given profession was also included in the study. The purpose of such exams is to periodically evaluate the proficiency level of students, hence analyzing the results new tasks can be set for the participants of the educational sphere. The next phase of the process was marked by a middle-distance educational strategy for the 2005-2013 period<sup>3</sup>.

### Actual fields of Chamber activity

For the chambers of commerce and industry tasks of high account are building up the system of student contracts, spreading those among economic organizations, improving the system, handling records and operating a consulting network on student contracts. In order to raise the quality of trainings, chambers took 16+11 – in two steps - professions under their wings. They paid special attention mainly to physical professions – most of them are 'absent' from the labor market – which provide ground for activities related to industry, economy and building-industry. In case of these professions, the chambers became responsible for creating and handling documentation (for instance exam requirements, central programs) and they also set different levels of exams up. The chamber delegates the head of exam for final exams too, which means that it oversees and controls each item of the system of requirements for the school-leaving process. The scale of professions expanded further in autumn 2010.

In order to raising the prestige of professions, competitions are organized. Master exams come under chambers which inspire professional improvement and lifelong learning. They not just cooperate with training institutions, educational facilities but they also delegate committee members and heads of exams to OKJ professional exams (OKJ stands for the National Register of Trainings). Chambers are represented by appointed members in organizations coordinating professional trainings.

The objective of The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and regional chambers is to establish a labor market oriented system of professional trainings cooperating with representatives of economy. The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry supervises and coordinates professional training related tasks. On national and regional level it supports implementation of tasks from the referential part of the Labor Market Fund by issuing tenders and other means of financial assistance<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Middle Distance Strategy of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry 2005-2013

<sup>4</sup> Local Governmental Regulations for Professional Trainings of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry – The Hungarian chamber of Commerce and Industry 2004

It operates a standardized online database – Internet alapú Integrált Szak-képzési Informatikai Információs Rendszer (ISZIIR) – which helps performing training related tasks. An up to date database is provided concerning new and archived information on the training system. On the other hand it offers information on certain results and indices of the system for anyone interested<sup>5</sup>.

It also handles registers of experts and database connected to the following fields: the already mentioned delegation to exams, proficiency exams, supervision and coordination of practical training, requirements for exams and professions, improvement of syllabus for different levels of practical exams, master exam.

Authorized by the Delegation Assembly implementing training related tasks of regional chambers of commerce and industry is governed by the executive body of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. By preparing strategic decisions the Department of Education and Professional Training provides assistance. It can take actions, evaluates results of performed tasks and shares knowledge and experience with regional chambers. It also makes suggestions concerning tenders and improvements for the Hungarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and regional chambers.

The Board of Education and Training coordinates tasks related to professional training of regional chambers. Within the confines of the administrative body of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, it oversees coordination of public legal tasks related to professional training on a national level as well. It governs implementation, coordination of tasks, preparation of related grant contracts, monitors implementation of tasks and organizes preparation.

The aforementioned tasks are carried out in accordance with instructions of elected bodies, administrative organizations of regional chambers. Coordination of tasks on national level is facilitated by Committees of Professional Training.

### **Student contract**

The rules of entering a student contract are laid down in the referential legal regulation (Act LXXVI of 1993 on professional training). The Act on chambers (1994) brought forth the opportunity for economic chambers to allow student contract based employment for companies<sup>6</sup>.

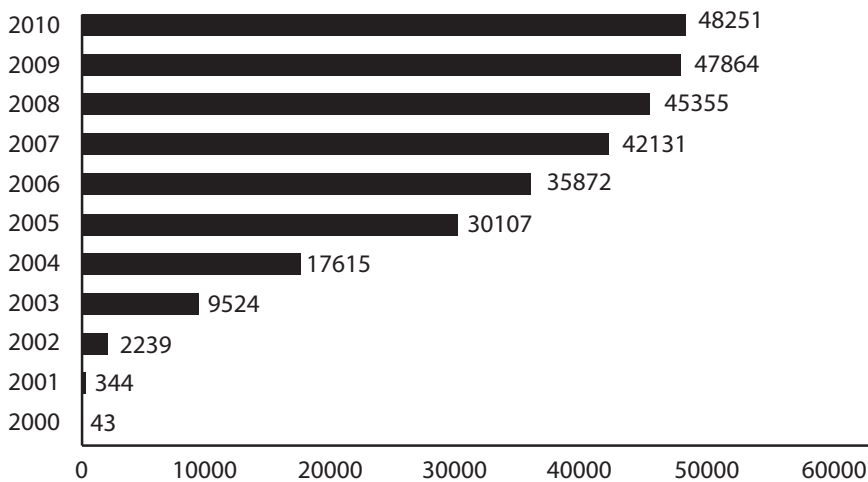
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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.isziir.hu/>

<sup>6</sup> Manual of Student Contract – Regulations of Hungarian System of Chambers – The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Student contracts have become more and more popular among companies; their number has been increasing since 1995. The Ministry of Education along with the National Professional Training Board launched an experimental project for two regional chambers. Coordinated by the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry a consulting network on students contracts was established under the guidance of the Budapest and Csongrád County Chambers of Commerce and Industry in the 2000/2001 school year.

The consultants executed immense monitoring and informative work with obligation to report the results to the Ministry of Education and the National Professional Training Board. The test run proved to be successful, the number of employed students – based on student contracts – increased in both regions. Understanding the importance of the positive feedback, the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry expanded the network to other regional chambers as well. Nowadays around 130 consultants work, the number of signed student contracts is near 48000 (figure 1).



**Figure 1:** Number of student contracts (in November of the given year)

Source: ISZIIR

*Student contracts come into existence between students and economic organizations which control the legal conditions of the contract. On the one hand a student contract offers many advantages for economic organizations since it provides secured practical trainings and more importantly it gives access to suitable skilled workforce as well. On the other hand the contract is a favorable choice for students because by entering the contract they get practical training suitable for*

the needs of the labor market. The law points out that economic organizations cannot ask for money during the training, on the contrary students have to be regularly paid. According to the present legal regulations the amount of provision can be from 20% up to 50% of the minimum wage. *In case of rare professions an additional 20% has to be provided.* On regional level the Boards of Regional Improvement and Training define – according the recent and up to date surveys - a profession as rare. Quality of work, good results at school may increase the amount of financial benefits. In case of failing an exam provisions concerning the previous semester apply. It goes without saying that social expenses must be deducted from paid salaries, and companies pay referential social insurance. Having covered the social insurance, the student becomes insured and learning years count as official work years.

In reality occurrence of negative examples is inevitable, for instance in some cases economic organizations do not grant students provisions they deserve or make students pay for education. Providing students financial benefits however is advantageous for the employer as well, because by paying them regularly motivation can really be improved. These cases usually do not get publicity because in certain fields it is hard to get an opportunity for practicing the given profession. Despite the increasing number of student contracts more economic organizations should be involved to broaden the range of possible workplaces students can choose from. It is important to underline that schools providing theoretical background for professions are obliged to accept – if they meet the requirements - students with contracts.

Many legal allowances facilitate the integration of economic organizations into the educational framework. Several expenses of companies are eligible like the cost of catering, work clothes, protecting equipments, hygienic products and amount of salaries up to 50% of the minimum wage with all additional costs. Cost of traveling, accommodation – up to a certain amount – examination and transfers of students are also eligible, however proof – invoice, any other acceptable documentation – has to be provided. Other expenses like cost of medical treatment, insurances, and trainers are also eligible (Act LXXXVI of 2003).

Other possible form of employing students is the cooperation agreement. When the duration of practical training spent at the company does not exceed the 40% of the total duration of practical training, schools assign students to companies. In this case students are not insured, therefore these years do not count as official work years meaning that they do not add up to the number of years necessary for retirement. Students do not get salary neither except the duration of the continuous field-work. Companies sign cooperation agreements with schools.



After obtaining the given proficiency, student contracts do not pose any responsibility concerning employment on students and economic organizations. However, should any need for capable workforce arise; companies tend to employ experienced workers whose skills are known. During practical training both parties get familiar with each other. Offering a job for the student at the company where the training took place is a big success, especially nowadays.

### **Personal and material terms of employing students**

In order to employ students given members of a company should have the proper qualification concerning the student's studies. An instructor with proper qualifications – higher level qualification is welcome - in the field in question should be appointed. The trainer should have 2-5 years field experience depending on whether the student is trained individually (2 years) or in a group (5 years). Clean record is also a must. Persons joining practical trainings are provided information concerning requirements by an expert during the introductory controlling phase.

Apart from personal requirements the company should provide appropriate equipment for training as well. Requisites of professional training in terms of adequate examination, materials, equipment and a proper syllabus should be met. Syllabi for training and examination are issued by the Institute of Professional and Adult Training, and schools carrying out theoretical training provide these – along with their own programs – for companies in question. Documents are available from the Institute of Professional and Adult Training, school maintainer local governments, regional chambers and faculty schools. In reality the school should give the local curriculum to companies, unfortunately it rarely happens.

The programs contain a list of all the required items, equipment for teaching a given profession. If some equipment is not available, it is possible to agree on cooperation with other companies or schools. According to legal regulations, conditions for secured and legal work and proper organization of the training are essential. Concerning work, students enjoy same rights as employers do. These factors ensure that students learn the ways of group work, professional job and role competencies are built, hence making their way in the world of labor becomes much easier.

### **Introductory control, mid-year control and accreditation**

The system of controls and monitoring guarantees that students are provided with proper educational environment. Chambers together with experts play an important role in monitoring.

Before starting the practical training Chambers should initiate an introductory control in order to check on the requirements of education. The parks of those economic organizations entering the practical training program for the first time become a training facility during the visit. Economic organizations meeting the requirements are registered and get a resolution on registration. During the process experts of the chamber collect data on the organization, evaluate equipment and how the organization is operated. Attention is also paid to safety regulations.

Chambers organize mid-year monitoring as well providing opportunity for companies to improve their training programs. Those economic organizations applying regulations are given a resolution proving their capability of functioning as training facilities.

The accreditation process is a more sophisticated form of monitoring implemented by regional chambers. Accreditation is necessary for organizations fulfilling their contribution to vocational training by providing students with practical training. In this case companies can claim back expenses – in accordance with the referential legal regulations - of the training. In order to treat expenses related to contribution to vocational training as mentioned above economic organizations should have a certificate issued by the chamber. Accreditation is valid for two years from the date of issue of the certificate; however should any data of the company change it must be renewed. During the accreditation process the economic organizations has to present all documents – proof of payment for students, log book of training - related to training and the company.

### **Practical exams**

The framework of the system of level exams was formed by interim exams used in Hungarian vocational training programs. (Enactment of 26/2001 issued by the Ministry of Education) Modification of the act on vocational training enabled drawing up rules for the system of level exams. Based on the act the Ministry of Education signed a contract with the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry on assigning the latter the elaboration of requirements for exams of 16 OKJ trainings. The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry undertakes

assisting competent regional chambers to create the requirements for exams in cooperation with professional organizations, faculty schools, and practical training facilities. It also participates in the organization and preparation of exams. Their objective is to improve the efficiency and quality of vocational training hence establishing a solid ground for auditing practical trainings.

The finishing touch was put to the National Regulation for Exams in 2004. At the same time the standardized (on national level) register of tasks for exams and the system of requirements and evaluation were created. Chairs of exams were elected through tenders. With the participation of 4200 students the first test run was executed on national level in the school year 2004/2005. Having drawn the conclusions the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry was assigned the task to organize exams for 14000 students. The system of requirements for all 16 professions was ready, and it became part of the related legal regulations hence level exams were integrated into the curriculum and became the prerequisites for the final exam. In the school year 2006/2007 12000, in the next year 13000 students faced the requirements of the examination system.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed a cooperation agreement on expanding tasks for professional trainings in 2008 therefore the chamber was given 11 additional professions. By 2010 this number rose to 125. Level exams are due before the final exam. (12th and 13th grade) Should a student fail the exam resit must be taken because a pass is a must in order to take the final exam. It is a good way to assess the student's knowledge in light of the given period of the training. Identifying incompetence becomes easy for students, parents and instructors as well. Obtaining experience in the workings of exams, handling problematic spots, improving the efficiency of preparation for the final exam are seen as major advantages of interim examination. On the top of that both student and teacher may be driven towards a more disciplined learning, teaching strategy. Cooperation of schools, economic organizations, local governments and chambers also improves so does the quality of practical training. Conclusions drawn from experience gained during interim exams enables further modifications. The framework of practical training may be adapted more easily to the needs of the economy.

Training facilities and regional chambers consult on the number of students, places of exams, and distribution of professions. The chamber coordinates and administers exam related tasks and provides training facilities information concerning the course of exams and tasks. Training facilities in question are given application forms, requirements related to given professions and a field survey is carried out by experts in order to check if the proper equipment is available for adequate examination. Most level exams take place at vocational training institu-

tions – faculty schools – and vocational training centers maintained by economic organizations. By the end of October chambers get datasheets of students from schools. Students are grouped and informed on the date and place of the exams in November. Organizers ask members of the examination committee to participate in the examination process.

Application for the position of head of exam is based on an open, continuous and public tender procedure. Regional chambers present candidates to the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Its chair makes a list of appointed heads of exam, from which regional chambers choose the appropriate persons for the task. Members of the examination committee are proposed by vocational training schools. The minute keeper handles exam related documentation. Tasks for the exam are public and available for download at the website of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry<sup>7</sup>. The head of exam chooses from these.

After the examination is over, the head – at the presence of the members of the examination committee – evaluates the performance of students and conclusion is drawn. Students get their results within 10 days. Generally speaking performance of students on a national level can be seen as average; however results highly depend on schools and professions.

### Delegation to exams

The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry has been delegating members to professional examination committees for a long time. Just like members of examination committee in case of level exams these experts are also registered at the databank of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry through a tender procedure assisted by regional chambers. In their own counties regional chambers deal with the process of delegation. This method applies for exams organized as part of the school system and out of the school system as well. The place of the exam serves as a guide.

In case of related professions the chamber has delegated heads of exam since 2007. Previously this was a task of the Institute of Professional and Adult Training. Stakeholders delegated members of examination committee according to a former agreement on division of professions.

The process of delegation in case of all remaining professions (in the National Register of Trainings) did not undergo significant changes except that the new requirements for examination determine which institution can take part in

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<sup>7</sup> [www.mkik.hu](http://www.mkik.hu)

delegation. As a result of the delegation process the examination committee is formed defined by enactment 20/2007 (20.V) modified by enactment 19/2008 (XII.4). In accordance with the aforementioned enactment the examination committee includes the head of exam, the minute keeper, the member of examination committee, representative of the organizer of the exam and experts (teachers).

Members of examination committee are compensated for their work, settling issues related to payment is the organizer's responsibility. (Enactment 20/2008 defines the rates.) Should any costs arise related to traveling or accommodation, additional payment covers those expenses.

Delegated members of examination and heads should send a written orientation to their superior (chamber, stakeholder) within 10 days. The chamber handles examination reports and sends them to the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

#### Best student – profession - competition

Organizing the competition is a delightful part of the many tasks chambers implement. The elite participate in the competition. The chamber has organized the competition since 2008. In that year 2000 students competed in 15 professions, in the next year 2600 students in 25 professions showed their skills.

Written exams required for entering the final are implemented in cooperation with regional chambers. The first three candidates and their teachers are provided with a medal and a certificate along with extra awards offered by sponsors<sup>8</sup>.

Students, who pass 60% of the requirements – practical and theoretical as well –do not have to face those parts at the final exam. In case of achieving 60% in all parts of the exam, the final exam does not have to be taken.

The sphere of the best student competition was extended by another competition formerly held for graduated young trainees in 2009. This competition was also the sorter for Wordskill 2011 and Euroskills 2011 international competitions concerning cooks and electricians. The festival in 2009 held in Hungexpo Budapest City Center saw 11000 visitors, 8000 arrived from regional cities by 200 buses. Others were students of schools from Budapest, colleagues of stakeholders, companies, economic organizations and experts of vocational training. The main objective of the competition was to increase social prestige of skilled labor by promoting and presenting various career opportunities in the field. The event facilitates orientation and making decisions in profession related issues. By competing, students get a clear picture of their knowledge; success also boosts their confidence hence they become more and more motivated. Trainees have the

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<sup>8</sup> The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (2010) <http://www.szakmaszta.hu/>

possibility to prove their skills in a more relaxed environment, not the mention the fact that participation is free.

### **Master training for a high-standard professional training**

The Act of 1994 on chambers – and its modification in 1999 – assigned chambers with the implementation of master examination<sup>9</sup>. Master examination regulations for the first 10 professions were created by the National Institute of Professional Training in cooperation with branches of ministries in 1995. In accordance with the set of regulations chambers created their own internal rules. Following the merger of the Chamber of Handcraft and Chamber of Commerce and Industry in order to keep up the work temporary regulations were initiated concerning organization and implementation of exams. A new set of regulations were being cooked and in 2001 the master examination regulations of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry were put in force. Nowadays taking a master exam is possible in 85 professions. Examination related tasks – application, organization, examination and training – are handled by the chambers.

Candidates have to prove their skills in front of a master examination committee according to the give profession. Based on recommendations of regional chambers 600 well-trained heads of master exam assigned by the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry chair the exams. Regional chambers register, inform and accept candidates. A written databank of tasks and guidelines for preparation are available. Candidates may take part in preparatory courses aiming at broadening their knowledge.

The master exam consists of three parts: knowledge on pedagogy and enterprise, practical training and theoretical background of the profession (written and oral). Candidates have to prove that they are fully aware of the latest developments in their fields, know the workings of a sophisticated company, gained the sufficient pedagogical knowledge and are able to cope with financial and customer related issues<sup>10</sup>.

Apart from aiming at operating in a given field at a high level the master exam is also expected to restore and preserve the credibility of companies. Other expectations are: providing guarantee concerning quality and ethics, contribution to the professional and moral training of future generations along with keeping well-working traditions alive. Master training and examination facilitate lifelong

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<sup>9</sup> Middle Distance Strategy of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry 2005-2013

<sup>10</sup> Guideline for European System of Master Examination. The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. 2006

learning, career building, and competitiveness. Successful integration of master training into the educational framework, legal background for accepting master title and giving countenance to master exams across EU states are the chamber's main objectives. The notion of the title (rank) *master* should see more support.

### Organizing vocational training on a regional level

The Act of 2007 (1st of September) on Public Education along with the modification of acts on contribution to vocational training put into force from first of January in 2008 gave significant scope of authority to the Boards of Regional Improvement and Training in order to adjust professional training to market need. Having modified the managerial and personal structure of the Board, economic stake holders participating in the work of the National Interest Agreement Council were given member status, regional chambers of commerce and industry along with the Chamber of Agriculture got right to delegate co-presidents hence possibility for responsible participation in improving vocational training on regional level was established. Mobilization of economic organizations for cooperation with stakeholders in training related issues also means additional tasks for them.

The main objective of the project – based on conclusions drawn from the 2008 school year - was to provide significant support for the Boards in the process of setting course for professional training. Organizations involved in the project gave advice – in relation with Regional Integrated Vocational Training Centers and based on the aspects of professional training - for the Boards of Regional Improvement and Training in accordance with market need. Differently to the tasks carried out in 2008, decision had to be made one by one in case of all registered 76 centers. The basic principle for making decisions was to avoid factual rates which cannot be realized, but to indicate enrolment ratio and the framework of guidelines with a percentile variable (Vámosi, 2009).

Another significant change is that announcement of decentralized tenders was beyond the possibilities of the Boards of Regional Improvement and Training therefore modification of the structure of professional trainings could only be done through Regional Integrated Vocational Training Centers.

One of the key factors of successful implementation is a research based on a questionnaire which involved 12000 items, 8000 economic organizations, 3450 trainees, 300 public institutions, 250 experts and 420 askers in 2009 (February-May). Following to the survey conducted by the Institute for Economic and Enterprise Research an analysis was performed which took into account both national and regional aspects of the issue. It provided useful information con-

cerning the modification of the structure of school enrollment and educational framework of regions. During the process of preparing suggestions other factors like data coming from KIR-STAT - it is a system of collecting data on public education using statistical methods – surveys on enrollment. Available information concerning regional labor market, demographic data and results of school leaving exams were also used. As a result of the implemented regional tasks qualifications fell into the following four categories:

- Greatly supported qualification
- Supported qualification
- Qualification that is not funded by any financial source related to professional training
- Qualification that is not taught at school or in the given region

These categories outline the general principles of regional vocational training, furthermore played an important role in the decentralized tender award decision concerning grants and funds in 2010. In relation to the Regional Integrated Vocational Training Centers concrete ideas sprang to life on enrollment. Emphasis should be placed on the fact that the background of all types of training programs is solid. However it should be understood that in case of most needed professions, more attention is paid to improvements and allocation of financial sources. It is important for both individual and society.

### *Carrying out the program – advantages and possibilities*

As a result of the project, restructuring of the Hungarian professional training system has continued since its start in 2008.

The completed decision points are able to influence – through a financing system which improves motivation - the expansion of professions relevant to market need.

By outlining actual trends of the labor market and promoting rare professions career choice may be oriented toward satisfying economic needs. 'Fine-tuning' the financing system of vocational training the structure of school-enrollment may also be brought to changes.

By continuing research projects among young trainees other, previously not analyzed aspects of labor market needs can be understood. Surveys help collecting information concerning professional training and the labor market hence establishing a demand-oriented system becomes easier.



It is very important to underline that 132 professions were labeled as greatly supported, the following 7 professions fell into this category in all regions: lathe man, engine fitter, welder, bricklayer, mechanical, scaffolder, and tinsmith.

### *Problematic spots identified during the survey*

Lack of proper educational policy on national and regional level, suggestions of Boards of Regional Improvement and Training could not be supported.

Surveys carried out on a smaller scale would suffice, other methods related to forecasts and survey on market need should be used as well in order to analyze information from more angles (designing models, applying models, analysis of the 'job hunting' process etc.).

For international comparisons the ISCED system should be used. (International Standard Classification of Education).

The unemployed and inactive should be paid more attention.

Studies on adult training should be integrated into the analysis of supply and demand.

### **Summary**

In light of the aforementioned, perhaps it is not an exaggeration to come to the conclusion that the system of vocational training has rarely been subject of such significant modifications. Despite the fact that there were some major decisions – e.g. establishing Regional Integrated Vocational Training Centers – decisions of the last 10-15 years have barely scratched the surface. The present restructuring process may bring sweeping changes to vocational training. Reducing compulsory school attendance age, restoring the three years model, involvement of economic organizations into education will override the very basics of the system. However the Chamber undertook the implementation of related tasks, it is clear that without governmental support the project cannot be successful. There is a long way to go till results can be analyzed, however providing Hungarian economy with professionals, increasing employment rate, social integration are essential building blocks of a bright future.

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## Više prakse i bolja efikasnost mađarskog sistema stručnog obrazovanja

**Apstrakt:** Promena političkog kursa Mađarske 2010. godine donela je potrebu za reorganizacijom ekonomskog i društvenog okvira zemlje. Stručne obuke, sertifikovani program i celo polje obrazovanja takođe su prošli kroz proces rekonstrukcije. U praksi je ova reorganizacija trajala već neko vreme, međutim, trenutne promene mnogo su dublje u poređenju sa prethodnim periodom. U toku ovog procesa, mreža privrednih komora i industrije je bila veoma važan partner koji je bio usmeren na predstavljanje ekonomskih potreba u svetlu obrazovanja odraslih. Ovaj članak predstavlja analizu karakteristika ove oblasti i niz zadataka koje imaju cilj da unaprede učešće komora.

**Ključne reči:** stručne obuke, sertifikovani programi, privredne komore.

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